SoMe

Sources of Meaning and Meaning in Life Questionnaire (SoMe)

The SoMe is an in-depth self-report questionnaire designed to explore how a person constructs the meaning of their life from concrete sources of commitment, values and experiences. It assesses 26 sources of meaning, as well as two central and distinct dimensions: meaningfulness and crisis of meaning. The tool provides a nuanced profile of a patient's existential resources, rather than a simple overall score, which makes it particularly useful in clinical psychology, existential counseling, career guidance, well-being research and the exploration of periods of transition or vulnerability. It helps identify what supports the sense of a life that is coherent, directed, significant and experienced as belonging to a larger whole, while distinguishing this from an experience of emptiness, frustration or loss of meaning. The sources of meaning are grouped into broad dimensions such as self-transcendence, self-actualization, order, and well-being and relatedness, with a frequent distinction between vertical and horizontal transcendence.

Number of questions	151 questions
Estimated duration	23 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Sources of Meaning and Meaning in Life Questionnaire
Target audience	Adolescents and adults
Authors	Tatjana Schnell, Peter Becker (2007)
Category	General

Preview of the 151 questions

I feel I belong to something bigger than myself.

Totally disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Totally agree

I think my life has a deeper meaning.

Totally disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Totally agree

Everyone needs clear values to hold on to.

Totally disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Totally agree

I lead a fulfilled life.

Totally disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Totally agree

I feel pain from finding no purpose in my life.

Totally disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Totally agree

Scoring & interpretation

Each item is rated on a scale from 0 to 5, from strong disagreement to strong agreement. Scoring is done by subscale, calculating for each domain the mean or, depending on the administration protocol chosen, the sum of the corresponding items. The questionnaire produces separate scores for 26 sources of meaning, a meaningfulness score and a crisis of meaning score. The subscales can then be grouped into higher-order dimensions, notably self-transcendence, self-actualization, order, and well-being and relatedness, with self-transcendence divisible into vertical and horizontal aspects. Using a single total score is not recommended, because meaningfulness and crisis of meaning are not the opposite ends of the same continuum. A high meaningfulness score generally indicates a life perceived as coherent, directed and significant. A high crisis of meaning score rather suggests an experience of emptiness, lack of direction and existential frustration. Interpretation relies mainly on analyzing the relative profile of the sources of meaning and on placing it in the clinical context.