

DEVELOPING A QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF SELF-AS-CONTEXT: Preliminary Findings

Suzanne R. Gird, M.A.

Robert D. Zettle, Ph.D.

Blake K. Webster, M.A.

Angie Hardage-Bundy, M.A.



WICHITA STATE
UNIVERSITY

Purpose

- ✦ Design and evaluate a measure of Self-As-Context consistent with the ACT model.
 - ✦ Reliability
 - ✦ Factor Structure
 - ✦ Validity
- ✦ Relationship to life satisfaction
- ✦ Witnessing life experiences from an enduring and stable perspective

Method

Participants

- WSU undergraduates recruited via Sona Systems website

	<i>N</i>	<i>M_{age} (SD)</i>	Gender	Race
Sample 1	306	22.53 (6.82)	Female=216 (71%)	White=230 (75%)
Sample 2	150	21.10 (4.87)	Female= 92 (61%)	White=118 (79%)
Sample 3	322	22.22 (6.54)	Female=226 (70%)	White=267 (83%)

Method

Procedure

- Development of items:
 - Brainstorming
 - Opinions of ACT experts
- Determining internal consistency
- Determining factor structure
- Correlations with other measures
 - Discriminant validity
 - Convergent validity
- Linear regression predicting satisfaction with life

Original 13 Item SACS $\alpha = .83$

1. When I am upset, I am able to find a place of calm within myself.
2. I have a perspective on life that allows me to deal with life's disappointments without getting overwhelmed with them.
3. I lose my sense of stability as my emotions change.
4. Despite the many changes in my life, there is a basic part of who I am that remains unchanged.
5. As I look back upon my life so far, I have a sense that part of me has been there for all of it.
6. I allow my emotions to come and go without struggling with them.
7. I am able to notice my changing thoughts without getting caught up in them.
8. There is a basic sense I have of myself that doesn't change even though my thoughts and feelings do.
9. Though I have had many roles in my life, I have always had a sense of self that is stable and enduring.
10. Even though there have been many changes in my life, I'm aware of a part of me that has witnessed it all.
11. I am able to access a perspective from which I can notice my thoughts, feelings, and emotions.
12. If I lost most of my memories, I would still be me.
13. When I think back to when I was younger, I recognize that a part of me that was there then is still here now.

11 Item SACS

$$\alpha = .84$$

1. When I am upset, I am able to find a place of calm within myself.
2. I have a perspective on life that allows me to deal with life's disappointments without getting overwhelmed with them.
3. Despite the many changes in my life, there is a basic part of who I am that remains unchanged.
4. As I look back upon my life so far, I have a sense that part of me has been there for all of it.
5. I allow my emotions to come and go without struggling with them.
6. I am able to notice my changing thoughts without getting caught up in them.
7. There is a basic sense I have of myself that doesn't change even though my thoughts and feelings do.
8. Though I have had many roles in my life, I have always had a sense of self that is stable and enduring.
9. Even though there have been many changes in my life, I'm aware of a part of me that has witnessed it all.
10. I am able to access a perspective from which I can notice my thoughts, feelings, and emotions.
11. When I think back to when I was younger, I recognize that a part of me that was there then is still here now.

Factor Analysis

- ✿ **Minimum Average Partial Test (MAP):**
Two factors
- ✿ **Principal axis factoring with Promax rotation.**
 - ✿ **Transcending:** One's ability to access an enduring perspective from which experience can be observed.
 - ✿ **Centering:** One's ability to find inner stability in the face of emotional turmoil.

