

# SCALE FOR EXISTENTIAL THINKING

Branton Shearer, Ph.D.

*Circle answers that best fit for you either now or in the past.*

**1. Do you ever reflect on your purpose in life?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**2. Have you ever think about the human spirit or what happens to life after death?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**3. Have you ever spent time reading, thinking about or discussing philosophy or your beliefs?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**4. Do you have a philosophy of life that helps you to manage stress and crises or make important decisions?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**5. Do you think about ideas such as eternity, truth, justice and goodness?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**6. Do you spend time in prayer, meditation or reflecting on the mysteries of life?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**7. Do you discuss or ask questions to probe deeply into the meaning of life?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I'm not sure.

**8. Do you ever think about a "grand plan" or process that human beings are a part of?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**9. Have you ever thought about what is beyond the "here and now" of your daily life?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I don't know.

**10. Do you ever think about life's Big Questions?**

0= No or rarely.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I'm not sure.

**11. Have you ever reflected on the nature of reality or the universe?**

0= No or every once in a while.  
1= Sometimes.  
2= Often.  
3= Almost all the time.  
4= All the time.  
X= I'm not sure.

**\*\*\* You're done! \*\*\***

# The MIDAS Existential

by Branton Shearer, Ph.D.

The **MIDAS Existential** scale is a prototype assessment of skill and ability for understanding and dealing questions about nature of life and human existence. It is undergoing development at this time and I would appreciate your response to this set of questions. You may calculate an Existential scale score by following the directions below. Please compare this score to your general sense of what you know about yourself and your involvement and skill with Existential issues.

## How To Score

To calculate a percent score for the Existential scale:

- 1-Circle the number of each response on the questionnaire and total the RESPONSE score.
- 2-Count the number of questions that you answered (exclude "I don't know")
- 3- Multiply the number of questions you answered by 4 to calculate the TOTAL POSSIBLE score..
- 4- Divide Response score by the Total Possible to calculate your PERCENT score.

After you have calculated the percent score for each area then you may complete the *Brief Learning Summary* and follow instructions for verification.

**Response Score**     /     **Total Possible** **Percent Score**  
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# Existential Intelligence

## Core Capacities, Functions and Domain Skills

*“To be concerned with ‘ultimate’ issues, questions, mysteries and meanings of life, to engage in transcendental concerns”*

### ***Logical Analysis:***

*To use reasoning to create logical responses, explanations, investigations or models of ultimate life issues.*

“I think therefore I am”

#### Functions:

Artistic: novels, symphonic music, narrative analysis, criticism, dramatic analysis

Philosophical: essays, texts

Religious: theology, dogma, scriptures

Scientific: cosmology, theoretical physics

### ***Intuitive Insight:***

*To express one’s understanding about ultimate issues (questions and responses) without an explicitly detailed logical basis. A subjective knowing, a phenomenological experience.*

“I just know it to be so!” This is most often associated with artistic and creative endeavors or spontaneous insight associated with experiential learning.

#### Functions:

Artistic: visual art, stained glass, zen gardens, labyrinths, chanting, experiential art, poet, music, singing

Philosophical: story telling, folk wisdom, reflection, epiphanies

Religious: prayer, meditation, mythology, rites and ritual

Scientific: “Ah, ha!”

## Tools

- visual art, sculpture, architecture, sacred space (Visual-spatial)
- contemplation, meditation, prayer, insight (Intrapersonal)
- poetry, stories, essays, texts, lyrics (Linguistic)
- sacred dance & movement, labyrinths, drama, prayer (Kinesthetic)
- singing, experiencing sacred/cosmic sounds, rhythms (Musical)
- explanatory & cause & effect & complex reasoning, mathematical models (Math/logic)
- relating to animals, ecological systems, relating to animals (Naturalist)
- immersion in a relationship to a person or people (Interpersonal)

## **Questions about Existential Intelligence**

### **What does it mean to be High in Existential intelligence?**

- the ability to address the questions in subtle and complex ways?
- profound insight?
- to have all the answers to existential questions?
- elaborate, complex thinking and careful reasoning
- insights that enhance the quality of daily life
- well-constructed logical responses to profound questions
- what is the relationship to “wisdom,” common sense and leadership??

### **How to differentiate between involvement and propensity for Existential thinking vs. demonstrated skill and success in dealing with ultimate questions?**

### **What is the relationship between Existential awareness and Intuition?**

### **What are the implications of Existential intelligence for public school education?**