Neuroception of Psychological Safety Scale (NPSS)
Manual and Scoring Guide

Morton, L., Cogan, N., Kolacz, J., Calderwood, C., Nikolič, M., Bacon, T., Pathe, E., Williams, D., Porges, S. (2021) ©

Development and psychometric properties described in:

Morton, L., Cogan, N., Kolacz, J., Calderwood, C., Nikolic, M., Bacon, T., Pathe, E., Williams, D., & Porges, S. W. (2022). A new measure of feeling safe: Developing psychometric properties of the Neuroception of Psychological Safety Scale (NPSS). *Psychological trauma: theory, research, practice, and policy.*

This measure is free to use for research and educational purposes.

Please keep us updated with your feedback on the scale to assist us with its development and guidance for use.

Document last updated: May 2023

Contents

1. Interpretation Guidelines

1. General

This scale provides a standardized measure of psychological safety informed by The Polyvagal Theory. Higher scores indicate stronger feelings of psychological safety.

2. The importance of context

It is important to note that feelings of safety are likely to differ depending on context (for example, being at work versus being at home).

The establishment of the discriminant, construct and convergent validity of the NPSS-G are under development. Please contact us for further information.

Please note that the general form can be modified depending on the context of the research question. If a specific context is needed, we recommend editing the instructions of the text with the following addition:

> Please rate how well the following statements describe your feelings during (specify a particular situation, timeframe, or experience). For example: 'Your experiences at work over the past week', 'Your recent hospital stay', 'Your experiences in your classroom' or 'Your time spent on social media over the past week'. All such modifications should be explicitly described in publications, presentations, and other dissemination of research.

2.   Scoring

1. Response Conversion to Numbers

For each item, assign values to the responses according to the numbering below:

Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

2. Score Calculation

Total score and subscale values can then be calculated by sum or mean of the items. Subscale groupings are on page 6.

3. Missing Values

Participants should be allowed to skip items that they cannot accurately report. It is preferable to have missing values for scoring than unreliable responses.

Calculation of mean scores will be more robust to missing item values than sum scores, which affect the range of possible values. When missing values are present in the data, imputation may be used if needed. Scores for participants with high levels of missing item data should be interpreted with caution.

4. Subscale Overview

Domain	Subscale	Description	Item Count
Social	Social Engagement Subscale	Higher scores on this subscale reflect the evaluation of the environment as non-threatening and safe for social engagement. These scores reflect feelings of being accepted, understood, cared for, being able to express oneself without being judged, and having someone to trust.	14
Compassion	Compassion Subscale	Higher scores on this subscale reflect the ability to be compassionate and feeling connected, empathetic, caring and wanting to help others.	7
Bodily	Bodily Sensations Subscale	Higher scores reflect internal sensations of the body in a state of calm capturing the feeling of relaxation in the face and the body, steady heartbeat and breath, and settled stomach.	8

5. Item Subscale Scoring: Overview

Subscale	Item	Item Number
Social Engagement No. items: 14 Max Sub Score = 70	I felt valued	1
	I felt comfortable expressing myself	2
	I felt accepted by others	3
	I felt understood	4
	I felt like others got me	5
	I felt respected	6
	There was someone who made me feel safe	7
	There was someone that I could trust	8
	I felt comforted by others	9
	I felt heard by others	10
	I felt like people would try their best to help me	11
	I felt cared for	12
	I felt wanted	13
	I didn't feel judged by others	14
Compassion No. items = 7 Max Sub-Score = 35	I felt able to empathize with other people	15
	I felt able to comfort another person if needed	16
	I felt compassion for others	17
	I wanted to help others relax	18
	I felt like I could comfort a loved one	19
	I felt so connected to others I wanted to help them	20
	I felt caring	21
Body Sensations No. items = 8 Max Sub-Score = 40	My heart rate felt steady	22
	Breathing felt effortless	23
	My voice felt normal	24
	My body felt relaxed	25
	My stomach felt settled	26
	My breathing was steady	27
	I felt able to stay still	28
	My face felt relaxed	29