

The Incredible 5 Point Scale™

A. Description and Purpose:

The goal of the Incredible 5-Point Scale is to help students with autism and related disabilities become aware of their emotions, such as anger, fear, or pain, and the stage of the emotion. One-to-one instruction is suggested as the best condition for introducing this strategy to the student. Using the scale, the student rates his emotions or status of a condition or situation. This in turn allows him to (a) provide information to the teacher about how he is feeling, (b) manage his thinking process, or (c) implement the desired behavior as a proactive approach. Talking in numbers instead of describing or naming their emotional or mental status helps students think efficiently in order to make a right decision under a given set of circumstances. Buron and Curtis (2003) suggest that a story, narrative, or memo written along with the scale can be very useful in providing information about the purpose of the scale.

Example:

5	Impossible to handle! Not ready!!
4	Really hard for me. I will need lots of help to work on this.
3	Hard for me. I can try to work on this.
2	With a plan I can do this on my own.
1	No sweat- easy as pie. I can do this totally on my own.

B. Equipment Needed:

The Incredible 5 Point Scale can be done on any writing service, with any writing materials, just keep in mind the following:

- The scale needs to be portable and permanent so the individual can take it with them.
- Different colors choices may need to be available with which to draw and write.
- Respect the privacy of individual; the scale should not be visible to others if the individual does not want it to be.

C. Setting it Up:

- *Choose the target behavior.* Any kind of behavior or status can be a target behavior if rating the level or status of the behavior enhances adaptability. Anxiety or other feelings that usually result in problem behaviors may also be also targeted for rating.
- *Decide on the content for each scale point associated with the target behavior.* In the Incredible 5-Point Scale, each of the five stages represents the level or magnitude of the target behavior.
- *Develop a story or visual cue for the story, if necessary.* The story or visual cue should be developed carefully based on the student's interest or level of understanding. It should explain how the scale is to be used.

D. Implementation:

Introduce the scale to the student. To use the scale successfully, the student must learn how to discriminate and identify each stage.

E. Evaluation:

Practice the scale with the student, revising it if necessary. Peers who understand the student can support her as she practices the appropriate behavior or interaction by using the scale. Adults, including parents, teachers, or others in the setting, can help by using the scale for the student in various situations.

F. Teaching Tips:

When the target behavior needs to be addressed, adults in the setting can carry the 5-Point Scale in their ID tags, for example, to have it close at hand.

There is an Autism 5 Point Scale EP app for the iPod Touch and/or iPad.

G. Resources:

Buron, K. D., & Curtis, M. (2003). *The incredible 5-point scale: Assisting students with autism spectrum disorders in understanding social interactions and controlling their emotions responses.* Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

The Incredible 5-Point Scale: <http://www.5pointscale.com>