

# Hypersensitive Narcissism and the Imposter Phenomenon

## The Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS)

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Please answer the following questions by deciding to what extent each item is characteristic of your feelings and behavior. Fill in the blank next to each item by choosing a number from the scale printed below.

- 1 = very uncharacteristic or untrue, strongly disagree  
 2 = uncharacteristic  
 3 = neutral  
 4 = characteristic  
 5 = very characteristic or true, strongly agree

GJENNOMSNITT FOR  
STUDENTER ER 29

HØY SKÅRE = 35

LAV SKÅRE = 23

1. I can become entirely absorbed in thinking about my personal affairs, my health, my cares or my relations to others.
2. My feelings are easily hurt by ridicule or the slighting remarks of others.
3. When I enter a room I often become self-conscious and feel that the eyes of others are upon me.
4. I dislike sharing the credit of an achievement with others.
5. I feel that I have enough on my hands without worrying about other people's troubles.
6. I feel that I am temperamentally different from most people.
7. I often interpret the remarks of others in a personal way.
8. I easily become wrapped up in my own interests and forget the existence of others.
9. I dislike being with a group unless I know that I am appreciated by at least one of those present.
10. I am secretly "put out" or annoyed when other people come to me with their troubles, asking me for my time and sympathy.

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*Abstract:*

A new measure of hypersensitive narcissism was derived by correlating the items of H. A. Murray's (1938) Narcism Scale with an MMPI-based composite measure of covert narcissism. In three samples of college students (total  $N = 303$ ), 10 items formed a reliable measure: the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS). The new HSNS and the MMPI-based composite showed similar patterns of correlations with the Big Five Inventory, and both measures correlated near zero with the Narcissistic Personality Inventory, which assesses overt narcissism. Results support the theoretical distinction between covert and overt narcissistic tendencies in the normal range of individual differences and suggest that it would be beneficial for personality researchers to measure both types of narcissism in future studies.

*Scale Characteristics:*

There were 10 items which had significantly positive correlations with the composite measure of covert narcissism in both samples. These 10 items formed a reliable scale which we named the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS;  $\alpha = .72$  for Sample 1 of 109 college women,  $M = 28.7$ ,  $SD = 6.2$ ;  $\alpha = .75$  for Sample 2 of 151 college women,  $M = 29.7$ ,  $SD = 6.1$ ,  $\alpha = .62$  for Sample 3 of 143 college men,  $M = 29.3$ ,  $SD = 4.7$ ). Because the alpha for the male participants in Sample 3 was relatively low, we also scored the new HSNS in another group of 101 college males from Cheek and Melchior's (1985) data, who had completed Murray's Narcism Scale, but not the NPI, and obtained a mean of 29.8, a standard deviation of 6.0, and an alpha of .76.

*Source:*

Hendin, H.M., & Cheek, J.M. (1997). Assessing Hypersensitive Narcissism: A Re-examination of Murray's Narcissism Scale. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 31, 588-599.

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Webpage created by Tara A. McGovern '04  
Maintained by: Jonathan Cheek, Psychology  
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