

Cambridge Depersonalisation Scale

Name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Please read these instructions carefully: This questionnaire describes strange and 'funny' experiences that normal people may have in their daily life. We are interested in the experiences' (a.) *frequency* – how often you have had these experiences **over the last six months**, and (b.) their approximate *duration*. To the right of each question please fill in a number that estimates how frequently (*use 0–4 scale given below*) you estimate you have had this symptom over the last six months, and how long (*use 0–6 scale below*) on average the symptom has tended to last for. If not sure, give your best guess. Please use the following scales:

Frequency: 0 = never; 1= rarely; 2=often; 3=very often; 4=all the time

Duration: (on average it lasts): 1=few seconds; 2=few minutes; 3=few hours
4=about a day; 5=more than a day; 6=more than a week

	<i>questions</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>duration</i>
1	out of the blue, I feel strange, as if I were not real or as if I were cut off from the world		
2	what I see looks 'flat' or 'lifeless', as if I were looking at a picture		
3	parts of my body feel as if they didn't belong to me		
4	I have found myself <i>not being frightened at all</i> in situations which normally I would find frightening or distressing		
5	my favourite activities are no longer enjoyable		
6	whilst doing something I have the feeling of being a 'detached observer' of myself		
7	the flavour of meals no longer gives me a feeling of pleasure or distaste		
8	my body feels very light, as if it were floating on air		
9	when I weep or laugh, I do not seem <i>to feel</i> any emotions at all		
10	I have the feeling of <i>not having any thoughts at all</i> , so that when I speak it feels as if my words were being uttered by an 'automaton'.		
11	familiar voices (including my own) sound remote and unreal		
12	I have the feeling that my hands or my feet have become larger or smaller		
13	my surroundings feel detached or unreal, as if there were a veil between me and the outside world		
14	it seems as if things that I have recently done had taken place a long time ago. For example, anything which I have done this morning feels as if it were done weeks ago		

frequency: 0 = never; 1 = rarely; 2 = often; 3 = very often; 4 = all the time
duration: (on average it lasts): 1 = few seconds; 2 = few minutes; 3 = few hours
4 = about a day; 5 = more than a day; 6 = more than a week

	<i>questions (continued)</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>duration</i>
15	whilst fully awake I have 'visions' in which I can see myself outside, as if I were looking at my image in a mirror		
16	I feel detached from memories of things that have happened to me – as if I had not been involved in them		
17	when in a new situation, it feels as if I have been through it before		
18	out of the blue, I find myself not feeling any affection towards my family and close friends		
19	objects around me seem to look smaller or further away		
20	I cannot feel properly the objects that I touch with my hands for it feels <i>as if it were not me</i> who were touching it		
21	I do not seem able to picture things in my mind, for example, the face of a close friend or a familiar place		
22	when a part of my body hurts, I feel so detached from the pain that it feels as if it were 'somebody else's pain'		
23	I have the feeling of being outside my body		
24	when I move it doesn't feel as if I were in charge of the movements, so that I feel 'automatic' & mechanical as if I were a 'robot'		
25	the smell of things no longer gives me a feeling of pleasure or dislike		
26	I feel so detached from my thoughts that they seem to have a 'life' of their own		
27	I have to touch myself to make sure that I have a body or a real existence		
28	<i>I seem to have lost</i> some bodily sensations (e.g. of hunger and thirst) so that when I eat or drink, it feels an automatic routine		
29	previously familiar places look unfamiliar, as if I had never seen them before		

Number of questions endorsed: _____

Average frequency: _____ **Average duration:** _____

Total score: _____

depersonalisation & derealisation

definitions: depersonalisation has been defined as 'an alteration in the perception or experience of the self so that one feels detached from, and as if one is an outside observer of, one's mental processes or body (e.g. feeling as if one is in a dream)'; and derealisation as 'an alteration in the perception or experience of the external world so that it seems strange or unreal (e.g. people may seem unfamiliar or mechanical)' (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). It seems likely that depersonalisation and derealisation are two aspects of the same type of process, both of which are assessed in the Cambridge Depersonalisation Scale.

experiences involved: the depersonalisation/derealisation syndrome often involves a complex set of experiences which may include feelings of unreality, emotional numbing, heightened self-observation, changes in body experience, distortions in the experiencing of time and space, changes in the feeling of agency, feelings of having the mind empty of thoughts, memories and/or images, and an inability to focus and sustain attention.

explanation: it has been suggested that these experiences arise from two simultaneous mechanisms an inhibition of emotional processing, and a heightened state of alertness (i.e. akin to vigilant attention). Emotional numbing or lack of emotional colouring of various perceptions, thoughts and images would result from the emotional processing inhibition. Feelings of 'mind emptiness', increased perceptual acuity, and feelings of lack of agency would result from the heightened alertness.

typical (median) scores on the Cambridge Depersonalisation Scale:

	<i>questions endorsed</i>	<i>typical frequency</i>	<i>typical duration</i>	<i>total score</i>
depersonalisation disorder	21	2 'often'	3 'few hours'	113
anxiety disorders	7	1 'rarely'	1 'few seconds'	20
temporal lobe epilepsy	11	1 'rarely'	2 'few minutes'	44
