

How Susceptible are you to Emotions? (The Emotional Contagion Scale, EC)

Instructions

How sensitive, or susceptible are you to certain emotions? Does the sight of another person's emotions makes you feel like you were experiencing those emotions yourself? This measure assesses how susceptible you are to others' emotions, and to the process of emotional contagion in general. State the extent to which you agree or disagree to each of the following statements below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. If someone I'm talking with begins to cry, I get teary-eyed.					
2. Being with a happy person picks me up when I'm feeling down.					
3. When someone smiles warmly at me, I smile back and feel warm inside.					
4. I get filled with sorrow when people talk about the death of their loved ones.					
5. I clench my jaws and my shoulders get tight when I see the angry faces on the news.					
6. When I look into the eyes of the one I love, my mind is filled with thoughts of romance.					
7. It irritates me to be around angry people.					
8. Watching the fearful faces of victims on the news makes me try to imagine how they might be feeling.					
9. I melt when the one I love holds me close.					
10. I tense when overhearing an angry quarrel.					
11. Being around happy people fills my mind with happy thoughts.					
12. I sense my body responding when the one I love touches me.					
13. I notice myself getting tense when I'm around					

people who are stressed out.					
14. I cry at sad movies.					
15. Listening to the shrill screams of a terrified child in a dentist's waiting.					

Scoring

Total susceptibility to emotions = Average of items 1 to 15.

Total susceptibility positive emotions score = Average of items 2, 3, 6, 9 11 and 12

Total susceptibility to negative emotions score = Average of items 8, 13, 15, 5, 7, 10, 1, 4, 14

Interpretation

This measure assesses the extent to which you are susceptible to certain emotions, namely, as happiness, love, fear, anger and sadness. The average score is 3.62 from a sample of 369 students. Women have been found to be more susceptible to emotion than men (3.72 for women, 3.36 for men) in general. Women (4.02) were also more likely to be susceptible than men (3.89) to others' positive emotions. Women also report a higher degree of susceptibility to negative emotions (3.72) than men (3.01).

Reference

Doherty, R. W. (1997). The emotional contagion scale: A measure of individual differences. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 21(2), 131-154.