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The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)

28 Aug 2019 by Kelly Miller, BA, CAPP ⓘ

Scientifically reviewed by Jo Nash, Ph.D. ⓘ

Ever found yourself driving and suddenly unaware of how you got to your present location?



Do you find yourself walking fast to get somewhere and missing the experience of getting there?

How about plowing through your meal without tasting it?

We are all susceptible to the “busyness” of life and the detachment from the valuable and satisfying experience of our daily lives. Our brains tend to go on autopilot to conserve energy. By saving energy, our minds are robbing us of the delicious moment-to-moment experience that improves psychological and physical wellbeing.

While humans vary in their abilities in trait mindfulness, those who have effectively cultivated it live lives with higher



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Mindful Attention Awareness Scale. It has been validated across cultures and age groups. It has been helpful in various areas of research, especially in self-determination theory and consciousness. It can be useful in helping people discover a baseline to cultivate this inherent human ability.

Let's explore how the MAAS can give you an indication of a baseline in mindfulness, and how this scoring can help improve your moment-to-moment experiences.

Before you read on, we thought you might like to download our three Mindfulness Exercises for free. These science-based, comprehensive exercises will not only help you cultivate a sense of inner peace throughout your daily life but will also give you the tools to enhance the mindfulness of your clients, students, or employees.



This Article Contains:

- What is the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale?
- A Brief Look at the Authors Brown and Ryan
- How Does the Scoring Work?
- A Look at the Validity and Reliability of the MAAS

→ Where Can I Find the Questionnaire Online? (PDF)

→ A Take-Home Message



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What is the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale?

The research that created the MAAS investigated mindfulness as an attribute that varies between and within people (Brown, Ryan, 2003). Humans vary in attention and awareness to present events and experiences. The inherent capability differs in individuals due to levels of discipline, self-regulation, and personality.

The MAAS assesses individual differences in the frequency of mindful states over time. The scale is a 15-item (1-6 Likert scale) questionnaire to assess dispositional (or trait) mindfulness. The measurements from the MAAS tap consciousness related to self-regulation and various areas of wellbeing.



As a trait, it is shown that some individuals are more proficient at putting themselves into a state of mindfulness than others. It is also suggested that the willingness and practice of mindfulness varied as well. Focusing our internal radar is a skill that can be improved.

This scale is based around the understanding that all humans have a “radar” for internal and external experience,



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awareness of current experience or the present moment.

This scale intentionally excludes mood, attitude, and motivation to keep dispositional mindfulness neutral as a construct. The MAAS measures one’s tendency toward mindfulness or mindlessness. Scores of the MAAS strongly correlate with self-consciousness, rumination, and self-reflection.

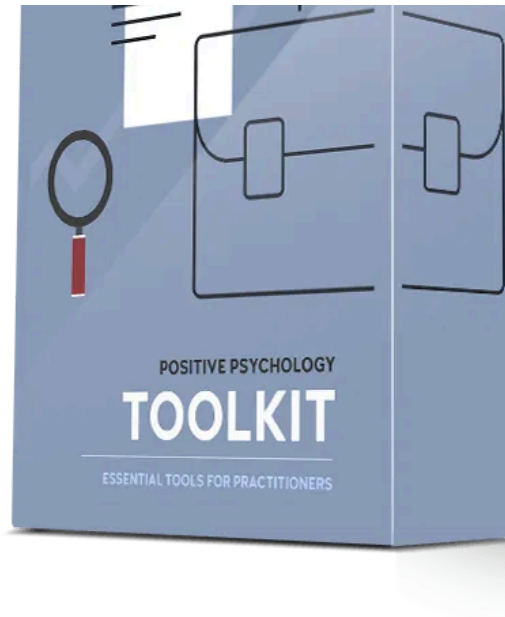
Those scoring higher in mindfulness tend to report higher levels of pleasant affect, higher self-esteem, optimism, and self-actualization. Also, lower levels of neuroticism, anxiety, depression, and unpleasant affect are reported in those scoring higher in mindfulness.

Some of the basic needs of humans like autonomy, relatedness, and competence are typically met in someone who has a higher tendency to pursue the practice of mindfulness actively.





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and Ryan

Research in mindfulness has taken vast leaps since the introduction of the MAAS in 2003.

The authors of this scale are continuing their excellent research and initiatives to better understand mindfulness and its role in self-determination theory and human consciousness. Their valuable work continues to improve our understanding for improvements in wellbeing practices.

Kirk Warren Brown, Ph.D. is an associate professor at Virginia Commonwealth University. He continues to be interested in consciousness and its role in human functioning. The research in social psychology surrounding mindfulness and its effect on compassion and emotional self-regulation continues to intrigue him and his colleagues.



Community-wide interventions in mindfulness practices have been improving the world around this research. A recent article about kindness and strangers showed the role of mindfulness in outreach. The impact of this research is far-reaching.

Richard M Ryan, Ph.D. continues to research self-determination theory and its relationship to mindfulness.