Factor Structure-1 1 Item SACS

<u>Items</u>	<u>Transcending</u>	<u>Centering</u>
As I look back upon my life so far, I have a sense that part of me has been there for all of it.	.78	
Even though there have been many changes in my life, I'm aware of a part of me that has witnessed it all.	.69	
Despite the many changes in my life, there is a basic part of who I am that remains unchanged.	.66	
When I think back to when I was younger, I recognize that a part of me that was there then is still here now.	.62	
There is a basic sense I have of myself that doesn't change even though my thoughts and feelings do.	.47	
I am able to access a perspective from which I can notice my thoughts, feelings, and emotions.	.35	
I am able to notice my changing thoughts without getting caught up in them.		.82
I have a perspective on life that allows me to deal with life's disappointments without getting overwhelmed with them.		.77
I allow my emotions to come and go without struggling with them.		.68
When I am upset, I am able to find a place of calm within myself.		.56
Though I have had many roles in my life, I have always had a sense of self that is stable and enduring.	.43	.41

(Sample 1)

Factor Structure-7 Item SACS

$\alpha = .83$

Items

Even though there have been many changes in my life, I'm aware of a part of me that has witnessed it all.	.69
Though I have had many roles in my life, I have always had a sense of self that is stable and enduring.	.68
There is a basic sense I have of myself that doesn't change even though my thoughts and feelings do.	.66
As I look back upon my life so far, I have a sense that part of me has been there for all of it.	.66
When I think back to when I was younger, I recognize that a part of me that was there then is still here now.	.65
Despite the many changes in my life, there is a basic part of who I am that remains unchanged.	.63
I am able to access a perspective from which I can notice my thoughts, feelings, and emotions.	.57

Measures

- ❁ **Duke University Religion Index (DUREL):** A widely-used measure of religiosity
- ❁ **Marlowe-Crowne *and* Edwards Social Desirability Scales:** Measures of social desirability response bias
- ❁ **NEO-Five Factor Inventory - Neuroticism Scale (BNS):** A measure of emotional instability
- ❁ **Acceptance and Action Questionnaire II (AAQII):** A measure of psychological flexibility
- ❁ **Functional Assessment of Chronic Illness Therapy-Spiritual Well-Being Scale (FACIT-Sp):** A widely-used measure of spirituality
- ❁ **Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS):** A measure of global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life

Duke University Religion Index (DUREL)

- ✦ **Organized Religiosity:** How often do you attend church or other religious meetings?
- ✦ **Unorganized Religiosity:** How often do you spend time in private religious activities, such as prayer, meditation, or the reading or studying of sacred texts?
- ✦ **Intrinsic Religiosity:**
 - ✦ In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine (i.e., God).
 - ✦ My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.
 - ✦ I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.
 - ✦ Regardless of how often you attend religious services, how religious do you consider yourself to be?
 - ✦ How important do you feel religion is in your life?

Full Scale: $\alpha = .93$

Intrinsic Religiosity Subscale: $\alpha = .93$

Social Desirability (Edwards and Marlowe-Crowne) Sample Items

- ✿ I am very seldom troubled by constipation.
- ✿ I am easily embarrassed.
- ✿ Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.
- ✿ My table manners at home are as good as when I am out in a restaurant.
- ✿ My parents and family find more fault with me than they should.
- ✿ I like to gossip at times.
- ✿ I never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car.

(Crowne & Marlowe, 1960)

(Edwards, 1957)

NEO-Five Factor Inventory- Neuroticism Scale (BNS)

- ✦ I am not a worrier.
 - ✦ I often get angry at the way people treat me.
 - ✦ I rarely feel lonely or blue.
 - ✦ When I'm around people, I worry that I'll make a fool of myself.
 - ✦ I seldom give in to my impulses.
 - ✦ I often feel helpless and want someone else to solve my problems.
 - ✦ I am easily frightened.
 - ✦ I'm an even-tempered person.
 - ✦ Sometimes I feel completely worthless.
 - ✦ I feel comfortable in the presence of my teachers or bosses.
 - ✦ I have trouble resisting my cravings.
 - ✦ I'm pretty stable emotionally.
- $\alpha = .78$ (Sample 2)

Discriminant Validity

	<u>SAC-11</u>		<u>SAC-7</u>	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
DUREL (full scale)	.16	.005	.16	.005
Organized Religiosity	.05	.448	.07	.249
Unorganized Religiosity	.10	.081	.11	.068
Intrinsic Religiosity	.19	.001	.18	.002
ESD	.40	<.001	.23	.005
MCSD	.33	<.001	.18	.029
BNS	-.55	<.001	-.36	<.001

Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (AAQ-II)

- ✦ My painful experiences and memories make it difficult for me to live a life that I would value.
- ✦ I'm afraid of my feelings.
- ✦ I worry about not being able to control my worries and feelings.
- ✦ My painful memories prevent me from having a fulfilling life.
- ✦ Emotions cause problems in my life.
- ✦ It seems like most people are handling their lives better than I am.
- ✦ Worries get in the way of my success.

