

The Incredible 5 Point Scale

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The Incredible 5 point Scale: A Cognitive Behavior Intervention

- Abstract concepts and feelings are made
 - Visual—depicts intensity of degree of emotion/behavior
 - Concrete
 - Static
 - Personal
- Talk in numbers may be preferred over social or emotional words
- Is a direct, instrumental way of teaching emotions
 - Typical students learn to recognize and express emotions indirectly and intuitively from exposure to family, friends, school companions, etc..

The premise is easy and can be adapted for almost every behavior or expectation imaginable.

Incredible 5 Point Scale



Designing a 5-Point Scale

Given that the majority of individuals with ASD are visual learners, the Incredible 5-Point Scale simplifies behaviors by assigning them a number and/or color.

Purposes of the Incredible 5-Point Scale

- Provides a mutual definition of terms
- Simplifies language
- Breaks down unclear concepts
 - Provides a concrete tool for abstract concepts
- Teaches recognition and cues for internal feelings
- Promotes self-managing behavior or emotional regulation

Versatility of the Incredible 5-Point Scale

- It can be used in groups, classes, or with individuals
 - Of different ages
 - Across a wide variety of circumstances
 - In a broad array of situations
- The Incredible 5-Point Scale can be applied prior to, during, or after an event or situation
- It can be used to prime an individual of behavior that is and is not acceptable and cue use of the appropriate skill
- It can provide a visual reminder of the individual's behavior at that specific point in time



Examples of use of Incredible 5-Point Scale

- Facilitating the right voice volume for certain situations
- Rating anger/stress levels
- Checking levels and types of appropriate, and inappropriate, behaviors
- Self-monitoring obsessional interests



Antecedent	Rating	Behavior
	5	
	4	
	3	
	2	
	1	



Voice Level	Rating	Examples
Voice to use when someone is in danger	5	
P.E. or outside voice	4	
Classroom voice; so the teacher can hear me	3	
Quiet voice; I use it with a partner	2	
Silence, no voice	1	



Looks like...

Feels like...

I can try...

5

4

3

2

1



Your Thoughts

**Your Guess About Someone
Else's Thoughts**

5

4

3

2

1



Level	Person, Place or Thing	Makes me feel like this...
5		
4		
3		
2		
1		

Steps in Implementing the Incredible 5-Point Scale

- Choose the target behavior
- Decide on the content for each scale point associated with the target behavior
- Develop a visual cue for each level, scale point, for the target behavior
- Introduce the scale to the student
- Practice the scale with the student, revising if necessary

Factors that can get in the way of the successful use of the Incredible 5-Point Scale

- Inconsistent use
- If student “feels” like singled out to use it
- Becomes what “they” (the students) use, rather than part of the class
- Lacks meaningfulness for the student

The more consistent, meaningful, and organic, the Incredible 5-Point Scale is for the student, the more successful he/she will be in its use.

Selected References:

- Books:
 - A “5” Could Make Me Lose Control! An activity-based method for evaluating and supporting highly anxious students
 - A “5” is Against the Law! Social Boundaries: Straight Up! An honest guide for teens and young adults
 - The Incredible 5-Point Scale: Assisting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Understanding Social Interactions and Controlling Their Emotional Responses
- Video:
 - The Incredible 5-Point Scale: Assisting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Understanding Social Interactions and Controlling Their Emotional Responses (DVD)