

The Diversity of Love Journal

The Need to Belong is the Need for Love

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People have a vital human need: the need for love. They want to be loved and nurtured. It is. It involves both receiving and giving love. The need to belong is also the need for love. It implies establishing and maintaining positive and long-lasting relationships with other people.

Psychologists often consider the need to belong as the need for love—a basic human need. However, people vary in their psychological needs and have individual differences in their need to belong.

Roy Baumeister, Mark Leary, and their colleagues have extensively studied the need to belong (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Allen, Gray, Baumeister, & Leary, 2022). They developed the *Need to Belong scale* to measure the extent to which individuals experience this need, from high to low (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell, & Schreindorfer, 2006).

You may take the *Need to Belong Scale* below to learn how high or low your need to belong is.

Need to Belong Scale

Instructions: For each of the statements below, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement by writing a number in

space beside the question using the scale below:

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Moderately disagree

3 = Neither agree nor disagree

4 = Moderately agree

5 = Strongly agree

_____ 1. If other people don't seem to accept me, I don't let it bother me. (R)

_____ 2. I try hard not to do things that will make other people avoid or reject me.

_____ 3. I seldom worry about whether other people care about me. (R)

_____ 4. I need to feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need.

_____ 5. I want other people to accept me.

_____ 6. I do not like being alone.

_____ 7. Being apart from my friends for long periods of time does not bother me. (R)

_____ 8. I have a strong need to belong.

_____ 9. It bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans.

_____ 10. My feelings are easily hurt when I feel that others do not accept me.

Scoring:

Reverse your number for items with index (R) according to the following schema:

1 = 5, 5 = 1, 2 = 4, 4 = 2, 3 = 3.

Then compute the mean score averaging your numbers in front of all 10 ratings (items with R – after their reversal).

Interpretation:

The scores in the following ranges can be responsible as follows:

1 – 2: very low need to belong

2 – 3: moderately low need to belong

3 – 4: moderately high need to belong

4 – 5: very high need to belong

Personality traits and cultures can determine our needs to belong and our affiliations.

References

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