

## Existential Ability Descriptors

By Branton Shearer 1.4.24

*“To be concerned with ‘ultimate’ issues, questions, mysteries and meanings of life, to engage in transcendental concerns...the capacity...to explore the nature of existence in its multifarious guises”*

Howard Gardner

### **If you scored Very Strong on the Existential thinking scale.....**

you are probably someone who often engages in thinking about the meaning of life often and you have skill in understanding the philosophical dimensions of everyday life. It is easy for you to consider and reflect on different philosophical, religious or moral perspectives. You thoroughly think things through in order to understand more than what is obvious or practical. You realize that there is more to “truth” than mere opinion. You are able to have insight into the deep meaning of events and issues beyond what is immediately obvious. As a skilled existential thinker you can explain the nuances in different philosophical views. You can understand the subtle differences in philosophical, religious or moral perspectives that impact decision-making and behaviors. You very much enjoy the challenge of critiquing differing theories about life and discussing different viewpoints and assumptions. You are very concerned about the meaning and importance of your life and take nothing for granted. The consideration of religious ideals or philosophical principles is an essential part of your daily life.

### **If you scored Strong on the Existential thinking scale.....**

you are probably someone who engages in thinking about the meaning of life fairly often and you are able to understand the philosophical dimensions of everyday life. You are able to consider and reflect on different philosophical, religious or moral perspectives. You think things through in order to understand more than what is obvious or practical. You realize that there is more to “truth” than mere opinion. You are able to have insight into the meaning of events and issues beyond what is immediately obvious. As an existential thinker you can explain the differences in philosophical views. You can understand some of the differences in philosophical, religious or moral perspectives that impact decision-making and behaviors. You may enjoy the challenge of critiquing different theories about life and discussing viewpoints and assumptions different from your own. You are concerned about the meaning and importance of your life and take nothing for granted. The consideration of religious ideals or philosophical principles is an important part of your daily life.

### **If you scored Moderate on the Existential thinking scale.....**

you are probably someone who sometimes thinks about the meaning of life and you understand the philosophical dimensions of everyday life. You occasionally consider different philosophical, religious or moral viewpoints. You think things through in order to understand more than what is obvious or practical. You realize that there is more to “truth” than mere opinion. You understand that events and issues in daily life have meaning beyond what is immediately apparent. You understand that different philosophical, religious or moral views can impact decision-making and behavior. You may on occasion think about the meaning of your life, but are generally satisfied with taking care of daily business. You sometimes consider religious or philosophical ideals, but are not overly concerned with them.

### **If you scored Somewhat on the Existential thinking scale...**

you are probably someone who only occasionally thinks about the meaning of life and its philosophical or religious aspects. It is easy for you to make up your mind about what is true and most important in your life. You are generally satisfied with your own point of view or opinions and feel little need to question or probe deeper. You have some interest in comparing your perspectives with the views of others. You are

more concerned with the immediate day-to-day matters of your own life. You find philosophical discussions to be somewhat interesting, perhaps confusing and only sometimes worth your time. You are more interested in solving practical problems or discussing family matters or your social life.

**If you scored a Little on the Existential thinking scale...**

you are probably someone who very rarely thinks about the meaning of life and has very little interest in philosophical or religious ideas. You are more concerned with the immediate day-to-day matters of your own life. You find philosophical discussions to be of very little interest, confusing or a not worth your time. You are more interested in solving practical problems or discussing family matters or your social life. You easily make up your own mind about what is true or important to you. You are nearly always satisfied with your opinions and decisions and feel no need to question or probe deeper. You have only a little interest in comparing your perspectives with the views of others.