

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory

Description of the Instrument

The PFAI measures the strength of individuals' beliefs in five aversive consequences of failing. Scores are provided for each of these five lower-order fears of failing: (a) fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment, (b) fear of devaluing one's self-estimate, (c) fear of having an uncertain future, (d) fear of important others losing interest, and (e) fear of upsetting important others. These scores are moderately- to strongly-correlated with each other and their common variance can be modeled with a single higher-order factor representing a general fear of failure. This general fear of failure can be interpreted as the strength of an individual's belief that failure is generally associated with aversive consequences.

Differences in PFAI Long Forms A & B.

Two forms of the PFAI are provided in this packet. Form A is identical to the form that has been used in all of the published research on the PFAI up to 2003. Form B includes a minor modification to one item (removing the negative wording in item #12) that has been recommended in psychometric research with the PFAI (Conroy, Metzler, & Hofer, 2003; Conroy, Willow, & Metzler, 2002). Users are encouraged to use Form B to reduce measurement error and increase the stability of scores over time.

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Long-Form, 25 Items)
Form A – NOT RECOMMENDED FOR USE

Response Scale				
-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Do Not Believe At All		Believe 50% of the Time		Believe 100% of the Time

- _____ 1. When I am failing, it is often because I am not smart enough to perform successfully.
- _____ 2. When I am failing, my future seems uncertain.
- _____ 3. When I am failing, it upsets important others.
- _____ 4. When I am failing, I blame my lack of talent.
- _____ 5. When I am failing, I believe that my future plans will change.
- _____ 6. When I am failing, I expect to be criticized by important others.
- _____ 7. When I am failing, I am afraid that I might not have enough talent.
- _____ 8. When I am failing, it upsets my “plan” for the future.
- _____ 9. When I am failing, I lose the trust of people who are important to me.
- _____ 10. When I am not succeeding, I am less valuable than when I succeed.
- _____ 11. When I am not succeeding, people are less interested in me.
- _____ 12. When I am failing, I am not worried about it affecting my future plans.
- _____ 13. When I am not succeeding, people seem to want to help me less.
- _____ 14. When I am failing, important others are not happy.
- _____ 15. When I am not succeeding, I get down on myself easily.
- _____ 16. When I am failing, I hate the fact that I am not in control of the outcome.
- _____ 17. When I am not succeeding, people tend to leave me alone.
- _____ 18. When I am failing, it is embarrassing if others are there to see it.
- _____ 19. When I am failing, important others are disappointed.
- _____ 20. When I am failing, I believe that everybody knows I am failing.
- _____ 21. When I am not succeeding, some people are not interested in me anymore.
- _____ 22. When I am failing, I believe that my doubters feel that they were right about me.
- _____ 23. When I am not succeeding, my value decreases for some people.
- _____ 24. When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me.
- _____ 25. When I am failing, I worry that others may think I am not trying.

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Long-Form, 25 Items)
Form B – RECOMMENDED FOR USE

Response Scale				
-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Do Not Believe At All		Believe 50% of the Time		Believe 100% of the Time

- _____ 1. When I am failing, it is often because I am not smart enough to perform successfully.
- _____ 2. When I am failing, my future seems uncertain.
- _____ 3. When I am failing, it upsets important others.
- _____ 4. When I am failing, I blame my lack of talent.
- _____ 5. When I am failing, I believe that my future plans will change.
- _____ 6. When I am failing, I expect to be criticized by important others.
- _____ 7. When I am failing, I am afraid that I might not have enough talent.
- _____ 8. When I am failing, it upsets my “plan” for the future.
- _____ 9. When I am failing, I lose the trust of people who are important to me.
- _____ 10. When I am not succeeding, I am less valuable than when I succeed.
- _____ 11. When I am not succeeding, people are less interested in me.
- _____ 12. When I am failing, I worry about it affecting my future plans.
- _____ 13. When I am not succeeding, people seem to want to help me less.
- _____ 14. When I am failing, important others are not happy.
- _____ 15. When I am not succeeding, I get down on myself easily.
- _____ 16. When I am failing, I hate the fact that I am not in control of the outcome.
- _____ 17. When I am not succeeding, people tend to leave me alone.
- _____ 18. When I am failing, it is embarrassing if others are there to see it.
- _____ 19. When I am failing, important others are disappointed.
- _____ 20. When I am failing, I believe that everybody knows I am failing.
- _____ 21. When I am not succeeding, some people are not interested in me anymore.
- _____ 22. When I am failing, I believe that my doubters feel that they were right about me.
- _____ 23. When I am not succeeding, my value decreases for some people.
- _____ 24. When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me.
- _____ 25. When I am failing, I worry that others may think I am not trying.

