

HOW IS YOUR INNER CHILD?

We learn life lessons in childhood, and this applies to our emotions. To give yourself an idea of how well your past is treating you today, answer the following questions by checking Yes or No. Be as honest with yourself as you can without going too easy or being too self-critical.

I am generally even-tempered.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I am not prone to sudden outbursts.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I don't react impulsively.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I can take criticism pretty well.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I find it easy to be happy for someone else's good fortune.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I don't hold grudges.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I don't indulge in revenge fantasies.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I can remember recent moments of joy.

Yes ☐ No ☐

The happiness of others is important to me.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I consider rivals to be competitors, not enemies.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I can listen patiently to someone else's woes.

Yes ☐ No ☐

My emotions don't get me into trouble, such as heated arguments.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I am comfortable being warm and affectionate.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I value being loved and lovable.

Yes ☐ No ☐

My parents were good examples of emotional maturity.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I don't immediately strike back if someone gets angry with me.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I don't care too much if I am liked or disliked.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I find most people likable.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I tend to see the best in others rather than the worst.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I am accepting. I am not quick to criticize others.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I can usually tell what someone else is feeling even when they try to hide it.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I feel compassion for those in trouble.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I laugh easily.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I enjoy the company of children.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I know what it feels like to be spiritually uplifted.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Total Yes _____ Total No _____

ASSESSING YOUR SCORE

If your inner child is perfectly happy and balanced, you will score Yes twenty-five times, and if your inner child is suffering and out of balance, you will score No twenty-five times. Nobody can achieve such an absolute score either way, because everyone's inner life is mixed. What you need to notice is the ratio of Yes to No answers. The more Yes answers you have, the better.

18-24 YES: You have evolved very well emotionally and have helped your inner child grow in understanding and acceptance. You demonstrate a good combination of feeling secure in your emotional life and also responding well to the emotions of others. You don't crave approval or cringe from disapproval. Your emotional reactions are considered, tempered by experience, reason, and maturity.

13-17 YES: Your emotional life falls somewhere in the middle, close to the social norm. Your inner child is insecure at times. You probably don't value your emotions or trust them entirely. Instead, you find yourself ambushed by unwanted emotions that you'd much rather avoid. If you are introverted, you keep your feelings to yourself. If you are extroverted, your emotions are out there for all the world to see. You are likely to be fond of escaping into romantic fantasies, either in imagination or through movies and books.

1-12 YES: Your inner child has a negative influence over you, and the lower your score, the more self-defeating this influence is. You have a hard time connecting with mature adults, preferring to be with others who are as immature, pessimistic, self-doubting, and impulsive as you are. At the higher end (10-12 YES), you might notice none of these deficits. Instead, you simply turn your back on emotions, giving great value to being a rational creature on the one hand or highly self-disciplined on the other. In any case, you judge against people who show their emotions easily. You might feel superior to them. Tending to your own life with its ups and downs, you have little sympathy for people who don't just get on with it and solve their own problems. In your view, the more emotional you are, the weaker you seem to others and yourself.

Let me underscore that most of us find it hard to be completely honest about our emotional lives, so this quiz is just a general guide. It is all too easy for some people to exaggerate their positive qualities as it is for others to

exaggerate their faults. Use this quiz simply as a mirror, reflecting back how you feel about your emotions in a general way.