



Best Connections

03

Core status

This is about you – how you feel about yourself as you track on through the world. In particular, the Core Status will look at your SHM:

SECURITY

– what is it that makes me feel secure or insecure? How can I maximise personal security?

HAPPINESS

– “The purpose of our lives is to be happy,” Dalai Lama (born 1935). What is happiness? Am I happy? Could I be happier? What makes me happy?

MOTIVATION

– “Motivation is a fire from within. If someone else tries to light that fire under you, chances are it will burn very briefly,” Stephen Covey. Exploring what motivates you could be the step to lighting your fire and making sure it doesn’t go out! A motivated life is a life worth getting up for every morning.

No surprise that answers to these questions link back to Core Goals and other parts of the app. Your status on SHM is affected by many things and will vary at different stages of your life cycle, as well as from day to day in more subtle ways.

Before you move on, do a quick reality check:

My level of personal security is
a) strong b) middling c) weak

In terms of happiness, overall I see myself as
a) Very happy b) Sometimes happy c) Could be happier

- *My current motivational state!*
 a) *Highly motivated* b) *Middling* c) *Not very motivated*

MY SENSE OF SECURITY ...

“I want my boys to have an understanding of people’s emotions, their insecurities, people’s distress, and their hopes and dreams”

– **Princess Diana**

Before trying to understand others, here’s something to help you understand yourself!

My security self-awareness quiz – score yourself 1–10 where 10 is your highest possible personal score:

I am secure in my ...		Score 1-10
<i>Work – abilities and career</i>		
<i>Family – personal relationships</i>		
<i>Home – familiar surroundings</i>		
<i>Money – income and savings</i>		
<i>Health – physical and emotional</i>		
<i>Identity – being appreciated for who I am</i>		
<i>Other – freedom, spiritual etc</i>		
Total		
7 – 30:	There are a few areas of vulnerability to think about. Maybe a good idea to have a chat with a close friend or have an exploratory meeting with a counsellor.	
31 – 55:	You’re with the majority ... good in many areas but some areas are still giving a bit of grief!	
56 – 70:	You are a very secure person and have much to be thankful for. Help someone who may have a low score!	

"I hope life isn't a big joke, because I don't get it" – **Jack Handey**
((b. 1949))

Why should it be a joke? Why shouldn't it?!

"You fall out of your mother's womb, you crawl across open country under fire, and drop into your grave" – **Quentin Crisp**

We feel very secure in the womb and then spend the rest of life dealing with insecurities – why?

"Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid" – **Frederick Buechner (b. 1926)**

Do you notice the beautiful things each day? How do you cope with the terrible things?

"The art of life is the art of avoiding pain" – **Thomas Jefferson (b. 1743)**

Is the 3rd President of USA being pessimistic or realistic? Are we born optimists who change?

"The fear of life is the favourite disease of the 20th century"
– **William Lyon Phelps (b. 1865)**

How can one person's phobia be another person's delight? Have you faced a fear and overcome it?

"If A equals success, then the formula is: $A = X + Y + Z$, where X is work, Y is play, and Z is keep your mouth shut" – **Albert Einstein**

Have you ever wished you'd kept quiet? What is the insecurity in speaking?

"Life is easier than you'd think; all that is necessary is to accept the impossible, do without the indispensable, and bear the intolerable"
– **Kathleen Norris (b. 1947)**

**Do you over-complicate life?
What is it for you at its simplest?**

“The blanket of life is kind and warm for those who can find its snuggle”
– Terri Guillemets

**What is your main ‘comfort blanket’ these
days? Have you got older threadbare blankets?!**

“You can tell the greatness of a man by what makes him angry”
– Abraham Lincoln (b. 1809)

**What makes you angry?
What do you do about it?**

“Is freedom anything else than the right to live as we wish? Nothing else”
– Epictetus (b. AD55)

