

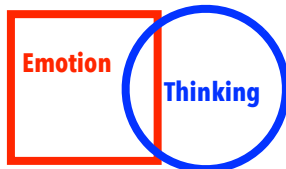
# Bowen's Differentiation of Self Scale

adapted by Peter A Frith

## High differentiation (100):

Thinking and feeling are disentangled. Reasoned, thoughtful responses are not sabotaged by emotion. A person is characterised by:

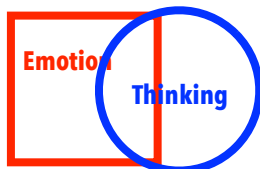
- Less anxiety, less relationship enmeshment, and less cognitive/emotion fusion
- Better decisions and relationships and fewer life problems
- Less determined by others peoples' opinions
- Life is lived from a solid sense of self which is shaped by one's own convictions and beliefs.



**100** is hypothetical only

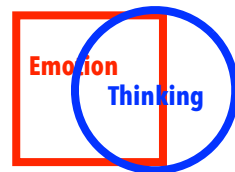
### 75-95

- Can listen without reacting
- Able to assume responsibility for oneself
- Not preoccupied with placement in the hierarchy



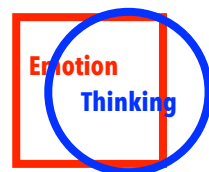
### 60-75

- Less emotionally reactive & less chronically anxious
- Able to choose between closeness and goals
- Can extricate themselves from high emotion situations



### 50-60

- Aware of the difference between thoughts & feelings
- Still sensitive to others' opinions
- Hesitates to say what they believe lest they offend



### 25-50

- Lives in a feeling world
- Borrows beliefs and convictions from others
- Quick to imitate others in order to gain acceptance
- Energy goes into loving and being loved
- Little energy for goal directed activity
- Addicted to comfort
- Can react as authoritarian, compliant, or rebellious



### 0-25

- Makes major life decisions based on what feels right
- Responses range from compliance to rebellion
- Narcissistic statements dominate e.g. "I want" or "I hurt"
- So sensitive to other's opinions that functioning is governed by reactions to the environment
- Immersed in a feeling world.

## Low differentiation (0):

Thinking and emotion are fused and confused.

Automatic, instinctive reactions overwhelm cognitive objectivity.

Characterised by:

- More anxiety, more relationship enmeshment, more cognitive/emotion fusion, and more life problems
- Poorer decision making, greater relational trouble, and focused on others' opinions
- Life is lived from a pseudo-self which is shaped by and borrowed from others.