His research on human motivation is world-renowned. He is considered an expert in the field. He continues his work as a



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Self-determination theory and its applications can be found in the following areas: education, healthcare, relationships, psychotherapy, psychopathology, organizations, sports & exercise, goals, health & wellbeing, and the environment. It is an exciting area of research. The development of interventions and programs to affect change is profound.

When asked about his research since 2003, Dr. Ryan was kind enough to reply:

“Our interest in mindfulness relates to our broader view within self-determination theory that awareness contributes both autonomous regulation (because with greater awareness people make better choices and act with more congruence) and wellness (because mindful awareness helps us both avoid bad experiences, and better appreciate and savor good ones). So since 2003, we have been expanding our research in the connections between both mindful awareness and interested self-reflection on peoples quality of experience and behavior.”



When asked how practitioners might utilize the MAAS in real-life settings such as coaching, Dr. Ryan replied with the following:

“The MAAS is pretty straightforward, so it might be of interest to people as a change score. We haven’t used it that

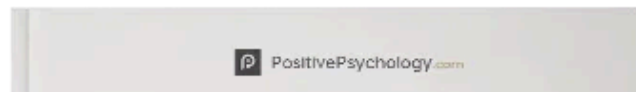


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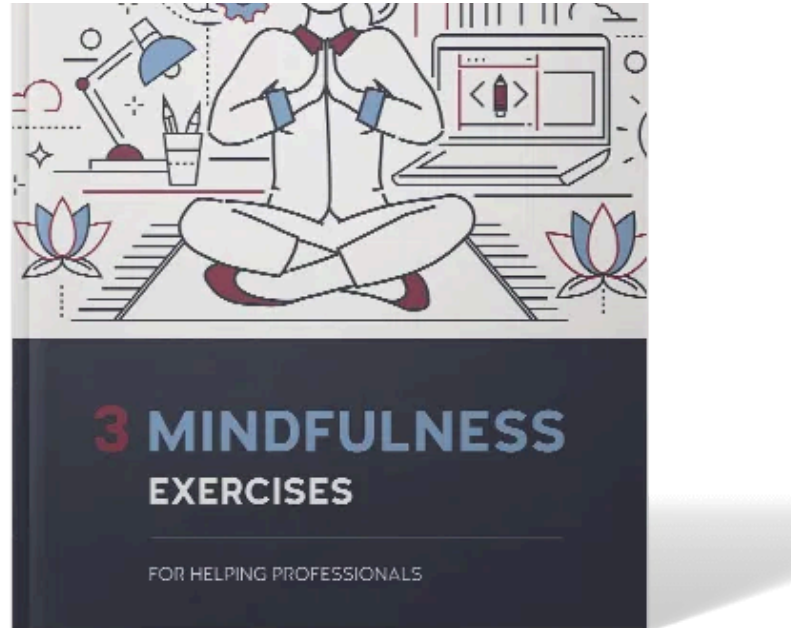
In 2015, Brown and Ryan edited *The Handbook of Mindfulness: Theory, Research, and Practice*. This book explores the evolving field of study of mindfulness and its application in improving life satisfaction. Interventions for behavioral and emotion dysregulation disorders like depression, anxiety, addictions, and physical health conditions are examined.

As their work continues to improve practitioners’ understanding of the role of mindfulness in wellbeing, further interventions can be developed. The more we know about consciousness, the more we can harness the benefits in wellbeing, and how a deeper understanding of awareness and attention improves humans.





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These detailed, science-based exercises will help you or your clients enjoy the benefits of mindfulness and create positive shifts in their mental, physical, and emotional health.

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How Does the Scoring Work?

To score the MAAS, a mean of the 15 items (collected in a Likert scale) is calculated. For those who may not be

mathematically minded, the mean equals the sum of the answers divided by the total number of questions (15).



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Average scores for undergraduate students in the research were 3,85. Zen meditators scored an average of 4,38. Statistically, those who actively participated in mindfulness activities reportedly had fewer and less intense instances of negative emotional experience. Also, a study done on people living with cancer showed that those awake to their mortality increase the moment-to-moment appreciation of their lives.



Paying attention & mindfulness – Sam Chase



A Look at the Validity and Reliability of the MAAS



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accuracy. Though the scale requests that the participant reflects on their experiences as they are, rather than how they think they should be, humans tend to answer inaccurately where subjective experience is concerned. It is exceedingly difficult to measure “present” state in a “post” state manner.

A deeper understanding of mindfulness and its role in self-determination theory has been helpful in many different areas, including but not limited to the adherence to medical recommendations.

Validation of the scale’s usefulness in a cancer patient study showed improved wellbeing in patients more attuned to their internal and external experience. Facing mortality allows for increased mindfulness practice and with-it adherence to suggested treatments.



The scale has been validated among college students, community adults, and cancer patients, and it has been translated into at least five different languages.

It has also been adapted to consider adolescent and child perspective, as there is burgeoning research in the field of childhood interventions in mindfulness practice (Brown, 2011). [Benefits in teaching children and adolescents](#)

mindfulness activities are far-reaching and incredibly effective.



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psychology interventions. Adhering to the basic scientific principle that a phenomenon can be studied only if it can be adequately defined and measured, gives a more significant validation to the field of mindfulness and consciousness as a significant area of further scientific study.



