

Self Assessment

The Locus of Control Scale

Psychologically hardy people tend to have an internal locus of control. They believe that they are in control of their own lives. In contrast, people with an external locus of control tend to see their fate as being out of their hands.

Are you “internal” or “external”? To learn more about your perception of your locus of control, respond to this questionnaire, which was developed by Nowicki and Strickland (1973). Click the blank to place a check mark in either the Yes or the No column for each question. When you are finished, click the Answer Key button to see your score and interpretation.

	YES	NO			
1. Do you believe that most problems will solve themselves if you just don't fool with them?	_____	_____	9. Do you feel that most of the time parents listen to what their children have to say?	_____	_____
2. Do you believe that you can stop yourself from catching a cold?	_____	_____	10. Do you believe that wishing can make good things happen?	_____	_____
3. Are some people just born lucky?	_____	_____	11. When you get punished, does it usually seem it's for no good reason at all?	_____	_____
4. Most of the time, do you feel that getting good grades meant a great deal to you?	_____	_____	12. Most of the time, do you find it hard to change a friend's opinion?	_____	_____
5. Are you often blamed for things that just aren't your fault?	_____	_____	13. Do you think cheering more than luck helps a team win?	_____	_____
6. Do you believe that if somebody studies hard enough he or she can pass any subject?	_____	_____	14. Did you feel that it was nearly impossible to change your parents' minds about anything?	_____	_____
7. Do you feel that most of the time it doesn't pay to try hard because things never turn out right anyway?	_____	_____	15. Do you believe that parents should allow children to make most of their own decisions?	_____	_____
8. Do you feel that if things start out well in the morning, it's going to be a good day no matter what you do?	_____	_____	16. Do you feel that when you do something wrong there's very little you can do to make it right?	_____	_____
			17. Do you believe that most people are just born good at sports?	_____	_____
			18. Are most other people your age stronger than you are?	_____	_____
			19. Do you feel that one of the best ways to handle most problems is just not to think about them?	_____	_____
			20. Do you feel that you have a lot of choice in deciding who your friends are?	_____	_____

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| 21. If you find a four-leaf clover, do you believe that it might bring you good luck? | _____ | _____ | 32. Do you feel that when good things happen, they happen because of hard work? | _____ | _____ |
| 22. Did you often feel that whether or not you did your homework had much to do with what kind of grades you got? | _____ | _____ | 33. Do you feel that when somebody your age wants to be your enemy there's little you can do to change matters? | _____ | _____ |
| 23. Do you feel that when a person your age is angry with you, there's little you can do to stop him or her? | _____ | _____ | 34. Do you feel that it's easy to get friends to do what you want them to do? | _____ | _____ |
| 24. Have you ever had a good luck charm? | _____ | _____ | 35. Do you usually feel that you have little to say about what you get to eat at home? | _____ | _____ |
| 25. Do you believe that whether or not people like you depends on how you act? | _____ | _____ | 36. Do you feel that when someone doesn't like you, there's little you can do about it? | _____ | _____ |
| 26. Did your parents usually help you if you asked them to? | _____ | _____ | 37. Did you usually feel it was almost useless to try in school, because most other children were just plain smarter than you were? | _____ | _____ |
| 27. Have you ever felt that when people were angry with you, it was usually for no reason at all? | _____ | _____ | 38. Are you the kind of person who believes that planning ahead makes things turn out better? | _____ | _____ |
| 28. Most of the time, do you feel that you can change what might happen tomorrow by what you did today? | _____ | _____ | 39. Most of the time, do you feel that you have little to say about what your family decides to do? | _____ | _____ |
| 29. Do you believe that when bad things are going to happen they are just going to happen no matter what you try to do to stop them? | _____ | _____ | 40. Do you think it's better to be smart than to be lucky? | _____ | _____ |
| 30. Do you think that people can get their own way if they just keep trying? | _____ | _____ | | | |
| 31. Most of the time do you find it useless to try to get your own way at home? | _____ | _____ | | | |

ANSWER KEY FOR THE “LOCUS OF CONTROL SCALE”

TOTAL SCORE ____

Interpreting Your Score

Low Scorers (0–8). About 1 respondent in 3 earns a score of from 0 to 8. Such respondents tend to have an internal locus of control. They see themselves as responsible for the reinforcements they attain (and fail to attain) in life.

Average Scorers (9–16). Most respondents earn from 9 to 16 points. Average scorers may see themselves as partially in control of their lives. Perhaps they see themselves as in control at work, but not in their social lives—or vice versa.

High Scorers (17–40). About 15% of respondents attain scores of 17 or above. High scorers tend largely to see life as a game of chance and success as a matter of luck or the generosity of others.