

# The Arc's Self-Determination Scale

Adolescent Version

The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (Adolescent Version) is a student self-report measure of self-determination designed for use by adolescents with cognitive disabilities. The scale has two primary purposes:

- To provide students with cognitive disabilities and educators a tool that assists them in identifying student strengths and limitations in the area of self-determination; and
- To provide a research tool to examine the relationship between self-determination and factors that promote/inhibit this important outcome.

The scale has 72 items and is divided into four sections. Each section examines a different essential characteristic of self-determination: **Autonomy, Self-Regulation, Psychological Empowerment and Self-Realization**. Each section has unique directions that should be read before completing the relevant items. Scoring the scale (see Procedural Guidelines for scoring directions) results in a total self-determination score and subdomain scores in each of the four essential characteristics of self-determination. A comprehensive discussion and exploration of self-determination as an educational outcome is provided in The Arc's Self-Determination Scale Procedural Guidelines, as well as detailed scoring procedures and a discussion about the use of self-report measures in general. The scale **should not be** used until the administrator is thoroughly familiar with these issues.

The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (Adolescent Version) was developed by The Arc National Headquarters with funding from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), under Cooperative Agreement #H023J20012. Questions used in Section One (Autonomy) were adapted, with permission from the authors, from the Autonomous Functioning Checklist. Questions used in Section 4 (Self-Realization) were adapted, with permission from the author, from the Short form of the Personal Orientation Inventory. Appropriate citations for both instruments are available in The Arc's Self-Determination Scale Procedural Guidelines. The Arc gratefully acknowledges the generosity of these researchers.

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Self-Determination Assessment Project

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name \_\_\_\_\_

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# Section One

## Autonomy

### Directions:

Check the answer on each question that BEST tells how you act in that situation. There are no right or wrong answers. Check only one answer for each question. (If your disability limits you from actually performing the activity, but you have control over the activity (such as a personal care attendant), answer like you performed the activity.)

#### 1A. Independence: Routine personal care and family oriented functions

- |                                                      |                                                             |                                                                |                                                                  |                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. I make my own meals or snacks.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 2. I care for my own clothes.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 3. I do chores in my home.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 4. I keep my own personal items together.            | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 5. I do simple first aid or medical care for myself. | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 6. I keep good personal care and grooming.           | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |

1A. Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1B. Independence: Interaction with the environment

- |                                                        |                                                             |                                                                |                                                                  |                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7. I make friends with other kids my age.              | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 8. I use the post office.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 9. I keep my appointments and meetings.                | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 10. I deal with salespeople at stores and restaurants. | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |

1B. Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1C. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Recreational and leisure time

- |                                                                        |                                                             |                                                                |                                                                  |                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. I do free time activities based on my interests.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 12. I plan weekend activities that I like to do.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 13. I am involved in school-related activities.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 14. My friends and I choose activities that we want to do.             | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 15. I write letters, notes or talk on the phone to friends and family. | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 16. I listen to music that I like.                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |

1C. Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_



**1D. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities:**

Community involvement and interaction

**1D. Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

- |                                                                     |                                                             |                                                                |                                                                  |                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17. I volunteer in things that I am interested in.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 18. I go to restaurants that I like.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 19. I go to movies, concerts, and dances.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 20. I go shopping or spend time at shopping centers or malls.       | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 21. I take part in youth groups (like 4-H, scouting, church groups) | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |

**1E. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Post-school directions****1E. Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

- |                                                                                               |                                                             |                                                                |                                                                  |                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 22. I do school and free time activities based on my career interests.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 23. I work on school work that will improve my career chances.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 24. I make long-range career plans.                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 25. I work or have worked to earn money.                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 26. I am in or have been in career or job classes or training.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 27. I have looked into job interests by visiting work sites or talking to people in that job. | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |

**1F. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Personal expression****1F. Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

- |                                                                 |                                                             |                                                                |                                                                  |                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 28. I choose my clothes and the personal items I use every day. | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 29. I choose my own hair style.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 30. I choose gifts to give to family and friends.               | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 31. I decorate my own room.                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |
| 32. I choose how to spend my personal money.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance | <input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance |

**Please check Section One, A thru F, to make sure there is only one answer for each question.**



# Section Two

## Self-Regulation

### Directions:

Each of the following questions tell the beginning of a story and how the story ends. Your job is to tell what happened in the middle of the story, to connect the beginning and the end. Read the beginning and ending for each question, then fill in the BEST answer for the middle of the story. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember, fill in the one answer that you think BEST completes the story.

