

The Incredible 5-Point Scale

Topic Summary:

The Incredible 5-Point Scale (Buron & Curtis, 2003) is a behavioral support designed to help individuals understand and manage their emotions and social behaviors. It may be used for one to one teaching situations or for groups when teaching a specific skill. The 5-point scale is a visual representation that breaks down typically abstract concepts into 5 smaller steps so that individuals can identify emotions, rate the status of the emotion and learn appropriate strategies for responding to difficult situations. It is a useful teaching tool for home, school and the community. The 5-point scale can be helpful for any age, depending on that person's level of understanding. Although it is frequently used with those on the autism spectrum, it is also beneficial for those who have difficulty with social competence and understanding the consequence of their behaviors for themselves and others.

Implementation Checklist:

1. **Decide which behavior you would like to target first.** - Buron and Curtis (2003), provide examples such as: anxiety, appropriate touch and greetings, controlling voice level, dealing with obsessions or obsessive behaviors etc.
2. **Use the 5-point scale worksheet included with this document to determine the content for each point of the scale.** - It is helpful to develop the scale with the individual that will be using it. Determine what behaviors are seen at each point and what strategies are acceptable when the student is at that level on the scale. Choose pictures to represent each level when appropriate.
3. **Develop a social narrative considering the students interests and level of understanding.** - This narrative should explain to the student how the scale will be used.
4. **Teach the 5 point scale to the student.** - Never skip this step! The student must be taught how to use the scale in order to use it effectively.
5. **Practice the scale with the student in a variety of settings-** Revise when needed.

Recommended Resources:

1. Autism Internet Module (AIM) on The Incredible 5-Point Scale; http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/mod_intro.php?mod_id=19
2. The Incredible 5-Point Scale: <http://www.5pointscale.com/>
3. Buron, K. D. (2003). *When my autism gets too big!* Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
4. Buron, K. D., & Curtis, M. (2008). *The 5-point scale and anxiety poster.* Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company. These materials describe how to use the Incredible 5-Point Scale.
5. Buron, K. D., & Curtis, M. (2004). *The incredible 5-point scale: Assisting students with autism spectrum disorders in understanding social interactions and controlling their emotional responses.* Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

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Rating	Looks/Sounds Like	Feels Like	Safe People can help/ I can try
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			