Scoring Template:
Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (25-Item Long Form)

Fear of Experiencing Shame & Embarrassment (FSE)

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{10} + \frac{\quad}{15} + \frac{\quad}{18} + \frac{\quad}{20} + \frac{\quad}{22} + \frac{\quad}{24} + \frac{\quad}{25} \right) = \frac{\quad}{7} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

Fear of Devaluing One's Self-Estimate (FDSE)

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{1} + \frac{\quad}{4} + \frac{\quad}{7} + \frac{\quad}{16} \right) = \frac{\quad}{4} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

Fear of Having an Uncertain Future (FUF): scoring varies for Forms A & B

FORM A

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{5} + \frac{\quad}{8} - \frac{\quad}{12} \right) = \frac{\quad}{4} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

FORM B

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{5} + \frac{\quad}{8} + \frac{\quad}{12} \right) = \frac{\quad}{4} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

Fear of Important Others Losing Interest (FIOLI)

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{11} + \frac{\quad}{13} + \frac{\quad}{17} + \frac{\quad}{21} + \frac{\quad}{23} \right) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

Fear of Upsetting Important Others (FUIO)

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{3} + \frac{\quad}{6} + \frac{\quad}{9} + \frac{\quad}{14} + \frac{\quad}{19} \right) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

General Fear of Failure

$$\text{Scale} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{\text{FSE}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FDSE}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FUF}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FIOLI}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FUIO}} \right) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Short-Form)				
---	--	--	--	--

Response Scale				
-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Do Not Believe At All		Believe 50% of the Time		Believe 100% of the Time

- _____ 1. When I am failing, I am afraid that I might not have enough talent.
- _____ 2. When I am failing, it upsets my “plan” for the future.
- _____ 3. When I am not succeeding, people are less interested in me.
- _____ 4. When I am failing, important others are disappointed.
- _____ 5. When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me.

Scoring Template: Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Short Form)
--

General Fear of Failure

Item $(\frac{\quad}{1} + \frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{3} + \frac{\quad}{4} + \frac{\quad}{5}) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \underline{\quad}$

Key References for the PFAI

- Conroy, D. E., & Metzler, J. N. (2003). Temporal stability of Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory items. *Measurement in Physical Education and Exercise Science, 7*, 243-261. doi: 10.1207/S15327841MPEE0704_3 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., Metzler, J. N., & Hofer, S. M. (2003). Factorial invariance and latent mean stability of performance failure appraisals. *Structural Equation Modeling, 10*, 401-422. doi: 10.1207/S15328007SEM1003_4 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., Willow, J. P., & Metzler, J. N. (2002). Multidimensional fear of failure measurement: The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 14*, 76-90. doi: 10.1080/10413200252907752 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E. (2001). Progress in the development of a multidimensional measure of fear of failure: The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (PFAI). *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping, 14*, 431-452. doi: 10.1080/10615800108248365 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)

