Negative Symptom Assessment-16 (NSA-16)—Long Form

1. **Prolonged time to respond.** After asking the subject a question, he/she pauses for inappropriately long periods before answering. Rate severity of the frequency of these pauses.
   1. No abnormal pauses before speaking
   2. Minimal evidence of inappropriate pauses, may be extreme of normal
   3. Occasionally pauses long enough before answering the question to cause you to wonder whether he/she heard it
   4. Pauses occur frequently (20-40% of responses)
   5. Pauses occur most of the time (40-80% of responses)
   6. Pauses occur with almost every response (80-100% of responses)
   9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

2. **Restricted speech quantity.** This item assesses the amount of speech the subject provides in the course of the interview. Ratings on this item suggest that the subject gives brief answers to questions and/or provides elaborating details only after the interviewer prods him.
   1. Normal speech quantity
   2. Minimal reduction in quantity, may be extreme of normal
   3. Speech seems reduced, but more can be obtained with minimal prodding
   4. Speech is maintained only by regularly prodding the subject
   5. Responses are usually limited to a few words and/or details are only obtained by prodding or bribing
   6. Responses are usually non-verbal or limited to 1 or 2 word answers (despite one’s best efforts to get the subject to elaborate)
   9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

3. **Impoverished speech content.** The subject may talk a lot or a little but the information conveyed is very limited. If this symptom is pronounced, you will feel you have little more information at the end of the conversation than at the beginning. For subjects who give minimal responses, rate item based on what the interviewer knows after asking probing questions.
   1. Normal speech content
   2. Minimal reduction in content, may be extreme of normal
   3. Ideas are sometimes vague
   4. Ideas are vague and/or some ideas remain vague even after the interviewer asks for clarification
   5. Ideas remain vague even after the interviewer asks for clarification
   6. No ideas can be clarified beyond vague
   9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)
4. **Inarticulate speech.** The subject’s speech cannot be understood because enunciation is poor. Do not rate psychotic sub-vocalizations if the rest of the subject’s speech is normal and these utterances are not addressed to the interviewer. For subjects with a strong dialect, rate on the basis of the subject’s ability to articulate and not on their competence with the language.

   1. Clear speech, not mumbled
   2. Minimal garbled speech, may be extreme of normal
   3. A few words slurred, but can be understood in context
   4. The subject must occasionally be asked to repeat mumbled words
   5. Many words are difficult to understand; the subject must frequently be asked to repeat, but on repeating can usually be understood
   6. Little language can be understood even after repeating
   7. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

5. **Emotion: Reduced range.** Emotion is the feeling content of a person’s inner life. This item assesses the range of emotion experienced by the subject during the last week (or other specified time period). Base ratings on the subject’s answers to queries of whether he/she has felt happy, sad, etc. during the last week, as well as any reports of having these emotions later in the interview. A full range of emotions would include, but not be limited to happiness, sadness, pride, fear, surprise, and anger. This item should be distinguished from the capacity to display affect, which is rated elsewhere. (If you sense that a subject’s emotional life is autistic and not contextually validated, rate his/her emotional range according to your interpretations of his/her experience.)

   1. Normal range of emotion
   2. Minimal reduction in range, may be extreme of normal
   3. Range seems restricted relative to a normal person, but during the specified time frame subject convincingly reports at least 4 emotions.
   4. Subject convincingly identifies 2 or 3 emotional experiences
   5. Subject convincingly identifies only 1 emotional experience
   6. Subject reports little or no emotional range
   7. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

6. **Affect: Reduced modulation of intensity.** This item assesses the subject’s modulations of intensity of affect shown during the interview while discussing matters that would be expected to elicit significantly different affective intensities in a normal person.

   1. Normal modulations of affect
   2. Minimal reduction of modulation, may be extreme of normal
   3. Affective intensity is muted relative to normal, but some spontaneous change in affective intensity appropriate to the content of conversation is observed
   4. Affective responses are clearly blunted; but by asking more pointed questions, appropriate changes in affective intensity can be elicited
   5. Intensity of affect is modulated only slightly, even after prodding
   6. Affective responses are never modulated, even after prodding
   7. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)
7. **Affect: Reduced display on demand.** Affect is the outward expression of a person’s feelings. This item assesses the subject’s ability to display a range of affect as expressed by changes in his/her facial expression and gestures when asked by the interviewer to show how his/her face appears when he/she feels happy, sad, proud, scared, surprised, and angry. (Although capable, some subjects are reticent about making facial expressions on demand. The interviewer may encourage the subject until convinced that he/she is unable, or unwilling to assume the expression. Do not accept correct affective expressions that are half-hearted and unconvincing, and do not accept descriptions of affective expressions.)