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Where Can I Find the Questionnaire Online? (PDF)

Here is a link to the [Mindful Attention Awareness Scale](#) for adults, plus we have more [mindfulness questionnaires and scales](#) on our own blog for you to enjoy.

A Take-Home Message

The Mindful Awareness Attention Scale has advanced research in positive psychology, social psychology, and child psychology since 2003.



More exciting research is being done within self-determination theory and human motivation to provide further measurable science to develop continued interventions and improvement in human beings. The more we know about the construct, the more effective the practice of mindfulness can become.

More conscious humans in the world will create a better world. When people are more aware of their internal



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at our fingertips and can utilize the MAAS as a baseline to create change.

Thanks for reading!

We hope you enjoyed reading this article. Don't forget to [download our three Mindfulness Exercises for free.](#)

REFERENCES

- Brown, Ryan 2003 Journal of Personality and Social Psychology Copyright 2003 by the American Psychological Association, Inc. 2003, Vol. 84, No. 4, 822-8480022-3514/03/\$12.00
- Brown, K. W., West, A. M., Loverich, T. M., & Biegel, G. M. (2011). Assessing adolescent mindfulness: Validation of an Adapted Mindful Attention Awareness Scale in adolescent normative and psychiatric populations. *Psychological Assessment*, 23(4), 1023-1033.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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[Kelly Miller](#) is a graduate of the Flourishing Center's CAPP program and published author of *Jane's Worry Elephant*. She is currently the owner of A Brighter Purpose, LLC, a provider in positive psychology coaching services. When she isn't gleefully helping humans move toward flourishing, she enjoys National Park hikes and spending quality time with her adventurous family.

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Not useful at all

Very useful

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COMMENTS

What our readers think



Muhammad Usman on March 11, 2024 at 15:52

is there any reverse coded item in MAAS (Mindful Attention Awareness Scale). Or MAAS have any

subscale?

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... assistance,

The MAAS does not use reverse-coded items; all items directly measure the construct of mindfulness, where higher scores indicate greater mindfulness.

I hope this helps!

Warm regards,

Julia | Community Manager

[Reply](#)



Muhammad Usman on March 12, 2024 at 06:44

Yes it is very helpful for me, thats all i need,
Thank You , Always stay happy and blessed.

[Reply](#)



MADHUMITHA C on March 29, 2024 at 14:27

Good evening mam,
I'm Madhumitha C MSc Nursing I year student studying in Sri Ramachandra institute of higher education and research , Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.I am conducting a research on Effectiveness of Mindful attention awareness breathing on attention and well being among undergraduate nursing



students . kindly give me permission to use
MAAS SCALE in my research .it is useful for



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[Reply](#)



Preeti on February 12, 2024 at 09:19

Good afternoon mam , I am Preeti , research scholar in the department of psychology from central university of haryana, mhenbergerh, INDIA. I am conducting a research on variable mindfulness among adolescents. Please give me permission to use MAAS in my research. Also provide manual of MAAS.
Thanking you

[Reply](#)

Julia Poernbacher on February 15, 2024 at 23:51

Hi Preeti,

This scale is freely available to use and a copy of it with scoring information can be accessed [here](#).

Hope this helps!

Warm regards,

Julia | Community Manager

[Reply](#)

Chioma on December 14, 2023 at 09:04

Glad to find the MAAS as my scholarly project practice intervention is on Mindfulness as a means of balancing



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Rida Ul Wafa Shehzad on November 13, 2023 at 15:30

hello, i want to use MAAS 15 item scale for my dissertation, how can i get permission to use this scale? Or is this open to use?

[Reply](#)

Julia Poernbacher on November 17, 2023 at 23:15

Hi Rida,

This scale is freely available to use and a copy of it with scoring information can be accessed [here](#).

Hope this helps!

Warm regards,

Julia | Community Manager

[Reply](#)

Jashan on October 25, 2023 at 16:47

We want criteria to check the scores .

[Reply](#)

Julia Poernbacher on October 25, 2023 at 18:16

Hi Jashan,

To calculate the MAAS score, the average of the 15 items (gathered using a Likert scale) is determined.



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greater dispositional mindfulness, and those with higher scores often report fewer negative emotional states.

I hope this helps!

Warm regards,

Julia | Community Manager

[Reply](#)

poniman poniman on October 12, 2023 at 11:33

good afternoon dear friends, happy to find this MAAS as part of my dissertation research related to mindfulness. I'm looking for indicators or dimensions related to the questionnaire. Can you help me find the indicators so that it becomes a comprehensive questionnaire. Thank You

Poniman

[Reply](#)

Julia Poernbacher on October 14, 2023 at 00:49

Hi!

I'm glad you've found the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) useful for your dissertation

research on mindfulness. To create a comprehensive questionnaire, you can consider these indicators:



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- Judgment and Acceptance.
- Emotional Regulation.
- Mindful Behavior.
- Impact on Daily Life.
- Self-Compassion.
- Awareness of Physical Sensations.
- Mindfulness Practices.

I hope this helps 😊

Warm regards,

Julia | Community Manager

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