



## THE SUBMISSIVE BEHAVIOUR SCALE

Below are a series of statements which describe how people act and feel about social situations. Circle the number to the right of the statements which best describes the degree to which a statement is **true** for you.

**Please use the following scale:**

**0 = NEVER 1 = RARELY 2 = SOMETIMES 3 = MOSTLY 4 = ALWAYS**

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I agree that I am wrong even though I know I'm not   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I do things because other people are doing them, rather than because I want to             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I would walk out of a shop without questioning, knowing that I had been short changed      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I let others criticise me or put me down without defending myself                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. I do what is expected of me even when I don't want to                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. If I try to speak and others continue, I shut up   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. I continue to apologise for minor mistakes   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. I listen quietly if people in authority say unpleasant things about me                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. I am not able to tell my friends when I am angry with them                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. At meetings and gatherings, I let others monopolise the conversation                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. I don't like people to look straight at me when they are talking                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. I say 'thank you' enthusiastically and repeatedly when someone does a small favour for me | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. I avoid direct eye contact  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. I avoid starting conversations at social gatherings                                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. I blush when people stare at me   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. I pretend I am ill when declining an invitation   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |



## SCORING

Simply add up all items.

## DESCRIPTION

### *Submissive Behaviour Scale*

Derived from the work of Buss and Craik (1986), the Submissive Behaviour Scale was developed by Gilbert and Allan (1994) and refined by Allan and Gilbert (1997). It consists of 16 examples of submissive behaviour (e.g. "I agree that I am wrong even though I know I'm not") which people rate as a behavioural frequency (from 0 = Never to 4 = Always). The scale has good reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .89, and four-month test-retest reliability of  $r = .84$ ,  $p < .001$  with a student population (Gilbert et al., 1996).

## REFERENCES

Allan, S. & Gilbert, P. (1997). Submissive behaviour and psychopathology. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 36, 467-488.