

## Daydreaming Characteristics Questionnaire (DCQ)

(Theodor-Katz & Soffer-Dudek, 2025b, 2025a)

### Instructions

The following questions refer to situations where you experience difficulties in staying attentive or struggle to focus on your external environment. In some of the following questions, we ask about your daydreams or mind-wandering. Please carefully read the question to make sure you provide an answer that best describes **your** daydreams/mind-wandering. There is no correct answer; please only think about your experience and mark the answer that best describes you.

1. People often find it hard to concentrate or to be attentive to the tasks that they are supposed to perform; this may be caused by different types of thoughts (for example, worries, daydreams, distractions, etc.). Which type of thoughts mainly occupy your mind when you are unable to concentrate? (Be aware that everyone has distracting thoughts from time to time, but we are interested only in those, if any, that significantly disturb your ability to concentrate.)

0- There are no specific thoughts that interrupt me when I try to concentrate.

1- Most of the time when I have difficulty concentrating, I stare into space with my mind blank.

2- Most of the time when I have difficulty concentrating, I'm preoccupied by my "to-do" list, worries, or recounting recent events.

3- Most of the time when I have difficulty concentrating, I'm occupied with my fantasies – daydreaming about imaginary events.

4- Other (please explain):

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2. Some people have recurring daydreams where the theme REPEATS ITSELF over a significant period of time in their lives (even if some of the specific details change). In contrast, others have various daydreams that change completely from one day to another. How would you describe your daydreams?
- 0- Not consistent at all, with no repetitive theme.
  - 1- Generally, not consistent.
  - 2- Sometimes consistent with a repetitive theme and sometimes not.
  - 3- Tend to be consistent, but not always.
  - 4- Very consistent with a repetitive theme.
3. There are people whose daydreams are like a continuous, sequential drama, like a soap opera with many episodes or a book with many chapters. Are your daydreams continuous, or have many episodes?
- 0- None of my daydreams has a plot, and they never have a sequential narrative.
  - 1- My daydreams rarely have a plot or a sequential narrative.
  - 2- In very few cases, my daydreams have a plot or a sequential narrative.
  - 3- Some of my daydreams have a plot or a sequential narrative.
  - 4- Most of my daydreams have a plot or a sequential narrative.
4. There are people whose daydreams are characterized by vivid fantasy, experienced as very real and immersive, as though they are watching a film in their minds (or participating in one). To what extent do your daydreams have these attributes?
- 0- None of my daydreams is characterized by vivid fantasy.
  - 1- Only a few of my daydreams are characterized by vivid fantasy.
  - 2- Some of my daydreams are characterized by vivid fantasy, as if I were watching a film in my mind, and some are not.

- 3- Most of my daydreams are characterized by vivid fantasy, as if I were watching a film in my mind.
- 4- Almost all my daydreams are characterized by vivid fantasy, as if I were watching a film in my mind.
5. Some people experience a range of emotions during their daydreams, such as happiness, fear, satisfaction, pride, and embarrassment, in accordance with the unfolding events in their daydream. To what extent do your feelings change during a single daydream?
- 0- I never experience a wide range of emotions in accordance with the unfolding events of that daydream.
- 1- Occasionally or rarely, I experience a wide range of emotions in accordance with the unfolding events of that daydream.
- 2- Sometimes I experience a wide range of emotions in response to the unfolding events of that daydream, and at other times, I do not.
- 3- I often experience a wide range of emotions in accordance with the unfolding events of that daydream.
- 4- Almost always, I experience a wide range of emotions in accordance with the unfolding events of that daydream.
6. Some people often experience positive emotions in their daydreams, such as pride, competency, happiness, love, compassion, determination, enthusiasm, strength, attentiveness, interest, excitement, etc. To what extent are such feelings present in your daydreams?
- 0- Barely any of my daydreams include positive feelings.
- 1- Very few of my daydreams include positive feelings.
- 2- Some of my daydreams include positive feelings, while others do not.

- 3- Most of my daydreams include positive feelings.
- 4- Almost all of my daydreams include positive feelings.
- 7. Some people daydream about things that are practically impossible, such as being able to fly or to play tennis with the president of the U.S.A.; on the other hand, some daydream about realistic events, such as a chat with the boss or a trip to a restaurant later that day. To what extent are your daydreams likely to become a reality?
  - 0- Very few of my daydreams are fantastical; they are usually realistic and are based on my everyday life.
  - 1- Not many of my daydreams are fantastical; they are mostly realistic.
  - 2- Some of my daydreams have a chance of occurring in reality, while others are largely unrealistic fantasies.
  - 3- The vast majority of my daydreams are unlikely to occur in reality; they are mostly unrealistic fantasies.
  - 4- All of my daydreams are unlikely to occur in reality; they are nearly all unrealistic fantasies.

## Scoring

The DCQ assesses immersive daydreaming patterns. It is beneficial as an added assessment measure to the MDS-16, which captures maladaptive daydreaming. If the MDS-16 score is  $\geq 40$  and ADHD is suspected, the DCQ can provide crucial information to make a differential diagnosis between maladaptive daydreaming and ADHD. The DCQ comprises one categorical item and one factor, labeled immersive daydreaming (IDD).

- Item 1 (categorical): A response of “3 – Most of the time when I have difficulty concentrating, I’m occupied with my fantasies” is expected in cases of maladaptive daydreaming. If the response is “4- other”, the clinician should make a judgment call as to whether the answer falls under the definition of daydreaming or imaginative events.
- Items 2–7 (IDD factor): Calculate the mean IDD score by summing responses on items 2-7 (each item with a scale of 0-4) and dividing by six.  
Cutoff: A mean score  $\geq 2.27$  on Items 2–7 indicates suspected MD.

Theodor-Katz, N., & Soffer-Dudek, N. (2025a). Differential diagnosis between maladaptive daydreaming and ADHD: Immersive daydreaming is not simply inattention. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, 25(3), 100616. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijchp.2025.100616>

Theodor-Katz, N., & Soffer-Dudek, N. (2025b). Where Is My Mind? The Daydreaming Characteristics Questionnaire, a New Tool to Differentiate Absorptive Daydreaming From Mind-Wandering. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 29(7), 515–528. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10870547251319081>