Functional Assessment of Chronic Illness Therapy-Spiritual Well-Being Scale (FACIT-Sp)

Meaning
Subscale
 $\alpha = .86$

- I feel peaceful.
- I have a reason for living.
- My life has been productive.
- I have trouble feeling peace of mind.
- I feel a sense of purpose in my life.
- I am able to reach deep down into myself for comfort.
- I feel a sense of harmony within myself.
- My life lacks meaning and purpose.

Faith
Subscale
 $\alpha = .87$

- I find comfort in my faith or spiritual beliefs.
- I find strength in my faith or spiritual beliefs.
- Difficult times have strengthened my faith or spiritual beliefs.
- Even during difficult times, I know that things will be okay.

Full Scale $\alpha = .87$
(Sample 2)

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

- ✿ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
- ✿ The conditions in my life are excellent.
- ✿ I am satisfied with my life.
- ✿ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
- ✿ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Convergent Validity

	<u>SAC-11</u>		<u>SAC-7</u>	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
AAQ-II	-.55	<.001	-.38	<.001
FACIT-Sp	.58	<.001	.43	<.001
Meaning	.65	<.001	.52	<.001
Faith	.30	<.001	.30	<.001
SWLS	.60	<.001	.51	<.001

Regression Predicting Satisfaction with Life

- Both models were significant
 - SAC-11: $F(5, 300) = 42.96, p < .001, f^2 = .75$
 - SAC-7: $F(5, 300) = 45.20, p < .001, f^2 = .72$
- The AAQ-II and SACS significantly contribute to life satisfaction independently.
- Religiosity did not independently contribute to satisfaction with life.

Regression Predicting Satisfaction with Life

Predictor Variables

SAC-11
 $R^2 = .43, p < .001$

SAC-7
 $R^2 = .42, p < .001$

	β	t	p	β	t	p
AAQ-II	-.322	-6.121	<.001	-.417	-8.698	<.001
SACS	.409	7.690	<.001	.346	7.173	<.001
DUREL Organized	.015	.239	.81	-.002	-.028	.98
DUREL Unorganized	-.037	-.573	.57	-.045	-.688	.49
DUREL Intrinsic	.062	.949	.34	.021	1.206	.23

Conclusion

- Good reliability
- Good discriminant validity
 - Weak correlations with neuroticism, social desirability, and religiosity
- Good discriminant validity
 - Moderate correlations with psychological flexibility, spirituality, and satisfaction with life
 - Higher correlation with “meaning” aspect of spirituality
- Accounts for a significant amount of variance in satisfaction with life
 - Independent of psychological flexibility
 - Independent of religiosity
- Religiosity did not predict life satisfaction

Next Steps...

- ✿ Results should be replicated in different populations.
- ✿ Temporal Stability Analysis
- ✿ Look at SACS in relationship to measures associated with other hexaflex processes (e.g., defusion, mindfulness)

Relationship to Other Core Processes

	<u>SAC-11</u>		<u>SAC-7</u>	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
VLQ Composite	.31	<.001	.33	<.001
VLQ Importance	.28	<.001	.27	<.001
VLQ Consistent Action	.28	<.001	.27	<.001
PHLMS Awareness	.31	<.001	.33	<.001
MAAS	.36	<.001	.25	<.001
WBSI	-.21	<.001	-.12	.031
PHLMS Acceptance	.18	<.001	.08	.164
CFQ-13	-.48	<.001	-.32	<.001