**How would you define your freedom?
What might reduce it?**

*“Jesus wanted us to be loving and forgiving. I don’t know what makes
people so cruel”* – Elton John (b. 1947)

**Can you recall the first time you encountered
cruelty against you? How did it affect you?**

“We’re all sinners. Everybody you meet all over the world is a sinner”
– Billy Graham

**Does this make it easier or harder to forgive
others? Do you hold grudges?**

*“Let us have a dagger between our teeth, a bomb in our hands, and an
infinite scorn in our hearts”* – Benito Mussolini (b. 1883)

**It didn’t seem to do Benito much good!
What was his problem?**

"I used to get the feeling, and sometimes I still get it, that sometimes I was fooling somebody; I don't know who or what, maybe myself"

– Marilyn Monroe

What do you think Marilyn meant?

Do you ever get that feeling?

"I want to be buried with a mobile phone, just in case I'm not dead"

– Amanda Holden (b. 1971)

**If we can't live with our insecurities, do we
have to take them to the grave? Is there room?!**

MY SENSE OF HAPPINESS...

'The teens used to be the golden years. Then it was decreed that life began at 40 but it seems true happiness does not begin until you hit 55,' study for First Direct reported in The Telegraph 2.9.10, linking it to retirement and paying off mortgages. 'This trend continues as they get older, with 71% of those older than 65 content with their lot'.

'One in four friendships is entirely digital with friends conversing at least once a week via Facebook, Twitter etc. On average, they last 6 years before meeting face to face'

– Future First, December 2013

'Britons have become miserable because we are selfish, unfit and anti-social, a group of eminent thinkers claims' – Daily Telegraph 13.4.11. Action for Happiness, backed by the Dalai Lama, launched to combat this.

Do Best Connections 'happiness score' – how are you doing?
1-10 for each with a maximum of 100!

I am happy in my ...	Score 1-10
<i>Giving – doing things for others, volunteering</i>	
<i>Relating – connecting with friends with whom you've lost contact</i>	
<i>Exercising – taking care of your body</i>	
<i>Appreciating – noting your surroundings and things of beauty</i>	
<i>Trying out – learning new things eg. Language, music, painting, food</i>	
<i>Direction – have goals to look forward to and stick to resolutions</i>	
<i>Resilience – using ways to bounce back and learn from disappointment</i>	
<i>Emotion – taking a positive approach, focussing on happy moments not the sad ones</i>	
<i>Acceptance – being comfortable with who you are rather than dwelling on the flaws</i>	
<i>Meaning – feeling part of something bigger with clear purpose eg. in societies/club,</i>	
Total	
10 – 30:	Life could be better! Need to change focus and speak to someone for help
30 – 60:	Getting on OK though with some ups and downs. Try some action points on the list
56 – 70:	You are a very secure person and have much to be thankful for. Help someone who may have a low score!
60 plus	This is a happy season of life. Celebrate the good things and share the harvest!

Clarke Carlisle, former professional footballer revealed he tried to take his own life and knew some 30 other top footballers needing help with depressive or suicidal thoughts – ‘a recurring theme was loss, such as injury or retirement’. (Sunday Times 15.9.13)

‘Everybody gets depressed, and one person’s depression is not a million miles from another’s. It also seems a given that depression is an adjunct of fame.’ (Sunday Times 7.10.12). Many famous have been cited – Victoria Pendleton, Jack Straw, Pamela Stephenson, Freddie Flintoff, Neil Diamond, Serena Williams, Nicolas Cage, Amy Winehouse, Winston Churchill, Princess Diana ... an endless list but why?

