

## How Envious are You? (The Benign and Malicious Envy Scale, BeMaS)

### Instructions

Envy – the desire to have another’s achievements, possessions, abilities or qualities deemed desirable, is an emotion most of us would have felt at one time or another. Individuals, however, vary in terms of how envious they tend to be. This 10-item measure assesses this dispositional envy. Indicate how much you would agree to the following statements for your envy score:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>1. When I envy others, I focus on how I can become equally successful in the future.</b>						
<b>2. I wish that superior people lose their advantage</b>						
<b>3. If I notice that another person is better than me, I try to improve myself.</b>						
<b>4. Envyng others motivates me to accomplish my goals.</b>						
<b>5. If other people have something that I want for myself, I wish to take it away from them.</b>						
<b>6. I feel ill toward people I envy.</b>						
<b>7. I strive to reach other people’s superior achievements.</b>						
<b>8. Envious feelings cause me to dislike the other person.</b>						
<b>9. If someone has superior qualities, achievements or possessions, I try to attain them for myself.</b>						
<b>10. Seeing other people’s achievements makes me resent them.</b>						

### Scoring

Total benign envy = Average items 1, 3, 4, 7 and 9

Total malicious envy = Average items 2, 5, 6, 8 and 10

### Interpretation

For a while, it was thought that envy was an unpleasant – and necessarily ‘bad’ or disruptive emotion. This measure assesses two forms of envy, actually. The first, benign envy, is envy experienced because of another’s perceived superiority, but does not incite or motivate hostility on part

of the envier. The Dutch have a word for this form of envy – *benijden*. In contrast, envy with a malicious intent, is the desire to see another person fail, along taking actions to harm the envied target's changes of success. The Dutch also have a word for this form of envy – *afgunst*. A sample of 192 participants showed an average benign envy score of 4.12, and an average malicious envy score of 2.54. In another sample of 474 individuals, the average benign envy score was 3.41, while the average malicious envy score was 1.58.

## Reference

Lange, J., & Crusius, J. (2015). Dispositional envy revisited: Unraveling the motivational dynamics of benign and malicious envy. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(2), 284-294.