### 2A. Interpersonal cognitive problem-solving

33. **Beginning:** You are sitting in a planning meeting with your parents and teachers. You want to take a class where you can learn to work as a cashier in a store. Your parents want you to take the Family and Child Care class. You can only take one of the classes.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Ending:** The story ends with you taking a vocational class where you will learn to be a cashier.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

34. **Beginning:** You hear a friend talking about a new job opening at the local book store. You love books and want a job. You decide you would like to work at the bookstore.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Ending:** The story ends with you working at the bookstore.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

35. **Beginning:** Your friends are acting like they are mad at you. You are upset about this.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Ending:** The story ends with you and your friends getting along just fine.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

36. **Beginning:** You go to your English class one morning and discover your English book is not in your backpack. You are upset because you need that book to do your homework.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Ending:** The story ends with you using your English book for homework.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

37. **Beginning:** You are in a club at school. The club advisor announces that the club members will need to elect new officers at the next meeting. You want to be the president of the club.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Ending:** The story ends with you being elected as the club president.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

38. **Beginning:** You are at a new school and you don't know anyone. You want to have friends.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Ending:** The story ends with you having many friends at the new school.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

**2A Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

## 2B: Goal setting and task performance

### Directions:

The next three questions ask about your plans for the future. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. For each question, tell if you have made plans for that outcome and, if so, what those plans are and how to meet them.

39. Where do you want to live after you graduate?

☐ I have not planned for that yet.

☐ I want to live \_\_\_\_\_

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

40. Where do you want to work after you graduate?

☐ I have not planned for that yet.

☐ I want to work \_\_\_\_\_

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

41. What type of transportation do you plan to use after graduation?

☐ I have not planned for that yet.

☐ I plan to use \_\_\_\_\_

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

**2B Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

# Section Three

## Psychological Empowerment

### Directions:

Check the answer that BEST describes you.

Choose only one answer for each question.

There are no right or wrong answers.

42. ☐ I usually do what my friends want... or  
☐ I tell my friends if they are doing something I don't want to do.
43. ☐ I tell others when I have new or different ideas or opinions... or  
☐ I usually agree with other peoples' opinions or ideas.
44. ☐ I usually agree with people when they tell me I can't do something... or  
☐ I tell people when I think I can do something that they tell me I can't.
45. ☐ I tell people when they have hurt my feelings... or  
☐ I am afraid to tell people when they have hurt my feelings.
46. ☐ I can make my own decisions... or  
☐ Other people make decisions for me.
47. ☐ Trying hard at school doesn't do me much good... or  
☐ Trying hard at school will help me get a good job.
48. ☐ I can get what I want by working hard... or  
☐ I need good luck to get what I want.

49. ☐ It is no use to keep trying because that won't change things... or  
☐ I keep trying even after I get something wrong.
50. ☐ I have the ability to do the job I want... or  
☐ I cannot do what it takes to do the job I want.
51. ☐ I don't know how to make friends... or  
☐ I know how to make friends.
52. ☐ I am able to work with others... or  
☐ I cannot work well with others.
53. ☐ I do not make good choices... or  
☐ I can make good choices.
54. ☐ If I have the ability, I will be able to get the job I want... or  
☐ I probably will not get the job I want even if I have the ability.
55. ☐ I will have a hard time making new friends... or  
☐ I will be able to make friends in new situations.
56. ☐ I will be able to work with others if I need to... or  
☐ I will not be able to work with others if I need to.
57. ☐ My choices will not be honored... or  
☐ I will be able to make choices that are important to me.

Section 3 Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_



# Section Four

## Self-Realization

### Directions:

Tell whether you think each of these statements describes how you feel about yourself or not. There are no right or wrong answers. Choose only the answer that BEST fits you.

|                                                           |                          |                          |                                               |                          |                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 58. I do not feel ashamed of any of my emotions.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 66. I don't accept my own limitations.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               | Agree                    | Don't agree              |
| 59. I feel free to be angry at people I care for.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 67. I feel I cannot do many things.           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               | Agree                    | Don't agree              |
| 60. I can show my feelings even when people might see me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 68. I like myself.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               | Agree                    | Don't agree              |
| 61. I can like people even if I don't agree with them.    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 69. I am not an important person.             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               | Agree                    | Don't agree              |
| 62. I am afraid of doing things wrong.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 70. I know how to make up for my limitations. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               | Agree                    | Don't agree              |
| 63. It is better to be yourself than to be popular.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 71. Other people like me.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               | Agree                    | Don't agree              |
| 64. I am loved because I give love.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 72. I am confident in my abilities.           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               | Agree                    | Don't agree              |
| 65. I know what I do best.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                               |                          |                          |
| Agree                                                     |                          | Don't agree              |                                               |                          |                          |
| Section 4 Subtotal _____                                  |                          |                          |                                               |                          |                          |

### Scoring Step 1:

Record the raw scores from each section:

#### Autonomy

1A =

1B =

1C =

1D =

1E =

1F =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Regulation

2A =

2B =

Domain Total:

#### Psychological Empowerment

3 =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Realization

4 =

Domain Total:

### Scoring Step 3:

Using the conversion tables in Appendix A, convert raw scores into percentile scores for comparison with the sample norms (Norm Sample) and the percentage of positive responses (Positive Scores):