“You will never be happy if you continue to search for what happiness consists of. You will never live if you are looking for the meaning of life”
– **Albert Camus**

**Are you always looking for the butterfly
but it always flies away?**

“Happiness depends upon ourselves” – **Aristotle**

**In what ways is he right and in what ways is he
wrong?!**

“Man is most nearly himself when he achieves the seriousness of a child at play” – **Heraclitus**

**How playful or serious are you?
Do you find both bring happiness?**

“I think everybody should get rich and famous and do everything they ever dreamed of so they can see that it’s not the answer” – **Jim Carrey**

**What do you think is Jim’s question?
What do you think is the answer?!**

*“I am good, but not an angel. I do sin, but I am not the devil.
I am just a small girl in a big world trying to find someone to love”*
– **Marilyn Monroe (b. 1926)**

In a big world, have you found someone to love? Why is love so important to happiness?

“Since I was 16, I’ve felt a black cloud hangs over me. Since then, I have taken pills for depression... I’m not frightened of appearing vulnerable”
– **Amy Winehouse**

Do you ever face your vulnerabilities? What are they?

“An example I often use to illustrate the reality of vanity, is this: look at the peacock; it’s beautiful if you look at it from the front. But if you look at it from behind, you discover the truth... Whoever gives in to such self-absorbed vanity has huge misery hiding inside them” – **Pope Francis**

Do you know any peacocks?! What do you think things are like ‘behind the scenes’?

“Sometimes I feel my whole life has been one big rejection. I wish I knew why I am so anguished” – **Marilyn Monroe**

Have you ever felt that way? Feelings are powerful but can they be trusted?

“If you’re going through hell, keep going” – **Winston Churchill**

WC knew all about depression – his ‘black dog’! Is it always that simple WC?

“And in the end it’s not the years in your life that count. It’s the life in your years” – **Abraham Lincoln**

What is putting ‘life’ in your years right now? Can you see them as ‘good’, even if tough?

“Too many people spend money they haven’t earned, to buy things they don’t want, to impress people they don’t like” – **Will Rogers**

**Is this true to some or any extent?
If so, why do any of us do it?**

"He has the most who is most content with the least"
– Diogenes (b. 1412 BC)

**Think back to a time when you had less
– were you more or less happy?**

"Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves" – Carl Jung

**What irritates you most about others?
How might this help you understand yourself?!**

MY SENSE OF MOTIVATION

"I'm really, really enjoying myself, I seem to have a lot of purpose in my life. I'm enjoying what I'm doing, you know, and people are liking it. So, it's great, you know" – Robbie Williams

**What would you say is motivating Robbie?
What about you?**

My motivation levels self-awareness quiz – score yourself 1–10 where 10 is your highest possible personal score:

Here’s how these motivate me right now:		Score 1-10
<i>My sense of purpose in general</i>		
<i>Outlets for my ability at work</i>		
<i>My home and neighbourhood</i>		
<i>The finances – incoming and outgoing</i>		
<i>Fitness, body shape and energy</i>		
<i>Personal relationships</i>		
<i>Overall self-improvement</i>		
Total		
TOP THREE:	These are your ‘drivers’. Do you have specific goals for them?	
FOURTH AND FIFTH:	Does this mean that these are in the ‘right sync’? Is your ‘motivational mix’ in balance?	
BOTTOM TWO:	Are these less important for you than they used to be? Are you giving them fair attention?	

“My career gave me a sense of purpose and without it my self-esteem fell. Quite simply my job was a huge part of who I was,”
 – 37 year old Louise on the loss of her job (First One magazine 26.2.12).

What are the things that currently give you a sense of purpose? What makes you feel less purpose in life?

“After sleeping through a hundred million centuries we have finally opened our eyes on a sumptuous planet, sparkling with colour, bountiful with life. Within decades we must close our eyes again. Isn’t it a noble, an enlightened way of spending our brief time in the sun, to work at understanding the universe and how we have come to wake up in it? This is how I answer when I am asked—as I am surprisingly often—why I bother to get up in the mornings” – Richard Dawkins (b. 1941)

Does the ‘sumptuous planet’ motivate you? Which bits?!