1. Subject convincingly displays all requested affective expressions
2. Subject convincingly displays 5 of 6 requested affective expressions
3. Subject displays any 4 of 6 requested affective expressions
4. Subject displays any 2 or 3 of 6 requested affective expressions
5. Subject displays any 1 of 6 requested affective expressions
6. Subject is unable to display any of the affective expressions
9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

8. **Reduced social drive.** This item assesses how much the subject desires to initiate social interactions. Desire may be measured in part by the number of actual or attempted social contacts with others. To rate severity probes the type of social interactions, and their frequency. Remember the reference range is a normal 20 year old. Many subjects may be rated 2 to 3.

1. Normal social drive
2. Minimal reduction in social drive, may be extreme of normal
3. Desire for social interactions seems somewhat reduced
4. Obvious reduction in desire to initiate social contacts, but a number of contacts are initiated each week
5. Marked reduction in the subject’s desire to initiate social contacts, but a few contacts are maintained at subject’s initiation (as with family)
6. No desire to initiate any social interactions
9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

9. **Poor rapport with interviewer.** This item assesses the interviewer’s subjective sense that he/she and the subject are actively engaged in communication with one another. Evaluate both verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication. Do no rate hostility as lack of rapport.

1. Normal rapport
2. Minimal reduction in rapport, may be extreme of normal
3. Interviewer sometimes has to carry the conversation because the subject’s interest seems reduced
4. Interchanges are generally dull and uninspiring; interviewer must often lead the conversation because subject is detached
5. Interviewer must prod to engage the subject in the interview
6. Prodding does not result in engagement with the interviewer
9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)
10. **Sexual interest.** This item assesses how much the subject retains interest in sexual activity. Do not exclusively rate actual performance though in many instances performance might indicate desire and non-performance the absence of it. Take the subject’s marital and environmental situations into account when rating this item. (Because of his/her illness, he/she may be unable to find a suitable sex partner; if hospitalized, he/she may be discouraged from having sex.) Sexual interest can be expressed by any sexual activity or interest including, but not limited to: intercourse, foreplay, masturbation, fantasy, flirtations, etc. If the subject claims to be interested in sex but his/her performance is not consistent with his/her claim, the rater should ask him/her to account for this discrepancy.

1. Desires to engage in some form of sexual activity once a day or more
2. Desires to engage in some form of sexual activity 3-6 times a week
3. Desires to engage in some form sexual activity once or twice a week
4. Desires to engage in some form of sexual activity 1-3 time a month
5. Desires to engage in some form of sexual activity several times a year
6. No sexual interest is reported
7. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

11. **Poor grooming and hygiene.** The subject presents with poorly groomed hair, disheveled clothing, etc. Do not rate grooming as poor if it is simply done in what a middle-class observer might consider poor taste (e.g.; wild hairdo or excessive facial makeup).

1. Normal grooming and hygiene
2. Minimal reduction of grooming and hygiene, may be extreme of normal
3. Clean but untidy, or clothes are mismatched
4. Clothes are unkempt and unbuttoned (looks as if subject just got out of bed)
5. Clothes are dirty or stained, or has an odor
6. Clothes are badly soiled and/or subject has a foul odor
7. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

12. **Reduced sense of purpose.** This item assesses whether the subject posits integrated goals for his/her life. If the subject already has what seems to be a satisfactory and well-integrated life, it is not necessary that he/she be planning a change to be judged as having a good sense of purpose.

1. Normal sense of purpose
2. Minimal reduction in purpose, may be extreme of normal
3. Life goals somewhat vague, but current activities suggest purpose
4. Subject has difficulty coming up with life goals, but activities are directed toward limited goals
5. Goals are very limited or have to be suggested, and activities are not focused toward achieving any of them
6. No identifiable life goals
7. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

13. **Reduced hobbies and interest.** This item assesses the range and intensity of the subject’s interests.

1. Normal interests
2. Minimal reduction in interests, may be extreme of normal
3. Range of interests and/or commitment to them seems diminished
4. Range of interests is clearly diminished and is not particularly committed to interests held
5. Only 1 or 2 interests reported, and these pursued superficially
6. No identifiable goals
7. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)
14. **Reduced daily activity.** This item assesses the level of the subject’s daily activity and his/her failure to take advantage of the opportunities his/her environment offers. Get a complete account of what the subject does from the time he/she gets up until he goes to bed. Compare his/her activities with those of a young person who is not mentally ill. If the subject participates as an outpatient in a mental health program, determine the level of his/her participation, i.e. whether he/she is actively involved, or just passes time there. If the subject is hospitalized rate his/her daily activity as you would for a young person who is not hospitalized and without regard for the limitations that the hospital routine may place on him/her.