Norm Sample Positive Scores

#### Autonomy

1A =

1B =

1C =

1D =

1E =

1F =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Regulation

2A =

2B =

Domain Total:

#### Psychological Empowerment

3 =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Realization

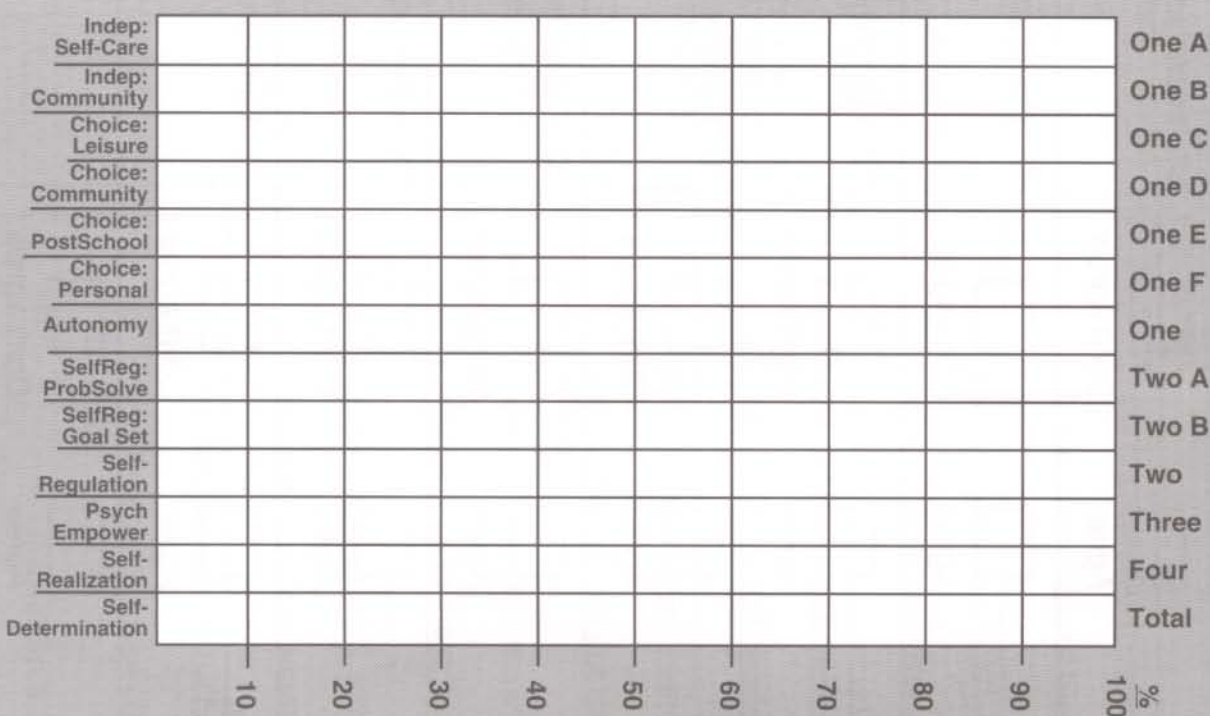
4 =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Determination Total Score =

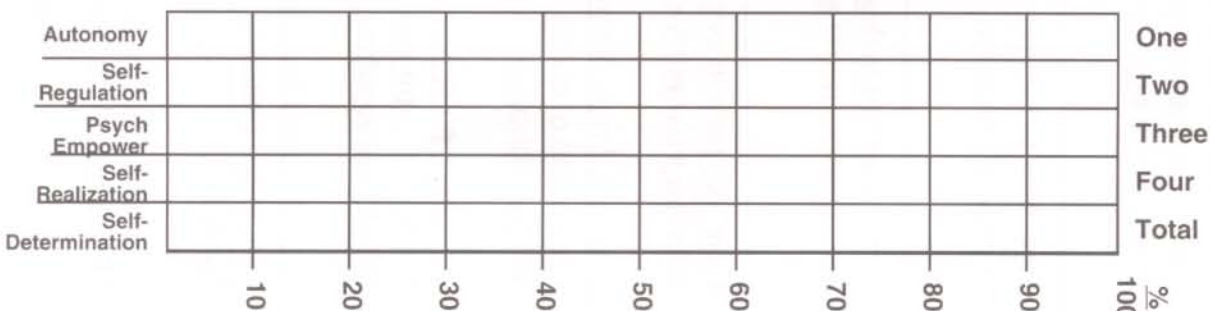
### Scoring Step 4:

Fill in the graph for the percentile scores from the norming sample. From the appropriate percentile down, darken the complete bar graph (See example in Scoring Manual):



### Scoring Step 5:

Fill in the graph for the percentile scores indicating the percent positive responses.



### Scoring Step 2:

Sum each Domain Total for a Total Score:

#### Self-Determination Total =