“Each day of human life contains joy and anger, pain and pleasure, darkness and light, growth and decay. Each moment is etched with nature’s grand design – do not try to deny or oppose the cosmic order of things” – **Morihei Ueshiba (b. 1883, founder of Aikido and Teacher)**

Has anything really changed since 1883? What is ‘the cosmic order’ lined up for your day’s moments?

“I would gladly give all my millions for just one lasting marital success,”
– **Five times married Jean Paul Getty, one time wealthiest man in the world.**

How did you define success when you were younger? How do you define it now?

“The great question of our time is, ‘Will we be motivated by materialistic philosophy or by spiritual power?’”
– **Billy Graham (b. 1918, American Preacher)**

Is it a great question? What does it mean?

“Look at situations from all angles, and you will become more open”
– **Dalai Lama**

What is your angle? Are you open-minded?

“My friend asked me the essence of life and I smiled” – **Mike Dolan**

Does this make you smile or wince? Look for something to make you smile today!

“Life does not cease to be funny when people die any more than it ceases to be serious when people laugh” – **George Bernard Shaw, The Doctor’s Dilemma, 1906**

**Should you smile at the absurdities in life?
Do you smile at some personal absurdities?!**

“Reason and justice tell me there’s more love for humanity in electricity and steam than in chastity and vegetarianism”

– Anton Chekhov (b. 1860, Russian Author)

**Can you identify a dynamo in your life?
Are your passions helping or hindering you
toward your goals?**

“He who has a why to live can bear almost any how”

– Friedrich Nietzsche (b. 1844, German Poet and Philosopher)

**Have you ever defined your ‘why’?
Do you struggle to cope with its demands?**

“I am just a child who has never grown up. I still keep asking these ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. Occasionally, I find an answer”

– Stephen Hawking (b. 1942, Theoretical Physicist)

**Do you have the same hunger for answers as
you once did? Might it be good to keep on
asking questions?**

“I used to get the feeling, and sometimes I still get it, that sometimes I was fooling somebody; I don’t know who or what, maybe myself”

– Marilyn Monroe

**Was she ‘a candle in the wind never knowing
who to cling to when the rain set in’?
What do you cling to?**

“Lifeless with a heartbeat” – Daniel, @blindedpoet
(contemporary commentator and tweeter)

**Do you ever feel like this?
What gets you motivated again?**

“You are a little soul carrying around a corpse” – Epictetus (b. 55 AD)

**Here’s a strange way to look at things! Go with
it for the day and see what insights you gain!**

“Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive”
– Howard Thurman (b. 1899, American African Author)

**What’s making you come alive today?
Go and impact the world for good!**

“Thou wilt find rest from vain fancies if thou doest every act in life as though it were thy last” – Aristotle (b. 384 BC, Greek Philosopher)

**Would it change what you today if you listened to
Aristotle on this? His name means ‘best purpose’!**

“Wherever you go, go with all your heart” – Confucius
(b. 551 BC, Chinese Philosopher)

**Are you clear on your motivation, goals and
purpose? Go well with all your energy!**

Why not try a motivation quiz to understand more about your motivators –

<http://richardstep.com/self-motivation-quiz-test/>

Whether you’ve gone through every bit of this fascinating section (Core Status) on how you see yourself in your interaction with the world or you’ve done a bit of fast forwarding, you’ve made it! Hopefully you’ve added to your personal journal on this or you might want to reflect now?

Have you already looked through Core Beliefs and Core Goals? If not, don’t ignore those bits of the apple to bite!

The next bit on the journey of Best Connections is LIFE FOUNDATIONS – this is where you can check how you're doing in the three bits that make up every human being. There are other ways to think of human essence but this is a convenient one for this app!

- **Your BODY** – health, fitness, diet and reaching your physical potential
- **Your SOUL** – understanding your personality, psychology and mental well-being
- **Your SPIRIT** – exploring issues of other-ness, beyond-ness and spirituality

Best step forward then with your **BEST CONNECTIONS**