Introduction and consent

Welcome to our study on the experience of meaning in life. We want to see how people experience their lives as having or not having meaning. The study will consist of two brief questionnaires. You will be shown several sets of statements about how you feel at the present moment. You will have to specify to what extent you agree or disagree with them. There are no right or wrong answers; we would simply like to know what you think. Also, don't spend too long on any one item; often, the first answer that comes to mind is the best.

Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving an explanation. All data we collect from you will be treated as confidential and will only be accessed by the research team. You can withdraw your data from the study at any point before data analysis has commenced (to do so, you will need to quote your Unique ID, generated on the next page). At the end of the study, you will be debriefed and the aims and purposes of our research will be fully explained.

The results of the study will be written up for my PhD thesis and for academic papers that may be submitted for publication. No identifiable information will be used in the write-up.

This study has been approved by the Sciences & Technology Cross-Schools Research Ethics Committee (crecscitec@sussex.ac.uk). The project reference number is ER/VC69/5. The University of Sussex has insurance in place to cover its legal liabilities in respect of this study.

By ticking the box below and clicking next, you acknowledge that you are over 16, have read and understood the information above, and consent to take part.

	Ιa	gree
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Vour and

Screening questions

rour ago.
•
How would you describe your level of English?
Native
Fluent
Working proficiency

Exclusion

Basic proficiency

Unfortunately, you are not eligible to take part in this study. Thank you for your time!

If you have any further questions or concerns about the study, please contact Vlad Costin at v.costin@sussex.ac.uk

PANAS

Please rate to what extent you feel in each of the following ways at the present moment:

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much
Attentive	0		0	0	0
Interested					
Guilty					\bigcirc
Ashamed					\bigcirc
Distressed					
Active					
Nervous		\bigcirc	\bigcirc		
Scared					
Strong					
Irritable					
Alert					
Jittery					
Hostile					
Afraid					
Upset					
Excited					
Enthusiastic		\bigcirc	\bigcirc		
Proud		\bigcirc	\bigcirc		
Determined		\bigcirc	\bigcirc		
Inspired			\bigcirc		

Meaning in life

Using the scale, please indicate your feelings **at the present moment** by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Fully disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Fully agree
My life as a whole has meaning.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
My life is meaningless.									
I feel that there is no meaning in my life.	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	0			\circ
My life is meaningful.									
My entire existence is full of meaning.	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
My existence is empty of meaning.	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc

Purpose in life

Using the scale, please indicate your feelings **at the present moment** by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Fully disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Fully agree
My direction in life is motivating to me.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I always have a series of goals to pursue.	0	\bigcirc	\circ		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc
I have aims in my life that are worth striving for.	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ		\bigcirc	\bigcirc
I have goals in life that are very important to me.	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
My current life course is not motivating	0	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	0	\circ		\circ
I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ		\bigcirc	\bigcirc
My life has no purpose.									
My goals don't seem connected to one another	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
I don't know what I am trying to accomplish in life.	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
I have overarching goals that guide me in my life.	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	0		\circ	\circ
I often feel like I am wandering aimlessly through life.	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
I have certain life goals that compel me to keep going.	0	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	0	\bigcirc		\circ
I have a good sense of what I am trying to accomplish in life.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I don't have compelling life goals that keep me going.	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I often feel like I am following a path in life.	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\bigcirc				\bigcirc

Sense of coherence

Using the scale, please indicate your feelings **at the present moment** by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I often feel that I can predict what is going to happen next.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I understand my life							
I can see how my decisions are influenced by my previous experiences.	0			\circ	0	\circ	0
I can see a connection between past, present and future events in my life.	0			\circ	0	\circ	0
I struggle to find common themes that tie my experiences together.	0			\circ	0	\circ	0
I can make sense of the things							

3/16/2016		Qualtrics Survey Software						
that happen in my life.	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	
I don't understand how my past decisions have led to where I am now.		0			0		0	
I know what my life is about.								
My life makes sense.								
Looking at my life as a whole, things seem clear to me.	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	
I feel that events in my life follow a certain order.	\circ	\circ		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	
I don't understand what my life is about.		\circ		\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ	
My experiences tend to have common themes.		\circ		\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	
I often feel that my life is chaotic.		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	
I see past, present and future events in my life as disconnected.		\circ		\circ			0	
I can't make sense of events in my life.	0	\circ	0	\circ	0	0	\circ	
My life feels like a sequence of unconnected events.								

Significance

unconnected events.

Using the scale, please indicate your feelings at the present moment by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My life is inherently valuable.	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Even a thousand years from now, it would still matter whether I existed or not.	0	0			0	0	
Whether my life ever existed matters even in the grand scheme of the universe.	0	0	0		\circ		0
I am certain that my life is of importance.	0	\circ		0		\circ	\circ
Even considering how big the universe is, I can say that my life matters.	0	0	0		0		0
There is nothing special about my existence.	0	\circ		0			
My existence is not significant in the grand scheme of things.		\circ		0			\circ
Given the vastness of the universe, my life does not matter.	0	\circ		0	0	0	
My life has no objective value.							

