**Possible selves citations, measure, and coding instructions**

July 2018 (updated from January 2004)

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FUNDED BY NIMH (NIMH R01 MH58299, Pathways for Youth: School-to-Jobs, A Prevention Model, Oyserman PI. NIMH R01 MH57495, Pathways for Youth: Risk and Resilience, Oyserman PI and the W.T. Grant Foundation ("School persistence vs. risky behaviors in adolescence: The role of African American Identity”). A number of publications have used the open-ended measure below

##### PUBLICATIONS research from my lab using the open-ended measure (see below)

* Oyserman, D., & Markus, H. (1990). Possible selves and delinquency. *Journal of* *Personality and Social Psychology, 59*(1), 112-125.
* Oyserman, D. & Saltz, E. (1993). Competence, delinquency, and attempts to attain possible selves. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65*, 360-374.
* Oyserman, D., Gant, L. & Ager, J. (1995). A socially contextualized model of African American identity: School persistence and possible selves. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 69*(6), 1216-1232.
* Oyserman, D. & Harrison, K. (1998). Implications of ethnic identity: African American identity and possible selves. In J. K. Swim & C. Stangor (Eds.) *Prejudice: The target's perspective.,* Academic Press, Calf.
* Oyserman, D., Terry, K., & Bybee, D, (2002). A possible selves intervention to enhance school involvement. *Journal of Adolescence, 24,* 313-326.
  + Oyserman, D., Bybee, D, & Terry, K. (2003). Gendered racial identity and involvement with school. *Self and Identity, 2,* 1-18.
  + Oyserman, D., Bybee, D., Terry, K., & Hart-Johnson, T. (2004). Possible selves as roadmaps. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *38*, 130-149.
  + Oyserman, D., Bybee, D. & Terry, K. (2006). Possible selves and academic outcomes: How and when possible selves impel action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 91*, 188-204.
  + Oyserman, D., Brickman, D., & Rhodes, M. (2007). School success, possible selves and parent school-involvement. *Family Relations, 56,* 279-289*.*
  + Fryberg, S., Markus, H., Oyserman, D., & Stone, J. (2008). Of warrior chiefs and Indian princesses: The psychological consequences of American Indian mascots. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 30*, 208-218.
  + Lee, S. J. & Oyserman, D. (2009). Expecting to work, fearing homelessness: The possible selves of low-income mothers. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 39*, 1334-1355.
  + Oyserman, D., Johnson, E. & James, L. (2010). Seeing the destination but not the path: Effects of socioeconomic disadvantage on school-focused possible self content and linked behavioral strategies. *Self and Identity*. doi: 10.1080/15298868.2010.487651
  + Elmore, K. & Oyserman, D. (2011). If ‘we’ succeed, ‘I’ can too: Identity-based motivation and gender in the classroom. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*. DOI: 10.1016/j.cedpsych.2011.05.003.

##### PUBLICATIONS using close-ended measure (described in the publication)

* Kemmelmeier, M. & Oyserman, D. (2001). Gendered influence of downward social comparisons on current and possible selves. *Journal of Social Issues,* *57,* 129-148.
* Oyserman, D. & Fryberg, S. A. (2006). The possible selves of diverse adolescents: Content and function across gender, race and national origin. In J. Kerpelman & C. Dunkel (Eds.), *Possible selves: Theory, research, and applications* (pp. 17-39). Huntington, NY: Nova.

##### Possible Selves Questionnaire

Who will you be next year? Each of us has some image or picture of what we will be like and what we want to avoid being like in the future. Think about next year -- imagine what you’ll be like, and what you’ll be doing next year.

* In the lines below, write what you expect you will be like and what you expect to be doing next year.
* In the space next to each expected goal, mark NO (X) if you are not currently working on that goal or doing something about that expectation and mark YES (X) if you are currently doing something to get to that expectation or goal.
* For each expected goal that you marked YES, use the space to the right to write what you are doing this year to attain that goal. Use the first space for the first expected goal, the second space for the second expected goal and so on.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Next year, I expect to be** | **Am I am doing something to be that way** | | **If yes,**  **What I am doing now to be that way next year** |
|  | **NO** | **YES** |  |
| (P1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s1)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| (P2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s2)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| (P3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s3)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| (P4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s4)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

In addition to expectations and expected goals, we all have images or pictures of what we don’t want to be like; what we don’t want to do or want to avoid being. First, think a minute about ways you would **not** like to be next year -- t*hings you are concerned about or want to avoid being like.*

* Write those concerns or selves to-be-avoided in the lines below.
* In the space next to each concern or to-be-avoided self, mark NO (X) if you are not currently working on avoiding that concern or to-be-avoided self and mark YES (X) if you are currently doing something so this will not happen next year.
* For each concern or to-be-avoided self that you marked YES, use the space at the end of each line to write what you are doing this year to reduce the chances that this will describe you next year. Use the first space for the first concern, the second space for the second concern and so on.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Next year, I want to avoid** | **Am I doing something to avoid this** | | **If yes,**  **What I am doing now to avoid being that way next year** |
|  | **NO** | **YES** |  |
| (P5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s5)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| (P6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s6)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| (P7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s7)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| (P8) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | (s8)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**Coding Instructions for Next Year Possible Selves**

**Content Coding into 7 Categories**

**There are six main categories of Next Year Expected Possible Selves:**

1. **Achievement/Academic/School** – relates to school and school interactions with teachers, achievement-related activities

2. **Interpersonal Relationships** – involves family, friends, relationships, and social interactions except with teachers

3. **Personality Traits** – relates to personality characteristics, self-descriptions of traits

4. **Physical/Health-Related** – relates to physical health, weight, height

5. **Material/Lifestyles** – relates to material possessions and living situation, including moving

6. **Negative** – includes all negatively worded responses

**There are six main categories of Next Year Feared Possible Selves.**

1. **Achievement/Academic/School** – relates to school and school interactions with teachers, achievement-related activities

2. **Interpersonal Relationships** – involves family, friends, relationships, and social interactions except with teachers

3. **Personality Traits** – relates to personality characteristics, self-descriptions of traits

4. **Physical/Health-Related** – relates to physical health, weight, height

5. **Material/Lifestyles** – relates to material possessions and living situation, including moving

6. **Non-normative /Risky Behaviors** – includes negative and illegal behaviors such as smoking, drinking, involved in fights, gangs, etc.

Categories of expected and feared possible selves are identical except that the sixth category for expected selves includes ANY negative reference (since the vast majority of expectations are framed positively) and the sixth category for feared possible selves includes behaviors or expectations that are either delinquent or risky behaviors (such as teen pregnancy or smoking). Each category includes subcategories that are listed below.

When coding ambiguous statements CONSIDER CONTEXT OF RESPONSE -- When a possible self is ambiguous because too little has been written, read through the strategy provided for that possible self to see if it provides clues for the content intended.

Below are some examples of responses that would be coded in each content category.

**1. Achievement/Academic/School**

**Expected selves**

**School**

·      **Grades** – good grades, honor roll, straight A student

·      **Homework/Tests** – doing my work, working hard, doing all my assignments, getting high marks, references to standardized tests

·      **Making it to High school** – graduating, a freshman, selective enrollment high school, passing, in high school, names of specific high schools, getting ready for college, service hours, community service.

·      **Attendance/punctuality** – not missing class, being on time, not being late

·      **Class Behavior** – not talking in class, not getting detentions/suspensions, staying out of trouble (with strategy that suggests it refers to classroom), not talking while other are talking (with strategy that suggests it refers to classroom), participate more in class, listening

·      **Relationship with teachers** – respecting teachers, not talking back in class, doing what the teacher says, good behavior (strategy about attitude or respect)

·      **Traits linked to achievement** – hardworking, responsible (unless strategy is only about money/spending decisions or relationships), organized, successful, smart, attentive, never giving up, confident (school strategy), giving effort

**Job**

·      **Current or near-future jobs** -- finding summer job, working, help mom save for school, babysitting, having a job, part-time job

**School/Academic Activities**

·      **Sports teams** – any mention of being “in” or “on” a team if it is a feasible high school sport (i.e. not rugby or dance); any mention of sport with a strategy that mentions getting a college scholarship; any mention of a sport with a strategy that mentions needing to keep grades up, “doing [sport]”, “in [sport]”.

·      **Clubs or activities** – school clubs or activities; after school programs; ROTC or something analogous; if ambiguous, the possible self must specifically mention school (i.e. “in school band,” but not “playing guitar”); specific answers of “cheerleading,” “art,” and “music,” are NOT coded as achievement (they are “5”, lifestyle.)

·      **Activities Not in School** – learning new things, reading more, learning about science/math, practicing handwriting/typing, coding (if seemingly about learning computer science, not gaming) etc.

