The Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS, 2018) is a 33-item scale that measures the self-reported frequency of behaviors that measure self-care behavior. Note, there are an additional three general questions for a total of 36 items.

Self-care is defined as the daily process of being aware of and attending to one’s basic physiological and emotional needs including the shaping of one’s daily routine, relationships, and environment as needed to promote self-care. Mindful self-care addresses self-care and adds the component of mindful awareness.

Mindful self-care is seen as the foundational work required for physical and emotional well-being. Self-care is associated with positive physical health, emotional well-being, and mental health. Steady and intentional practice of mindful self-care is seen as protective by preventing the onset of mental health symptoms, job/school burnout, and improving work and school productivity.

This scale is intended to help individuals identify areas of strength and weakness in mindful self-care behavior as well as assess interventions that serve to improve self-care. The scale addresses 6 domains of self-care: mindful relaxation, physical care, self-compassion and purpose, supportive relationships, supportive structure, and mindful awareness. There are also three general items assessing the individual’s general or more global practices of self-care: engaging in a variety of self-care activities, planning self-care, and exploring new ways of bringing self-care into the individual’s life.

Contact information: Catherine Cook-Cottone, Ph.D. at cpcottone@buffalo.edu

Circle the number that reflects the frequency of your behavior (how much or how often) within past week (7 days):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never (0 days)</th>
<th>Rarely (1 day)</th>
<th>Sometimes (2 to 3 days)</th>
<th>Often (4 to 5 days)</th>
<th>Regularly (6 to 7 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reverse-Scored:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never (0 days)</th>
<th>Rarely (1 day)</th>
<th>Sometimes (2 to 3 days)</th>
<th>Often (4 to 5 days)</th>
<th>Regularly (6 to 7 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

The questions on the scale follow.
Mindful Self-Care Scale

**Mindful Relaxation** (6 items)

I did something intellectual (using my mind) to help me relax (e.g., read a book, wrote) 1 2 3 4 5

I did something interpersonal to relax (e.g., connected with friends) 1 2 3 4 5

I did something creative to relax (e.g., drew, played instrument, wrote creatively, sang, organized) 1 2 3 4 5

I listened to relax (e.g., to music, a podcast, radio show, rainforest sounds) 1 2 3 4 5

I sought out images to relax (e.g., art, film, window shopping, nature) 1 2 3 4 5

I sought out smells to relax (lotions, nature, candles/incense, smells of baking) 1 2 3 4 5

**Total** _________

*Average for Subscale = Total/# of items  _________

**Physical Care** (8 items)

I drank at least 6 to 8 cups of water 1 2 3 4 5

I ate a variety of nutritious foods (e.g., vegetables, protein, fruits, and grains) 1 2 3 4 5

I planned my meals and snacks 1 2 3 4 5

I exercised at least 30 to 60 minutes 1 2 3 4 5

I took part in sports, dance or other scheduled physical activities (e.g., sports teams, dance classes) 1 2 3 4 5

I did sedentary activities instead of exercising (e.g., watched tv, worked on the computer) *reverse scored* 5 4 3 2 1

I planned/scheduled my exercise for the day 1 2 3 4 5

I practiced yoga or another mind/body practice (e.g., Tae Kwon Do, Tai Chi) 1 2 3 4 5

**Total** _________

*Average for Subscale = Total/# of items  _________
# Mindful Self-Care Scale

## Self-Compassion and Purpose (6 items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I kindly acknowledged my own challenges and difficulties</td>
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<tr>
<td>I engaged in supportive and comforting self-talk (e.g., &quot;My effort is valuable and meaningful&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I reminded myself that failure and challenge are part of the human experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>I gave myself permission to feel my feelings (e.g., allowed myself to cry)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I experienced meaning and/or a larger purpose in my work/school life (e.g., for a cause)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced meaning and/or a larger purpose in my private/personal life (e.g., for a cause)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total ________

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items ________

## Supportive Relationships (5 items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I spent time with people who are good to me (e.g., support, encourage, and believe in me)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I scheduled/planned time to be with people who are special to me</td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt supported by people in my life</td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt confident that people in my life would respect my choice if I said “no”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt that I had someone who would listen to me if I became upset (e.g., friend, counselor, group)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total ________

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items ________

## Supportive Structure (4 items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I maintained a manageable schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I kept my work/schoolwork area organized to support my work/school tasks</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Mindful Self-Care Scale**

I maintained balance between the demands of others and what is important to me  
1 2 3 4 5

I maintained a comforting and pleasing living environment  
1 2 3 4 5

Total  

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items  

**Mindful Awareness (4 items)**

I had a calm awareness of my thoughts  
1 2 3 4 5

I had a calm awareness of my feelings  
1 2 3 4 5

I had a calm awareness of my body  
1 2 3 4 5

I carefully selected which of my thoughts and feelings I used to guide my actions  
1 2 3 4 5

Total  

Average for Subscale = Total/# of items  

**General (3 items – not to be averaged)**

I engaged in a variety of self-care activities  
1 2 3 4 5

I planned my self-care  
1 2 3 4 5

I explored new ways to bring self-care into my life  
1 2 3 4 5
Mindful Self-Care Scale

Total Score Summary
Be sure you have correctly scored your reversed-scored item

Averaged Score

Subscale

_____ Mindful Relaxation
_____ Physical Care
_____ Self-Compassion and Purpose
_____ Supportive Relationships
_____ Supportive Structure
_____ Mindful Awareness

General – 3 separate scores:

_____ Variety
_____ Planning
_____ Exploring

Shade in your average score for each subscale below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale | Mindful Relaxation | Physical Care | Self-Compassion & Purpose | Supportive Relationships | Supportive Structure | Mindful Awareness

For a long version of the scale and a detailed description of the source scale see: