# Supplemental Materials for GSA Webinar: “Approaches to Measuring Wisdom”

Prepared by Nic M. Weststrate and Judith Glück
Department of Developmental Psychology
University of Klagenfurt, Austria

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1. Recommended Reading

1.1. Articles and Books Providing an Overview of the Psychological Study of Wisdom


1.2. Articles and Chapters Specifically Concerning the Measurement of Wisdom


1.3. Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale


1.4. Self-Assessed Wisdom Scale


1.5. Adult Self-Transcendence Inventory


1.6. Berlin Wisdom Paradigm


1.7. Bremen Wisdom Paradigm


1.8. Wise Reasoning Paradigm and Situated Wise Reasoning Scale


2. Scholarly Article Exchanges

In this section we present two scholarly article exchanges between wisdom researchers, who discuss issues related to the definition and measurement of wisdom. The articles are presented in the order that they should be read, each with a target article followed by peer commentaries and a concluding response from the original author.

2.1. Appearing in *Human Development*


### 2.2. Appearing in *Experimental Aging Research*


### 3. Questionnaires and Manuals

As a courtesy, for all questionnaires, please send published research reports to the scale authors for their records. German versions of these scales are available upon request from Judith Glück (judith.glueck@aau.at).

#### 3.1. Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale

**Participant Instructions**

How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Ignorance is bliss.
2. It is better not to know too much about things that cannot be changed.
3. In this complicated world of ours, the only way we can know what’s going on is to rely on leaders or experts who can be trusted.
4. There is only one right way to do anything.
5. A person either knows the answer to a question or he/she doesn’t.
6. You can classify almost all people as either honest or crooked.
7. People are either good or bad.
8. Life is basically the same most of the time.
9. Things often go wrong for me by no fault of my own.
10. I would feel much better if my present circumstances changed.
11. I am annoyed by unhappy people who just feel sorry for themselves.
12. People make too much of the feelings and sensitivity of animals.
13. There are some people I know I would never like.
14. I can be comfortable with all kinds of people. (R)
15. It’s not really my problem if others are in trouble and need help.

How much are the following statements true of yourself?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Definitely true of myself</td>
<td>Mostly true</td>
<td>About half way true</td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
<td>Not true of myself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. A problem has little attraction for me if I don’t think it has a solution.
17. I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a likely chance I will have to think in depth about something.
18. Simply knowing the answer rather than understanding the reasons for the answer to a problem is fine with me.
19. I am hesitant about making important decisions after thinking about them.
20. I often do not understand people’s behavior.
21. I try to look at everybody’s side of a disagreement before I make a decision. (R)
22. When I’m upset at someone, I usually try to “put myself in his or her shoes” for a while. (R)
23. I always try to look at all sides of a problem. (R)
24. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place. (R)
25. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from another person’s point of view.
26. When I am confused by a problem, one of the first things I do is survey the situation and consider all the relevant pieces of information. (R)
27. Sometimes I get so charged up emotionally that I am unable to consider many ways of dealing with my problems.
28. When I look back on what has happened to me, I can’t help feeling resentful.
29. When I look back on what’s happened to me, I feel cheated.
30. I either get very angry or depressed if things go wrong.
31. Sometimes I don’t feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.
32. Sometimes I feel a real compassion for everyone. (R)
33. I often have not comforted another when he or she needed it.
34. I don’t like to get involved in listening to another person’s troubles.
35. There are certain people whom I dislike so much that I am inwardly pleased when they are caught and punished for something they have done.
36. Sometimes when people are talking to me, I find myself wishing that they would leave.
37. I’m easily irritated by people who argue with me.
38. If I see people in need, I try to help them one way or another. (R)

