

Murray Bowen's Scale of Differentiation (adapted)

100	Hypothetical/ideal human? It is not clear whether this is achievable.
85-95	<p>Very well differentiated.</p> <p>Principle-oriented and goal-directed.</p> <p>Inner-directed, internal locus of control, self-sufficient, self-regulating, assertive.</p> <p>Not likely to be emotionally reactive.</p> <p>Not dogmatic or rigid in thinking and in action.</p> <p>Capable of listening to the viewpoints of others with an open mind.</p> <p>Can discard old beliefs in favour of new ones.</p> <p>Can listen without reacting and can communicate without antagonising others — non-adversarial.</p> <p>Secure with self and values time in solitude.</p> <p>Functioning and self-image not affected by praise or criticism. Welcomes and values honest feedback.</p> <p>Not overly responsible for others.</p> <p>Free to enjoy relationships.</p> <p>Does not have a 'need' for others and others do not feel used.</p> <p>Respects and values differences.</p> <p>Not prone to engage in polarised debates.</p> <p>Realistic self-image.</p> <p>Not pre-occupied with his/her place in the hierarchy.</p> <p>Realistic expectations from self — understands self limitations and needs and takes them seriously.</p> <p>Expectations from others are also realistic.</p> <p>Tolerance of intense feelings, has well-developed emotional skill and literacy.</p> <p>Low or no anxiety.</p> <p>Can adapt under stressful situations without developing stress but will avoid such situations where there is a choice.</p> <p>Peaceful. Well-developed spirituality (not necessarily religion).</p> <p>Excellent personal boundaries.</p>
75	<p>Fairly well differentiated.</p> <p>Can be calm in troubled times.</p> <p>Moves between emotional closeness and independent goals.</p> <p>More real — does not seek approval.</p> <p>Less emotionally reactive but if triggered recovers quickly. More choice between feelings and intellect.</p> <p>Good boundaries.</p>
60	<p>Acts more on the basis of reason and intellect than simply reacting to feelings.</p> <p>Able to consider and choose actions rather than simply react to a feeling.</p> <p>Able to think for self rather than simply follow the opinions of others.</p> <p>In relationships hesitates to say what he/she thinks. Can hide true thoughts/feelings/needs.</p> <p>Boundaries improving.</p>
50	If triggered or stressed recovers more easily.
40 (poor)	<p>Lifelong pursuit of ideal closeness.</p> <p>Relationships tend to be based on mutual dependency or might be avoided altogether.</p> <p>Low level of real self. Operates a lot out of a pseudo-self/adapted inner child.</p> <p>Seeks the approval of others a lot. Preoccupied with creating a good impression.</p> <p>Feels good if approved of, bad if criticised/disapproved of. Self-image depends on outside.</p> <p>Influenced by feelings — low ability to choose actions rationally.</p> <p>Poor emotional skill/literacy.</p> <p>Poor or inconsistent boundaries.</p> <p>Seeks distractions from self.</p>
30 (poor)	<p>Spends a lot of energy on 'loving' or 'being loved'.</p> <p>Highly suggestible to views/opinions of others and adopts viewpoints of others. Poor boundaries.</p> <p>Prone to joining sects or adopting extremist or rigid black/white ideologies, philosophies.</p> <p>Alternatively, consistently rebellious or rigid in beliefs and views.</p> <p>Successful at work only if praised by superiors.</p>
0-25 (very poor)	<p>Lives in a feeling world — but could also be so sensitised to the point of being emotionally numb.</p> <p>High levels of chronic anxiety — difficult to find situations in which they can be truly comfortable.</p> <p>Difficulty maintaining long-term relationships — Gives up on relationships.</p> <p>Emotionally needy and highly reactive to others. Co-dependent. No boundaries.</p> <p>Most of life energy goes into 'loving' or 'being loved' — most of the person's energy is consumed by reactivity to having failed to get love</p> <p>Little energy left for goal-directed pursuits — trying to achieve comfort is enough.</p> <p>Functioning almost entirely governed by emotional reactions to the environment.</p> <p>Inability to differentiate between thoughts and feelings — isn't aware of alternatives to what he/she feels.</p> <p>Responses range from automatic compliance to extreme oppositional behaviour.</p>
*Differentiation according to Bowen is 'the amount of self you have in you'.	
* We attract, and are attracted to, people with a similar level of differentiation	
Reference: Kerr M., Bowen M. (1988). Family Evaluation: An Approach Based on Bowen Theory. NY: Norton.	