1. Normal daily activity
2. Minimal reduction in activity, may be extreme of normal
3. Employed, attends school or volunteers, but is underachieving; few hobbies
4. Not involved in the activities expected of a normal young person (may be unemployed, or minimally employed for education, but may be involved in a mental health program one or more days a week)
5. Most of day spent doing activities, things that require minimal mental or physical exertion (watches TV, smokes, drinks coffee, walks to store, but may be involved in a mental health program one or more days a week)
6. Most of day is spent sitting in a chair or lying in bed; has little or no regard for what goes on in immediate environment
9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

15. **Reduced expressive gestures.** Gestures and body movements that normally facilitate communication during speech are less than normal, or are not observed at all. Do not rate involuntary movement disorders.

1. Normal expressive gestures
2. Minimal reduction in gestures, may be extreme of normal
3. Hand and head gestures normally seen during conversation are reduced
4. Hand or head gestures are infrequent; gestures may be limited to periods when the subject is discussing topics of special interest
5. Gestures infrequent even during discussion of highly emotional topics
6. Gestures are never observed
9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)

16. **Slowed movements.** This item assesses how much the subject’s voluntary movements are slowed. At a minimum one should rate movements as gait and those of rising from a chair. Rate these movements in comparison to a normal young person

1. Normal speed of movements
2. Minimal reduction in speed of movements, may be extreme of normal
3. Voluntary movements are slightly retarded or slowed
4. Movements are generally sluggish
5. Most movements are retarded and made with effort
6. All movements are made with extreme effort; subject must be assisted from chair
9. Not ratable (use only when all efforts to rate this item have failed)
**GLOBAL NEGATIVE SYMPTOMS RATING.** Rate this item on the basis of overall impression of negative symptoms in the subject, not on the basis of a single item or total score.

1. No evidence of negative symptoms
2. Minimal evidence of negative symptoms
3. Mild evidence of negative symptoms
4. Moderate evidence of negative symptoms apparent to the casual observer
5. Marked evidence of negative symptoms readily apparent to the casual observer
6. Severe evidence of negative symptoms marked and obvious impact on functioning
7. Extremely severe negative symptoms (incapacitating)
Negative Symptom Assessment Global Rating

Definition Of Negative Symptoms

Negative symptoms represent the reduction or absence of behaviors normally present in a healthy person. These include, but are not limited to, behaviors related to personal, social and affective behaviors. Specifically, negative symptoms of schizophrenia are considered to include reduction in emotional expression and perception, reduction in the fluency and productivity of thought and speech, reduced desire for social involvement and reduced social interaction with others and a loss or lack of goal-directed behavior. These symptoms contribute substantially to reductions in functioning for schizophrenic patients as compared to others in their society.

Global Negative Symptoms Rating--Severity

This score represents your overall assessment of the subject's negative symptoms. The rating should not be an average of any particular behavior, but a gestalt of everything seen in the interview. When rating impairment, only impairment that you judge is due to negative symptoms should be rated. The referent is a normal healthy young adult.

1) No impairment (No question of negative symptoms has been raised in the rater's mind.)
2) Minimal negative symptoms (A trained observer is uncertain if clinically meaningful negative symptoms are present. If present, they have little or no adverse impact on the subject's life.)
3) Mild negative symptoms (Close observation suggests that negative symptoms are present, but they might be missed in casual conversation or by an untrained observer. The subject is able to overcome most problems related to these deficits.)
4) Moderate negative symptoms (Negative symptoms are obviously present and they have adverse impact on some areas of the subject's life.)
5) Marked negative symptoms (Negative symptoms are obviously present by all who meet this person. Many aspects of the subject's life are adversely impacted by these symptoms.)
6) Severe negative symptoms (Negative symptoms are very prominent and the subject's life is severely disrupted because of them.)
7) Extremely severe negative symptoms (Negative symptoms are extremely prominent and the subject's life is completely disrupted because of them. These symptoms are amongst the most prominent that the rater has observed, or, if the rater has limited experienced, among the most severe that the rater can imagine.)
Global Level Of Functioning

This score represents your overall assessment of the subject's level of functioning. The rating should not be an average of any particular area, but a gestalt of everything known about the subject's level of functioning in all areas of his/her life. The referent is a normal healthy young adult.

1) No impairment (No question of impairment in functioning has been raised in the rater's mind.)
2) Minimal impairment (A trained observer is uncertain if there is impairment in functioning, and, if present, this impairment has little or no adverse impact on the subject's life.)
3) Mild impairment (Close observation suggests that the subject experiences some impairment in functioning, but this impairment might be missed in casual interactions or by an untrained observer. The subject is able to achieve most of his/her life goals.)
4) Moderate impairment (Impairment in functioning is obvious to any trained observer. Some life goals are not attained.)
5) Marked impairment (Impairment in functioning is obviously present by all who meet this person. Many aspects of the subject's life are adversely affected.)
6) Severe impairment (Impairment in functioning is extremely prominent and the subject's life is severely disrupted because of it.)
7) Extremely severe impairment (Impairment in functioning is extremely prominent and the subject's life is completely disrupted because of it. Functioning is at amongst the lowest levels that the rater has observed, or, if inexperienced, at the lowest level that the rater can imagine.)