DIFFERENTIAL LONELINESS SCALE (DLS)

Reference:

Schmidt, N. & Sermat, V. (1983). Measuring loneliness in different relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *44*, 1038-1047.

Description of Measure:

A 60-item scale designed to measure one's subjective sense of lacking satisfaction with a variety of social relationships. The relationships the scale deals with are: (1) romantic-sexual relationships, (2) friendships, (3) family relationships, (4) relationships with the community. In particular, the scale attempts to measure the difference between what an individual believes is the type of relationship one would like to have and the type of relationship one is actually having.

Each item is answered either as True or False.

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Marshall, G. W., Michaels, C. E., & Mulki, J. P. (2007). Workplace isolation: Exploring the constructs and its measurements. Psychology and Marketing, 24, 195-223.

Virtual offices are a growing trend in today's work environment and are expected to influence marketing roles dramatically, especially selling. These conditions may lead to perceptions of isolation, both socially and organizationally. Workplace isolation is a two-dimensional construct that represents individuals' perceptions of isolation from others at work and includes perceived isolation from both colleagues and from the company's support network. This article reports the results of a four-sample study to develop and validate a self-report scale for measuring the two facets of workplace isolation. The scale's usefulness for future research and management applications are discussed.

Alfons, M. & Brumagne, M. (1985). Loneliness among children and young adolescents. Developmental Psychology, 21, 1025-1031.

Investigated differences in loneliness involving parents and peers and the relations between loneliness, choices of a "first comfort figure" (FCF), and social sensitivity as perceived by peers. 60 female and 52 male 5th graders, 97 female and 45 male 7th graders, and 66 female and 73 male 9th graders were given a loneliness scale and a sociometric measure of perceived social sensitivity. Results indicate that age differences in parent-related loneliness were marginally significant. Seventh graders seemed to have fewer loneliness experiences in their relationships with parents than 5th and 9th graders. Boys more frequently reported those feelings than girls. Ss who indicated both parents as their FCFs had the lowest scores for parent-related loneliness, whereas those who indicated friends as their FCFs had the highest scores for parent-related loneliness. With respect to peer-related loneliness, no age or sex differences were found. However, girls who chose both parents as their FCFs were more lonely than boys who did the same, and boys who chose their fathers as their FCFs mentioned more peer-related

loneliness feelings than the girls who made this choice. Ss perceived as socially sensitive by their classmates less frequently mentioned peer-related loneliness feelings.

Sadava, S. W. & Matejcic, C. (1987). Generalized and specific loneliness in early marriage. Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, 19, 56-66.

38 husbands (mean age 26 yrs) and wives (mean age 23.8 yrs), married for an average of 35.8 mo and without children, independently completed a set of established measures of loneliness and of aspects of their marital relationship (e.g., UCLA Loneliness Scale). Significant levels of loneliness were reported by some Ss, and only modest correlations were found between the loneliness scores of husbands and wives. General and specific loneliness were related to marital attitudes, particularly less liking, less intimacy, and greater communication apprehension among husbands, and to less liking, less marital satisfaction, less love, and less self-disclosure among the wives. Scores of the spouses and spouse difference scores on several of these variables were also related to loneliness. Findings are discussed as pertaining to loneliness without social isolation and in relation to the quality of relationships.

Scale (taken from http://www.yorku.ca/rokada/psyctest/lonely.doc)**:**

Instructions: For each statement, decide whether it describes you or your situation or not. If it does seem to describe you or your situation, mark it TRUE (T). If not, mark it FALSE (F). If an item is not applicable to you because you are currently not involved in the situation it depicts, e.g., a current romantic or marital relationship, then mark it FALSE (F).

1.*	I find it easy to express feelings of affection toward members of my family.	T	F	Fam
2.	Most everyone around me is a stranger.	T	F	Gr
3.	I usually wait for a friend to call me up and invite me out before making plans to go anywhere.	T	F	Fr
4. *	Most of my friends understand my motives and reasoning.	T	F	Fr
5.	At this time, I do not have a romantic relationship that means a lot to me.	T	F	R/S
6.	I don=t get along very well with my family.	T	F	Fam
7.*	I have at least one good friend of the same sex.	T	F	Fr
8.	I can=t depend on getting moral or financial support from any group or organization in a time of trouble.	T	F	Gr
9.*	I am now involved in a romantic or marital relationship where both of us make a genuine effort at cooperation.	T	F	R/S
10.	I often become shy and retiring in the company of relatives.	T	F	Fam
11.*	Some of my friends will stand by me in almost any difficulty.	T	F	Fr
12.	People in my community aren=t really interested in what I think or feel.	T	F	Gr
13.	My trying to have friends and to be liked seldom succeeds the way I would like it to.	T	F	Fr
14.*	I spend time talking individually with each member of my	T	F	