Studies from the Lab Using the PFAI

- Rebar, A.L. & Conroy, D.E. (2013). Experimentally manipulated achievement goal state fluctuations regulate self-conscious emotional responses to feedback. *Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology, 2*, 233-249. doi: 10.1037/a0034645 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E. & Pincus, A. L. (2011). Interpersonal impact messages associated with different forms of achievement motivation. *Journal of Personality, 79*, 675-706. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2011.00693. PMID: 21682724
- Conroy, D. E., Elliot, A. J., & Pincus, A. L. (2009). The expression of achievement motives in interpersonal problems. *Journal of Personality, 77*, 495-526. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2008.00556.x. PMID: 19220722
- Schantz, L. H., & Conroy, D. E. (2009). Achievement motivation and intraindividual affective variability during competence pursuits: A round of golf as a multilevel data structure. *Journal of Research in Personality, 43*, 472-481. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2009.02.002 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Wright, A. G. C., Pincus, A. L., Conroy, D. E., & Elliot, A. J. (2009). The pathoplastic relationship between interpersonal problems and fear of failure. *Journal of Personality, 77*, 997-1024. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2009.00572.x. PMID: 19558445
- Conroy, D. E., & Coatsworth, J. D. (2007). Coaching behaviors associated with changes in fear of failure: Changes in self-talk and need satisfaction as potential mechanisms. *Journal of Personality, 75*, 383-419. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2006.00443.x. PMID: 17359243
- Conroy, D. E., Coatsworth, J. D., & Kaye, M. P. (2007). Consistency of fear of failure score meanings among 8 – 18 year old female athletes. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 67*, 300-310. doi: 10.1177/0013164406288174 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., Kaye, M. P., & Fifer, A. M. (2007). Cognitive links between fear of failure and perfectionism. *Journal of Rational-Emotive and Cognitive-Behavior Therapy, 25*, 237-253. doi: 10.1007/s10942-007-0052-7 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., Kaye, M. P., & Coatsworth, J. D. (2006). Coaching climates and the destructive effects of mastery-avoidance achievement goals on situational motivation. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 28*, 69-92. (NOTE: no doi or PMID/PMCID listed)
- Duley, A. R., Conroy, D. E., Morris, K., Wiley, J., & Janelle, C. M. (2005). Fear of failure biases affective and attentional responses to lexical and pictorial stimuli. *Motivation and Emotion, 29*, 1-17. doi: 10.1007/s11031-005-4413-1 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., Coatsworth, J. D., & Fifer, A. M. (2005). Testing dynamic relations between perceived competence and fear of failure in young athletes. *European Review of Applied Psychology, 55*, 99-110. doi:10.1016/j.erap.2004.05.004 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)

- Conroy, D. E. (2004). The unique meaning of multidimensional fears of failing. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 26, 484-491. (NOTE: no doi or PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., & Elliot, A. J. (2004). Fear of failure and achievement goals in sport: Addressing the issue of the chicken and the egg. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 17, 271-285. doi: 10.1080/1061580042000191642 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., & Coatsworth, J. D. (2004). The effects of coach training on fear of failure in youth swimmers: A latent growth curve analysis from a randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 25, 193-214. doi: 10.1016/j.appdev.2004.02.007 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E., & Metzler, J. N. (2004). Patterns of self-talk associated with various performance anxieties. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 26, 69-89. (NOTE: no doi or PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D. E. (2003). Representational models associated with fear of failure in adolescents and young adults. *Journal of Personality*, 71, 757-783. doi: 10.1111/1467-6494.7105003. PMID: 12932209

Additional Papers or Chapters from the Lab Discussing the PFAI

- Conroy, D. E. (2008). Fear of failure in the context of competitive sport: A commentary. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 3, 179-183. doi: 10.1260/174795408785100662 (NOTE: no PMID/PMCID listed)
- Conroy, D.E. (2017). Achievement motives. In A.J. Elliot, C.S. Dweck, & D.S. Yeager (Eds.), *Handbook of competence and motivation (2nd ed.)*. New York: Guilford Press. ISBN 9781462529605
- Conroy, D. E. (2014). Achievement motive theory. In R.C. Eklund & G. Tenenbaum (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of sport & exercise psychology* (pp. 6-9). Thousand Oaks: Sage. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483332222>
- Conroy, D. E., & Hyde, A. L. (2012). Achievement motivation processes. In G. Tenenbaum, R. Eklund, & A. Kamata (Eds.), *Measurement in sport & exercise psychology* (pp. 303-317). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. (NOTE: no doi listed)
- Elliot, A. J., Conroy, D. E., Barron, K. E., & Murayama, K. (2010). Achievement motives and goals: A developmental analysis. In R. Lerner, M. Lamb, & A. Freund (Eds.), *Handbook of lifespan development, Vol. 2: Social and emotional development* (pp. 474-510). New York: Wiley. doi: 10.1002/9780470880166
- Conroy, D. E., Elliot, A. J., & Thrash, T. M. (2009). Achievement motivation. In M. R. Leary & R. H. Hoyle (Eds.), *Handbook of individual differences in social behavior* (pp. 382-399). New York: Guilford Press. (NOTE: no doi listed)
- Conroy, D. E., Elliot, A. J., & Coatsworth, J. D. (2007). Competence motivation in sport: Links between the hierarchical model of achievement motivation and self-determination theory. In M. Hagger & N. Chatzisarantis (Eds.), *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in exercise and sport* (pp. 181-192). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. (NOTE: no doi listed)
- Roberts, G. C., Treasure, D. C., & Conroy, D. E. (2007). The dynamics of motivation in sport: The influence of achievement goals on motivation processes. In G. Tenenbaum & R. C. Eklund (Eds.), *Handbook of sport psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 3-30.). New York: Wiley. (NOTE: no doi listed)