Sense of control

Using the scale, please indicate your feelings at the present moment by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The events in my life are mainly determined by my own actions.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
What I do has very little effect on what happens to me.		\bigcirc		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I am not in control of most things that occur in my life		\bigcirc		\circ	\circ	\circ	
I feel like I am free to make my choices.		\bigcirc		\circ	\circ	\circ	
I feel constrained by things outside of my control.	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	
I feel that I have complete control over my life.	0	\circ		0	\circ	\circ	

Self-worth (self-liking)

The statements below describe ways in which you might feel about yourself. Please indicate how you see yourself **at the present moment** by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I never doubt my personal selfworth.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I am secure in my sense of self-worth.	0	\circ		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I tend to devalue myself.							
I have a negative attitude towards myself.	0	\circ		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I do not have enough respect for myself.		\circ		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I am very comfortable with myself.	0	\circ	0	\circ		\circ	\circ
I feel great about who I am.							
It is sometimes unpleasant for me to think about myself.	0	\circ		\circ			

Sense of belongingness

The statements below describe ways in which you might feel about yourself. Please indicate how you see yourself **at the present moment** by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My experiences are very different from those who are usually around me.	0				0	0	0
I don't feel that I participate with anyone or any group.		\circ		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I feel a sense of togetherness with my peers.		\circ		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I feel accepted.							
I feel included.	0						

3/16/2016	Qualtrics Survey Software						
I feel that I fit in.				\bigcirc		\bigcirc	
I feel like an outsider.							
I feel rejected by others.							
I have many experiences in common with those around							

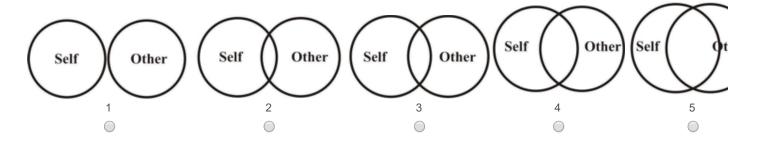
Connectedness with others

me.

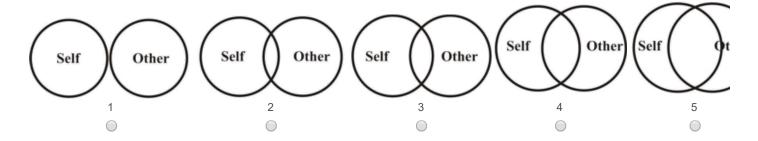
I feel excluded.

Below are seven diagrams that express varying degrees of relatedness or connectedness with some other other people. For each of the people listed below, indicate which diagram best expresses your relationship with that person.

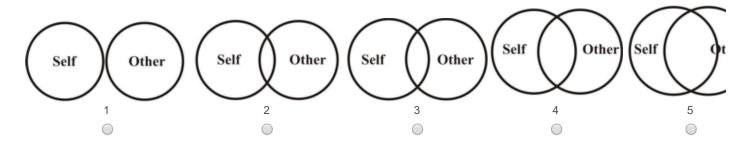
The relationship between you and your family members.



The relationship between you and your close friends.



The relationship between you and the person with whom you feel closest.



Self-competence

The statements below describe ways in which you might feel about yourself. Please indicate how you see yourself **at the present moment** by selecting how much you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I sometimes fail to fulfil my goals.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I am very talented.							
I am almost always able to accomplish what I try for.		0	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	0
I sometimes deal poorly with challenges.		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	
I wish I were more skillful in my activities.		0		\circ	\circ	\circ	
I am highly effective at the things I do.		0		\circ		\circ	
I perform very well at many things.		0	0	\circ		\circ	0
At times, I find it difficult to achieve the things that are important to me.	0	0			\circ	\circ	\circ

FAD-Plus

For each statement below, indicate how much you agree or disagree.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
No one can predict what will happen in this world.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Psychologists and psychiatrists will eventually figure out all human behavior.					0		\circ
Childhood environment will determine your success as an adult.					0		\circ
Whatever will be, will be – there's not much you can do about it					0	0	\circ
What happens to people is a matter of chance.	0	0		0		\circ	\circ
Life is hard to predict because it is almost totally random.			\circ				\circ
Your genes determine your future.			\circ		\circ		\circ
Whether people like it or not, mysterious forces seem to move their lives.					0	0	0
Life seems unpredictable - just like throwing dice or flipping a coin.					0	0	0
People have complete free will.			0				\circ
People must take full responsibility for any bad choices they make.		0		0	0	0	0