				Fam
	family.			
15.	I find it difficult to tell anyone that I love him or her.	T	F	R/S
16.	I don=t have many friends in the city where I live.	T	F	Fr
17.*	I work well with others in a group.	T	F	Gr
18.*	I am an important part of the emotional and physical well-being of my lover or spouse.	T	F	R/S
19.	I don=t feel that I can turn to my friends living around me for help when I need it.	T	F	Fr
20.	I don=t think that anyone in my family really understands me.	T	F	Fam
21.*	I have a lover or spouse who fulfils many of my emotional needs.	T	F	R/S
22.*	My friends are generally interested in what I am doing, although not to the point of being nosy.	T	F	Fr
23.*	Members of my family enjoy meeting my friends.	T	F	Fr
24.*	I allow myself to become close to my friends.	T	F	Fr
25.	My relatives are generally too busy with their concerns to bother about my problems.	T	F	Fam
26.	Few of my friends understand me the way I want to be understood.	T	F	Fr
27.	No one in the community where I live cares much about me.	T	F	Gr
28.	Right now, I don=t have true compatibility in a romantic or marital relationship.	T	F	R/S
29.*	Members of my family give me the kind of support that I need.	T	F	Fam
30.	A lot of my friendships ultimately turn out to be pretty disappointing.	T	F	Fr
31.*	My romantic or marital partner gives me much support and encouragement.	T	F	R/S
32.	I am not very open with members of my family.	T	F	Fam
33.	I often feel resentful about certain actions of my friends.	T	F	Fr
34.	I am embarrassed about the way my family behaves.	T	F	Fam
35.	People who say they are in love with me are usually only trying to rationalize using me for their own purposes.	T	F	R/S
36.*	I have a good relationship with most members of my family.	T	F	Fam
37.*	In my relationships, I am generally able to express both positive and negative feelings.	T	F	Fr
38.	I don=t get much satisfaction from the groups I attend.	T	F	Gr
39.*	I get plenty of help and support from friends.	T	F	Fr
40.	I seem to have little to say to members of my family.	T	F	Fam
41.	I don=t have any one special love relationship in which I feel really understood.	T	F	R/S
42.*	I really feel that I belong to a family.	T	F	Fam
43.	I have few friends with whom I can talk openly.	T	F	Fr
44.	My family is quite critical of me.	T	F	Fam
45.*	I have an active love life.	T	F	R/S

46.	I have few friends that I can depend on to fulfil their end of mutual commitments.	T	F	Fr
47.*	Generally I feel that members of my family acknowledge my strengths and positive qualities.	T	F	Fam
48.*	I have at least one real friend.	T	F	Fr
49.	I don=t have any neighbours who would help me out in a time of need.	T	F	Gr
50.*	Members of my family are relaxed and easy-going with each other.	T	F	Fam
51.	I have moved around so much that I find it difficult to maintain lasting friendships.	T	F	Fr
52.*	I tend to get along well with partners in romantic relationships.	T	F	R/S
53.	I find it difficult to invite a friend to do something with me.	T	F	Fr
54.	I have little contact with members of my family.	T	F	Fam
55.	My friends don=t seem to stay interested in me for long.	T	F	Fr
56.*	There are people in my community who understand my views and beliefs.	T	F	Gr
57.	As much as possible, I avoid members of my family.	T	F	Fam
58.	I seldom get the emotional security I need from a romantic or sexual relationship.	T	F	R/S
59.*	My family usually values my opinion when a family decision is to be made.	T	F	Fam
60.*	Most of my friends are genuinely concerned about my welfare.	T	F	Fr

Scoring:
For items with no asterisk, each marking of T (TRUE) is given one point. For items with an asterisk, each marking of F (FALSE) is given one point. The scale measures loneliness in four types of relationships, namely romantic/sexual relationships (R/S), friendships (Fr), relationships with family (Fam), and relationships with larger groups (Gr).