Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL)

Primary Reference:

Cohen, S., Memelstein, R., Kamarck, T., & Hoberman, H. (1985). Measuring the functional components of social support. In I.G. Sarason & B. Sarason (Eds.), Social support: Theory, research and application (pp.73-94). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Type of Measure: Modified. Original scale consists of 40 items (ten items in each of the four sub-cales measuring separate aspects of social support). The modified version includes only three sub-scales (the self-esteem sub-scale was excluded because it overlaps with the self-esteem measure) and only four highest-loading items for each sub-scale.

Purpose: To assess perceived availability of four types of social support (appraisal, belonging, self-esteem, and tangible). Availability of social support has been linked to reduced mortality (Rosenberg, Orth-Gomer, Wedel, & Wilhemsen, 1993) and improved psychological state (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

Description: Respondents indicate the extent to which sentences describing availability of different types of social support in their lives are true or false. No time frame or referent period is used.

Scaling: 0 = Definitely False; 1 = Probably False; 2 = Probably True; 3 = Definitely True

items: 12

Sample items: "If I were sick, I could easily find someone to help me with me daily chores." (tangible) "I don't often get invited to do things with others." (reversed; belonging) "When I need suggestions on how to deal with a personal problem, I know someone I can turn to." (appraisal)

Psychometrics:

Reliability: undergraduate students, alpha = .77 - .86 general population, alpha = .88 - .90

Validity: Correlates positively with other support scales (Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors), with number of close friends, and with the measure of the quality of marital relationships (Partner Adjustment Scale). The sub-scales are also associated in the predicted direction with related trait measures: self-esteem subscales correlates with self-esteem measure whereas appraisal subscale correlates with self-disclosure measure.

Scoring:

Reversed Items: 1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 12
Appraisal Subscale: Sum items: 2R, 4, 6, 11R
Belonging Subscale: Sum items: 1R, 5, 7R, 9
Tangible Subscale: Sum items: 3, 8R, 10, 12R
Overall Support: Sum of 3 Subscales