**Scoring Instructions**

Scores are first computed for each subscale by reversing the items labelled “R” and then computing the average of all items on the respective subscale. The subscales can then be averaged to form an overall wisdom score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>9, 10, 22 (R), 23 (R), 24 (R), 25 (R), 26, 27 (R), 28, 29, 30, 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective (compassionate)</td>
<td>11, 12, 13, 14 (R), 15, 32, 33 (R), 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 (R)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions can be directed to Monika Ardelt at [ardelt@ufl.edu](mailto:ardelt@ufl.edu).
3.2. Self-Assessed Wisdom Scale

Participant Instructions

This brief questionnaire is designed to investigate how people of different ages perceive themselves with respect to life experiences and whether or not these perceptions change as we grow older. You are asked to rate all of the following statements using the scale below. Remember, there are no “right” or “wrong” answers and your responses will remain anonymous. Do not rush, but work steadily as we are interested in your first impressions. Please record your responses by circling only one number on the rating scale to the left of each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Moderately disagree</td>
<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>Moderately agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I have overcome many painful events in my life.
2. It is easy for me to adjust my emotions to the situation at hand.
3. I often think about connections between my past and present.
4. I can chuckle at personal embarrassments.
5. I like to read books which challenge me to think differently about issues.
6. I have had to make many important life decisions.
7. Emotions do not overwhelm me when I make personal decisions.
8. I often think about my personal past.
9. There can be amusing elements even in very difficult life situations.
10. I enjoy listening to a variety of musical styles besides my favourite kind.
11. I have dealt with a great many different kinds of people during my lifetime.
12. I am “tuned in” to my own emotions.
13. I reminisce quite frequently.
14. I try and find a humorous side when coping with a major life transition.
15. I enjoy sampling a wide variety of different ethnic foods.
16. I have experienced many moral dilemmas.
17. I am very good at reading my emotional states.
18. Reviewing my past helps me gain perspective on current concerns.
19. I am easily aroused to laughter.
20. I often look for new things to try.
21. I have seen much of the negative side of life (e.g., dishonesty, hypocrisy).
22. I can freely express my emotions without feeling like I might lose control.
23. I often recall earlier times in my life to see how I’ve changed since then.
24. At this point in my life, I find it easy to laugh at my mistakes.
25. Controversial works of art play an important and valuable role in society.
26. I have lived through many difficult life transitions.
27. I am good at identifying subtle emotions within myself.
28. Recalling my earlier days helps me gain insight into important life matters.
29. I often use humour to put others at ease.
30. I like being around persons whose views are strongly different from mine.
31. I’ve personally discovered that “you can’t always tell a book from its cover.”
32. I can regulate my emotions when the situation calls for it.
33. I often find memories of my past can be important coping resources.
34. Now I find that I can really appreciate life’s little ironies.
35. I’m very curious about other religious and/or philosophical belief systems.
36. I’ve learned valuable life lessons from others.
37. It seems I have a talent for reading other people’s emotions.
38. Reliving past accomplishments in memory increases my confidence for today.
39. I can make fun of myself to comfort others.
40. I’ve often wondered about life and what lies beyond.

**Scoring Instructions**

Scoring involves summing all items, using raw scores, to obtain a total SAWS score. The five factors and their corresponding SAWS items are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Regulation</td>
<td>2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminiscence/Reflection</td>
<td>3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33, 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour</td>
<td>4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions can be directed to Jeffrey Dean Webster at jwebster@langara.ca.

