

# Subjective Vitality Scales

## Scale Description

The concept of subjective vitality refers to the state of feeling alive and alert--to having energy available to the self. Vitality is considered an aspect of eudaimonic well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001), as being vital and energetic is part of what it means to be fully functioning and psychologically well.

Ryan and Frederick (1997) developed a scale of subjective vitality that has two versions. One version is considered an individual difference. In other words, it is an ongoing characteristics of individuals which has been found to relate positively to self-actualization and self-esteem and to relate negatively to depression and anxiety. The other version of the scale assesses the state of subjective vitality rather than its enduring aspect. At the state level, vitality has been found to relate negatively to physical pain and positively to the amount of autonomy support in a particular situation (e.g., Nix, Ryan, Manly, & Deci, 1999). In short, because the concept of psychological well-being is addressed at both the individual difference level and the state level, the two levels of assessing subjective vitality tie into the two level of well being.

The original scale had 7 items and was validated at both levels by Ryan and Frederick (1997). Subsequent work by Bostic, Rubio, and Hood (2000) using confirmatory factor analyses indicated that a 6-item version worked even better than the 7-item version.

## References

Ryan, R. M., & Frederick, C. M. (1997). On energy, personality and health: Subjective vitality as a dynamic reflection of well-being. *Journal of Personality, 65*, 529-565.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). To be happy or to be self-fulfilled: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. In S. Fiske (Ed.), *Annual Review of Psychology* (Vol. 52; pp. 141-166). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews, Inc.

Nix, G. A., Ryan, R. M., Manly, J. B., & Deci, E. L. (1999). Revitalization through self-regulation: The effects of autonomous and controlled motivation on happiness and vitality. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 35*, 266-284.

Bostic, T. J., Rubio, D. M., & Hood, M. (2000). A validation of the subjective vitality scale using structural equation modeling. *Social Indicators Research, 52*, 313-324.

# The Scales

**Note:** Below is the original scale developed by Ryan and Frederick (1997). Subsequent research by Bostic, Rubio, and Hood (2000) indicates that eliminating items # 2 improves the scale's effectiveness. First, the individual difference version is presented, and then the state version. Scoring information follows the scales.

Ryan, R. M., & Frederick, C. M. (1997). On energy, personality and health: Subjective vitality as a dynamic reflection of well-being. *Journal of Personality*, 65, 529-565.

Bostic, T. J., Rubio, D. M., & Hood, M. (2000). A validation of the subjective vitality scale using structural equation modeling. *Social Indicators Research*, 52, 313-324.

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## Individual Difference Level Version

### Vitality Scale

Please respond to each of the following statements by indicating the degree to which the statement is true for you in general in your life. Use the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all			somewhat			very
true			true			true

1. I feel alive and vital.
2. I don't feel very energetic.
3. Sometimes I feel so alive I just want to burst.
4. I have energy and spirit.
5. I look forward to each new day.
6. I nearly always feel alert and awake.
7. I feel energized.

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## State Level Version

### Validity Scale

Please respond to each of the following statements in terms of how you are feeling **right now**. Indicate how true each statement is for you at this time, using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all			somewhat			very
true			true			true

1. At this moment, I feel alive and vital.
2. I don't feel very energetic right now.
3. Currently I feel so alive I just want to burst.
4. At this time, I have energy and spirit.
5. I am looking forward to each new day.
6. At this moment, I feel alert and awake.
7. I feel energized right now.

**Scoring Information for the Subjective Vitality Scale.** A scale score is formed for either version of the scale by averaging the individual's items scores. As noted above, it is recommended that you use six items, omitting item #2, in which case a person's score would be the average of the six items. If you do use item #2, that item has to be reverse scored before it is averaged with the other items. Thus, you would subtract the person's score on item #2 from 8 before averaging the resulting number with the person's responses on the other six items.