3/16	/2016		Qu	altrics Survey S	oftware			
	Criminals are totally responsible for the bad things they do.		\circ					
	People are unpredictable.							
	As with other animals, human behavior always follows the laws of nature.	0	\circ		\circ		\circ	
	People are always at fault for their bad behavior.	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
	No matter how hard you try, you can't change your destiny.		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	0	\circ
	I believe that the future has already been determined by fate.		\circ		0		0	0
	Luck plays a big role in people's lives.		\circ	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
	Fate already has a plan for everyone.		\circ			0	0	\circ
	People have complete control over the decisions they make.		\circ	0	\circ	0	0	\circ
	People can overcome any obstacles if they truly want to.		\circ	0	\circ	0	0	0
	People's futures cannot be predicted.	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
	Strength of mind can always overcome the body's desires.	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
	Parents' character will determine the character of their children.	0	\circ		\circ		\circ	
	Chance events seem to be the major cause of human history.	0	\circ	0	\circ	0	0	\circ
	People's biological makeup determines their talents and personality.		\circ					0
	Science has shown how your past environment created your	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Government and control

current intelligence and

personality.

For each statement below, indicate how much you agree or disagree.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
In general, my country's political system operates as it should	0				0		
Most policies serve the greater good	0	0	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	
In general, I'm satisfied with the way things are in my country.	0			0	0	0	

Religion and control; religious orientation

Thinking about your religious and spiritual beliefs, as well as your conception of God, please use the following response scales to answer the questions below.

the events within o		asible that God, o	or some type of n	onhuman entity,	is in control, at le	east in part, of
Very doubtful						Very likely
To what extent do nonhuman entity's		ne events that occ	ur in this world u	infold according	to God's, or som	e type of
	, plan.					
Very doubtful						Very likely
O	0	0				
How often do you	attend religious	services and acti	vities?			
never						
1-2 times a year	-					
2-6 times a year						
7-11 times a yea	ar					
1-3 times a mon	ıth					
at least once a r	month					
How often do you	pray or meditate	e outside of religio	ous services?			
never						
1-11 times a year	ar					
about once a mo	onth					
about once a we	eek					
about once a da	ıy					
several times da	aily					
In general, how re	ligious do you c	onsider yourself?				
not at all religiou	ıs					
slightly religious						
moderately relig	ious					
o very religious						
extremely religion	ous					

In general, how spiritual do you consider yourself?

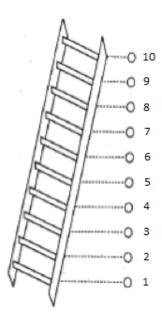
life?

	not at all spiritual
	slightly spiritual
	moderately spiritual
\bigcirc	very spiritual
\bigcirc	extremely spiritual
How	v much does religion influence th way you act in everyday
\bigcirc	Not at all
\bigcirc	Slightly
\bigcirc	Moderately
\bigcirc	Very
	Extremely
Democ	graphics
	•
Уон	r gender:
100	r gender.
	Male
	Female
	Other (please specify)
You	r relationship status:
	not in a relationship
	married
	separated
	in a committed relationship
	divorced
\bigcirc	widowed
	other (please specify)
Cou	ntry of birth
	▼

Country of residence

▼	
What is your ethnic group?	
What is your highest educational qualification?	
Are you currently pursuing a University degree (Undergraduate, Masters, PhD etc.)?	
○ Yes	
○ No	
f you have answered 'Yes' to the previous question, please specify your course:	
Your employment status:	
▼	
Your current or former occupation:	
▼	

Think of this ladder as representing where people stand in Britain. At the top of the ladder are people who are the best off, those who have the most money, most education, and best jobs. At the bottom are those who have the least money, least education, and worst jobs or no job.



Please select the number of the rung that best represents where you think you stand on the ladder.



Compared to other people in this country, how would you describe your (or your family's) level of financial wealth? If you are in full-time education, please indicate your parent's or legal guardian's level of financial wealth.

Below average Above average Moderately rich Very poor Moderately poor wealth Average wealth wealth Very rich

Which one of the following best describes the place where you are currently living?

- City/large town
- Smaller/average town
- Village/rural

Which one of the following best describes the place where you grew up?

- City/large town
- Smaller/average town
- Village/rural

Do you belong to a religion?

- No, I do not belong to any religion
- Yes, Christian (Please specify the denomination in the box below)
- $\ \bigcirc$ Yes, Jewish (Please specify the denomination in the box below)

Thank you for your time!

Debrief

This study had several aims:

- a) To develop a measure of significance (i.e. the sense that one's life has value), coherence (i.e. sense that one's life is orderly and predictable) and purpose (i.e. a central life aim), and see whether they emerge as meaningful subcomponents of meaning. Also, we wanted to test whether they are related to self-reported meaning in life judgements.
- b) To see whether sense of control (the feeling that we control important outcomes), self-esteem (the perception that we are worthy and valuable) and sense of belongingness (the sense that we belong and are connected to others around us) all predict perceptions of meaning in life, and whether they differentially predict the three subcomponents. c) Because we ran the study at three different time points (each one about 2 weeks apart), we can trace different

meaning trajectories and determine which of our predictors affect meaning scores across time.

If you have any further questions or concerns about the study, please contact Vlad Costin at v.costin@sussex.ac.uk