**3.3. Adult Self-Transcendence Inventory**

**Participant Instructions**

Please read the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree with each one, using the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree strongly</td>
<td>Disagree somewhat</td>
<td>Agree somewhat</td>
<td>Agree strongly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I often engage in quiet contemplation.
2. I feel that my individual life is a part of a greater whole.
3. I don’t worry about other people’s opinions of me.
4. I feel that my life has little meaning.
5. I can’t stop worrying about the future. (R)
6. I feel a sense of belonging with both earlier and future generations.
7. My peace of mind is not easily upset.
8. I feel isolated and lonely.
9. My sense of well-being does not depend on a busy social life.
10. I feel part of something greater than myself.
11. My happiness is not dependent on other people and things.
12. I do not become angry easily.
13. I have a good sense of humor about myself.
14. I have little patience with other people.
15. I find much joy in life.
16. Material possessions don’t mean much to me.
17. I am not optimistic about the future of humanity.
18. I feel compassionate even toward people who have been unkind to me.
19. I am not often fearful.
20. I can learn a lot from others.
21. Life is mainly filled with disappointment.
22. I often have a sense of oneness with nature.
23. I feel cut off from other generations.
24. I am able to accept my mortality.
25. I often “lose myself” in what I am doing.
26. I feel that I know myself.
27. I am accepting of myself, including my faults.
28. Different parts of me are often at cross purposes. (R)
29. I feel scattered and distracted much of the time. (R)
30. I am able to integrate the different aspects of my life.
31. I feel overwhelmed by the demands of life. (R)
32. I can accept the impermanence of things.
33. I have grown as a result of losses I have suffered.
34. Whatever I do to others, I do to myself.

Scoring Instructions

First reverse the items labelled “R” and then compute the average of all items for each subscale. In practice, we only use the self-transcendence subscale as a measure of wisdom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 5 (R), 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 (R), 29 (R), 30, 31 (R), 32, 33, 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>4, 8, 14, 17, 21, 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions can be directed to Michael R. Levenson at Rick.Levenson@oregonstate.edu.

3.4. Brief Wisdom Screening Scale

Participant Instructions

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement below using the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
<td>Disagree somewhat</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Agree somewhat</td>
<td>Agree completely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I am able to integrate the different aspects of my life.
2. It seems I have a talent for reading other people’s emotions.
3. I have a good sense of humor about myself.
4. I can freely express my emotions without feeling like I might lose control.
5. I can accept the impermanence of things.
6. Sometimes I get so charged up emotionally that I am unable to consider all ways of dealing with my problems. (R)
7. I have grown as a result of losses I have suffered.
8. I’m very curious about other religious and/or philosophical belief systems.
9. At this point in my life, I find it easy to laugh at my mistakes.
10. My peace of mind is not easily upset.
11. My happiness is not dependent on other people and things.
12. I’ve learned valuable life lessons from others.
13. I don’t worry about other people’s opinions of me.
14. I either get very angry or depressed if things go wrong. (R)
15. I like to read books which challenge me to think differently about issues.
16. I feel that my individual life is a part of a greater whole.
17. I always try to look at all sides of a problem.
18. I often have a sense of oneness with nature.
19. I am “tuned in” to my own emotions.
20. There are some people I know I would never like. (R)
21. I have dealt with a great many different kinds of people during my lifetime.

**Scoring Instructions**

First reverse the items labelled “R” and then compute the average of all items.

Questions can be directed to Judith Glück at judith.glueck@aau.at.

### 3.5. Performance Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm</th>
<th>Available From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Manual for the Assessment of Wisdom-Related Knowledge (Berlin Wisdom Paradigm)</td>
<td>The Max Planck Institute for Human Development <a href="http://hdl.handle.net/11858/00-001M-0000-0025-A428-5">http://hdl.handle.net/11858/00-001M-0000-0025-A428-5</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manual for the Assessment of Self-Related Wisdom (Bremen Wisdom Paradigm)</td>
<td>Ursula Staudinger <a href="mailto:umstaudinger@columbia.edu">umstaudinger@columbia.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manuals for Scoring Wise Reasoning</td>
<td>Igor Grossmann <a href="mailto:igrossma@uwaterloo.ca">igrossma@uwaterloo.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Subjective Wise Reasoning Scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Webinar Reference List


5. **Contact Information**

**Judith Glück**
University Professor
Department of Developmental Psychology
University of Klagenfurt, Austria
e: judith.glueck@aau.at

**Nic M. Weststrate**
Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Department of Developmental Psychology
University of Klagenfurt, Austria
e: nicholas.weststrate@aau.at