

Galassi J P, DeLo J S, Galassi M D & Bastien S. The College Self-Expression

Scale: a measure of assertiveness. *Behav. Ther.* 5:165-71, 1974.

[Student Counseling Service, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV]

The College Self-Expression Scale (CSES) is a 50 item self-report measure of assertiveness. The items tap three dimensions of assertiveness (positive, negative, and self-affirmation) in a variety of interpersonal contexts. Preliminary data concerning norms, reliability, and validity are presented. [The *Social Sciences Citation Index® (SSCI®)* indicates that this paper has been cited in over 140 publications since 1974.]

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"Development of the College Self-Expression Scale (CSES) was stimulated both by my doctoral dissertation research and internship with their underpinnings in humanistic approaches and by postdoctoral institute training in behavioral approaches to counseling/psychotherapy. My doctoral research revealed that college students who sought personal counseling exhibited significantly more alienation and felt less able to influence their environment than those who either sought vocational-educational counseling or did not seek counseling. About the same time, I was introduced to the work of Joseph Wolpe by a fellow intern, William Minichiello, and became interested in a behavioral technique, assertion training, as an intervention for students who felt alienated and unable to express themselves. I enrolled in Wolpe's behavior therapy institute where I learned of the early experimental studies in assertion training by McFall and his colleagues and, most notably, by McFall and Lillesand, another *Citation Classic*.^{1,2} However, I was not comfortable with McFall's reduction of assertion to simple refusal behavior and with his semiautomated analogue treatment. I

viewed assertion more broadly as involving the ability to express a range of emotions and opinions, and I wanted to develop interventions more typical of those applied in college counseling.

"My interests were clearly in developing and researching interventions for nonassertive behavior and not in scale construction. However, an instrument to measure the broader assertion construct with which I was concerned seemed to be needed for college students. Sheila Bastien, a doctoral student in clinical psychology and a graduate assistant at the West Virginia University Student Counseling Service where I was employed, actually was the person who suggested that I develop an assertion scale. It was called a self-expression scale by my research team, which included James DeLo, Merna Galassi, and Bastien, in order to avoid cuing students that the scale was a measure of assertiveness.

"It took more than two years (largely due to manuscript backlog) for the article to appear in print from the time it was submitted for publication. During that time, the journal published the Rathus Assertion Scale,^{3,4} and I worried that some of my originality had been anticipated and that the editor, Cyril Franks, might reverse his decision and decide not to publish another article about an assertion inventory. However, this was not the case. Unfortunately, the text of the article which appeared in print contained one scoring key misprint which I could not get corrected prior to publication. It stated that item 47 should be reverse scored, and it *should not be reverse scored*.

"The reason why the publication has been so highly cited is probably due to its timeliness. In the mid- and late 1970s, interest in both the research and practice of assertion training mushroomed. Assertion training was to the 1970s what sensitivity training was to the 1960s but with a greater empirical basis. Much of the research and practice was conducted with college students, and the article about the CSES simply appeared at the right time and in a visible journal."

1. **McFall R M & Lillesand D B.** Behavior rehearsal with modeling and coaching in assertion training. *J. Abnormal Psychol.* 77:313-23, 1971.
2. **McFall R M.** Citation Classic. Commentary on *J. Abnormal Psychol.* 77:313-23, 1971. *Current Contents/Social & Behavioral Sciences* 14(23):22, 7 June 1982.
3. **Rathus SA.** A 30-item schedule for assessing assertive behavior. *Behav. Ther.* 4:398-406, 1973.
4., Citation Classic. Commentary on *Behav Ther.* 4:398-406, 1973. *Current Contents/Social & Behavioral Sciences* 16(17): 16, 23 April 1984.