

OTHER-DIRECTEDNESS SCHEMAS



Self assessment:

Take a moment to reflect on where you might have a pattern to put others first. Below is a self-rating exercise that explores your experience of Self-sacrifice, Approval Seeking, and Subjugation Schemas.

This self-rating checklist might indicate to you what you already know or give you insight and new language to your experiences. If you would like support to build strategies and overcome these challenges, please reach out to us - www.centreself.com.au.

There is NO scoring for this assessment. It is purely a self-rating exercise for self-awareness and self-reflection.

Self Sacrifice schema: refers to a pattern of behaviour where individuals habitually prioritise the needs, desires, and well-being of others over their own, often at the expense of their own happiness, health, or fulfilment. Those with a self-sacrifice schema tend to neglect their own needs and suppress their own desires in order to please others or maintain harmony in relationships. They may feel a sense of duty or obligation to care for others, even to the detriment of their own well-being, and may struggle with asserting their own boundaries or advocating for their own needs.

Please rate your experience on a scale of 1 to 5,

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
1. Do you often prioritise the needs and desires of others over your own, even at your own expense?					
2. Do you have difficulty saying "no" to requests or favors, even when you're already overwhelmed or stretched thin?					
3. Do you feel guilty or selfish when you consider prioritizing your own needs and desires over those of others?					
4. In relationships, do you tend to go above and beyond to please others, often neglecting your own needs in the process?					
5. Do you experience feelings of resentment or bitterness when others don't reciprocate your sacrifices or appreciate your efforts?					
6. Do you stay in unhealthy or unfulfilling relationships because you feel it's your duty to take care of other people?					
7. Do you feel responsible for solving other people's problems or making them happy, even when it's not your obligation?					

CULTIVATING INNER BALANCE

SELF SACRIFICE SCHEMA CONTINUED

Please rate your experience on a scale of 1 to 5,

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
8. Do you tend to downplay or ignore your own feelings and emotions in favour of attending to the needs of others?					
9. Do you derive your sense of worth and validation primarily from how much you can do for others or how much they rely on you?					
10. Do you feel lost or disconnected from yourself because your identity is closely tied to being a caretaker or helper for others?					
11. Do you feel a sense of duty or obligation to fulfill certain roles or expectations, even if they conflict with your personal desires?					
12. Do you believe that sacrificing your own happiness and fulfillment is a necessary sacrifice for the happiness of those you care about?					
13. Do you believe that sacrificing your own happiness and well-being is necessary for being a good or moral person?					
14. Do you feel drained or depleted because you give so much of yourself to others without receiving much in return?					



CULTIVATING INNER BALANCE

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Approval seeking schema: involves a persistent need for external validation, praise, or approval from others in order to feel worthy, accepted, or good about oneself. Individuals with an approval-seeking schema often base their self-worth and identity on how they are perceived by others, seeking constant reassurance or validation to feel secure in themselves. They may go to great lengths to please others, avoid conflict, or conform to social expectations in order to gain approval, and may experience anxiety, insecurity, or low self-esteem when they perceive disapproval or rejection from others.

Please rate your experience on a scale of 1 to 5,

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
1. Do you often go out of your way to please others in social situations, even if it means compromising your own values or preferences?					
2. Do you feel anxious or uncomfortable if you think someone might disapprove of you or your actions?					
3. Do you find yourself constantly seeking reassurance or validation from others about your decisions or accomplishments?					
4. Do you feel a sense of emptiness or inadequacy when you don't receive praise or recognition from others?					
5. Are you overly sensitive to criticism or rejection, interpreting it as a reflection of your worth as a person?					
6. Do you engage in people-pleasing behaviours in the hope of receiving validation or approval from others?					
7. Do you avoid pursuing your own interests or goals if you believe they won't meet with the approval of others?					



CULTIVATING INNER BALANCE

APPROVAL SEEKING SCHEMA CONTINUED

Please rate your experience on a scale of 1 to 5,

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER 1
8. Do you have difficulty making decisions independently, relying instead on the opinions or advice of others to guide your choices?					
9. Do you experience anxiety or distress when you perceive that someone is upset with you or disappointed in you?					
10. Do you feel a sense of relief or validation when others praise or admire you, even if it's for something that doesn't align with your true self?					
11. Do you feel like you need to constantly prove yourself to others in order to earn their approval or acceptance?					
12. Do you avoid pursuing certain activities or opportunities because you're afraid of failing or not meeting others' expectations?					
13. Do you agree with others or change your behaviour to fit in or avoid conflict, even when it goes against what you truly believe?					
14. Do you base your sense of self-worth primarily on how others perceive you or on their approval of you?					



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Subjugation schema: a tendency to prioritise the needs, wishes, and demands of others over one's own, often out of fear of conflict, rejection, or disapproval. Individuals with a subjugation schema may feel compelled to comply with the desires or expectations of others, even when it goes against their own best interests or values. They may struggle to assert themselves, set boundaries, or advocate for their own needs, feeling powerless or helpless to resist the demands of others. This pattern of behaviour can lead to feelings of resentment, frustration, or loss of self-identity, as individuals sacrifice their own autonomy and well-being to maintain relationships or avoid confrontation.

Please rate your experience on a scale of 1 to 5,

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
1. Do you feel trapped or powerless in situations because you're unable to stand up for yourself or assert your boundaries?					
2. Do you feel obligated to comply with the demands or expectations of others, even when they go against your own best interests?					
3. Do you stay in relationships or friendships that feel one-sided or oppressive because you feared the consequences of leaving?					
4. Do you feel guilty or ashamed when you consider asserting yourself or advocating for your own needs in relationships?					
5. Do you suppress your own emotions or desires in order to avoid upsetting or angering someone else?					
6. Do you have difficulty expressing anger or frustration when you feel mistreated or taken advantage of by others?					
7. Have you ever felt like you were betraying someone or being disloyal by prioritising your own well-being over their desires?					



CULTIVATING INNER BALANCE

SUBJUGATION SCHEMA CONTINUED

Please rate your experience on a scale of 1 to 5,

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
8. Do you experience feelings of powerlessness or helplessness in situations where you feel unable to assert yourself or protect your own interests?					
9. Have you ever felt like your own needs or desires were less important or less valid than those of others, leading you to suppress or ignore them?					
10. Have you ever felt trapped in a career or lifestyle that didn't align with your true desires or passions because you were afraid to disappoint others?					
11. Do you struggle to make decisions that are in your own best interests because you fear the consequences of displeasing or upsetting someone else?					
12. Are you afraid that if you let your feelings out that you will lose control?					
13. Do you feel that people treat you like a doormat, and you let other people make the decisions for you?					
14. Do you tell people if they have hurt your feelings or let you down?					

