

Compassion

Adapted from: McCullough et al., 2002; Pommier, 2010; Sprecher & Fehr, 2005

Compassion is an important interpersonal strength, referring to the degree to which an individual displays care and concern for others and is motivated to help them. This scale was designed to measure compassion in a short form suitable for large survey research and using simplified wording accessible to individuals with limited reading levels. Items 1-3 were adapted from Pommier's (2010) 24-item Compassion Scale, items 4 and 5 were adapted from Sprecher and Fehr's (2005) 21-item measure of compassionate love, and item 6 is adapted from McCullough et al.'s (2002) scale on dispositional gratitude. Item 7, originally from a scale measuring grateful behavior, was written for the Life Paths study.

Development and validation of measure in pilot study and main sample: To establish reliability and validity for new and adapted items, we conducted a pilot study with 104 participants from the same community as the main sample, recruited through a local email classifieds list and word-of-mouth. In the main sample of over 2500 participants, we conducted domain-level factor analyses for all interpersonal strengths. Items from the four scales had been presented separately but loaded together onto this 7-item factor. Internal consistencies (coefficient alphas) for the pilot and main samples are 0.65 and 0.82, respectively. Validity was established in the main sample with moderate to strong correlations with related domains, such as Generativity ($r = .43$) and Meaning Making – Other-oriented ($r = .53$), as well as with outcome measures of well-being, such as the Awe Index ($r = .39$) and Subjective Well-being ($r = .36$).

Scoring: Each answer category was assigned a value from 4 to 1. The total score can be a sum or mean of all the items. We used z-scores of the scale score in our analyses. Higher scores indicate higher levels of compassion.

Life Paths version: Hamby, S., Grych, J., & Banyard, V. L. (2015). *Life Paths measurement packet: Finalized scales*. Sewanee, TN: Life Paths Research Program. <http://www.lifepathsresearch.org/strengths-measures/>

Partially adapted from: McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J. (2002). The grateful disposition: A conceptual and empirical topography. *Journal of Family and Social Psychology, 82(1)*, 112-127.

Pommier, E. A. (2010). *The Compassion Scale*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from the University of Texas Digital Repository. 2011-02-09T17:48:05Z.

Sprecher, S. & Fehr, B. (2005). Compassionate love for close others and humanity. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 22*, 629-651.

1. If I see someone going through tough times, I try to be caring toward that person.

Mostly true about me	4
Somewhat true about me	3
A little true about me	2
Not true about me	1
2. My heart goes out to people who are unhappy.

Mostly true about me	4
Somewhat true about me	3
A little true about me	2
Not true about me	1
3. When others feel sad, I try to comfort them.

Mostly true about me	4
Somewhat true about me	3
A little true about me	2
Not true about me	1
4. Helping family or friends gives me a lot of meaning in my life.

Mostly true about me	4
Somewhat true about me	3
A little true about me	2
Not true about me	1
5. When the people I love need me, I have been there for them.

Mostly true about me	4
Somewhat true about me	3
A little true about me	2

- Not true about me 1
6. As I get older, I am more thankful for the people and things that have been part of my life.
- Mostly true about me 4
- Somewhat true about me 3
- A little true about me 2
- Not true about me 1
7. I have told a teacher, coach, religious leader, boss, or other important person in my life how much he or she has meant to me.
- Mostly true about me 4
- Somewhat true about me 3
- A little true about me 2
- Not true about me 1