FIS

Fear of Intimacy Scale (FIS)

The Fear of Intimacy Scale (FIS) is a self-report questionnaire designed to measure the discomfort, avoidance, and anxiety associated with emotional closeness in significant relationships. It explores the difficulty of sharing one's thoughts, emotions, and vulnerabilities with a close person, particularly in an intimate relationship. This tool is useful for assessing interpersonal difficulties, insecure attachment styles, emotional avoidance, and certain couple issues. The FIS does not make a diagnosis on its own, but provides a relevant indicator of the level of fear of intimacy and of emotional openness.

Number of questions	35 questions
Estimated duration	10 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Fear of Intimacy Scale
Target audience	Adolescents and adults
Authors	Cheryl J. Descutner, Deborah J. Thelen (1991)
Category	Couple issues

Preview of the 35 questions

Imagine you are in a close, dating relationship. 'O' refers to the person who would be in the close relationship with you.

I would feel uncomfortable telling O about things in the past that I have felt ashamed of.

Not at all characteristic of me | Slightly characteristic of me | Moderately characteristic of me | Very characteristic of me | Extremely characteristic of me

Imagine you are in a close, dating relationship. 'O' refers to the person who would be in the close relationship with you.

I would feel uneasy talking with O about something that has hurt me deeply.

Not at all characteristic of me | Slightly characteristic of me | Moderately characteristic of me | Very characteristic of me | Extremely characteristic of me

Imagine you are in a close, dating relationship. 'O' refers to the person who would be in the close relationship with you.

I would feel comfortable expressing my true feelings to O.

Not at all characteristic of me | Slightly characteristic of me | Moderately characteristic of me | Very characteristic of me | Extremely characteristic of me

Imagine you are in a close, dating relationship. 'O' refers to the person who would be in the close relationship with you.

If O were upset I would sometimes be afraid of showing that I care.

Not at all characteristic of me | Slightly characteristic of me | Moderately characteristic of me | Very characteristic of me | Extremely characteristic of me

Imagine you are in a close, dating relationship. 'O' refers to the person who would be in the close relationship with you.

I might be afraid to confide my innermost feelings to O.

Not at all characteristic of me | Slightly characteristic of me | Moderately characteristic of me | Very characteristic of me | Extremely characteristic of me

Scoring & interpretation

Each item is rated on a Likert-type scale, generally from 1 to 5. The total score is obtained by summing or averaging the responses after reversing the items worded in the direction of relational ease, depending on the version used. A high score indicates greater fear of intimacy, with more emotional avoidance and more difficulty with self-disclosure in a close relationship. Interpretation is dimensional, as there is no universal diagnostic cutoff.