**Feared Selves**

**School**

·      **Grades** – bad grades, getting “F”s, failing

·      **Homework/Tests** – not doing my work, not doing homework, low scores, any negative references to standardized tests

·      **Making it to High school** – dropping out, repeating 8th grade, getting into a bad high school, names of specific bad high school, off-track (school related strategy)

·      **Attendance/punctuality** – missing class, being late, distractions, waking up late, going to sleep late (school strategy)

·      **Class Behavior** – bad students (strategy is conceivably about classroom behavior), talking in class, getting detentions/suspensions, getting in trouble (with strategy that suggests it refers to classroom), talking while other are talking (with strategy that suggests it refers to classroom), quiet (strategy context in not participating in class), talking (no strategy), bad behavior (strategy about attitude or respect), attitude (strategy about teacher)

·      **Relationship with teachers** – disrespecting teachers, talking back in class, not doing what the teacher says

·      **Traits linked to achievement** – lazy, irresponsible, unorganized, unsuccessful, stupid, dumb, immature (strategy mentions school, being organized, being responsible, etc.), giving up, bad habit (no strategy that makes it non-school related), unconfident (school strategy), stressed (school strategy), disrespectful (strategy mentions adults)

·      **Vague negative things** -- bad students (no strategy or school strategy), bad things (school strategy) bad people (school strategy), bad/wrong crowd (school strategy), trouble (school strategy), arguments (school strategy), bad friends(school strategy), things getting in the way, things keeping me off-track, trouble (strategy makes it clear it’s trouble in class), problems (school strategy)

**Job**

·      **Current or near-future jobs** – not finding job

·      **Far future jobs if strategy implies present actions** – not beginning to learn about law and what I need to do for law school; not talking to my cousin who is an engineer about what high school classes are best.

**School/Academic Activities**

·      **Sports teams** – any mention of not being “in” or “on” a team if it is a feasible school sport (i.e. not rugby or dance); any mention of not doing a sport with a strategy that mentions getting a college scholarship; any mention of not doing a sport with a strategy that mentions needing to keep grades up

·      **Clubs or activities** – not being in school clubs or activities; not doing after school programs; not doing ROTC or something analogous; if ambiguous, the possible self must specifically mention school (i.e. “in school band,” but not “playing guitar”); specific answers of “cheerleading,” “art,” and “music,” are NOT achievement (they are “5”, lifestyle.)

·      **Activities Not in School** – not reading more, not learning about science/math, not practicing handwriting/typing, etc.

**2. Interpersonal Relationships**

**Expected selves**

·      **General**- leader, role model, nice, respectful (to somebody other than teacher), friendly, listener, other traits in which strategy involves friends/relationships, honest (strategy ties it to relationships), better person (help, nice), responsible (strategy related to family or friends), caring

·      **Family**- obedient, getting along with parents/relatives, helping around house, better person towards mother, see relatives, doing things with family, closer to family, being a good/ better son/daughter

·      **Peers**- having a steady boyfriend/girlfriend, getting along better with people, having lots of friends, making new friends, hang with friends more, trying to be accepted at new school, being a better friend, having better reputation, good classmate.

**Feared selves**

·      **General**- shy, being a recluse, mean person, rude, stuck up, mistrusted, stingy, talking (non-school strategy), giving attitude (no or non-teacher related strategy), angry

·      **Family-** having anything happen to our family, not listening to parents, being smart with parents, mean to sibling/relative, getting into arguments with parent/relative, without someone to turn to, fighting with family, not talking back (strategy implies it’s about family or other non-school personnel)

·      **Peers**- bullying/bullies, drama, bad friends (not a school or non-normative strategy), enemies with other people, people talking smack, being a follower, being disliked by friends, not making friends, lying to people, boring, very talkative, breaking up with girl/boyfriend, troublemaker, bad to my friends, without friends because of rumors, used just for my car-for rides, arguments, loud/(strategy that ties it to social interactions), negative people, bad students (strategy about drama/gossip or general “negative” people), being too independent (refusing help), quiet (non-classroom strategy or no strategy)

·      **Negative things** – bad friends (no strategy, or strategy about trust/drama); bad things (e.g. “bad people”, “bad/wrong crowd”, “trouble”, “arguments”) in which the strategies make it clear that it’s about relationships, trust, or drama rather than non-normative behavior; stress (strategy ties it to friends); talking back (no school strategy or mention of teachers); negativity (strategy makes it about people/friends).

**3. Personality Traits**

**Expected selves**

·      **Independence or Maturity –** more mature, more grown-up, grow as a person, better than the year before, patient, self-control, confident (no strategy), cool (no strategy), quieter/less talking (no strategy)

·      **Attitude –** more serious, more open-minded, positive thoughts, positive attitude, to be a good person, better (no strategy), the best that I can be, good, be a good kid,

·      **Behavior/Traits –** Silent (no strategy), honest (no strategy), creative, responsible (specific non-school strategy -- e.g. not wasting money, eating right, etc.), funny

**Feared selves**

·  **Independence or Maturity** **–** not trusted, acting like a fool, lack of self-control

·  **Attitude** **–** a bad attitude, silly, greedy, weak mentally, emotional mess, caring about nothing, negativity, negative energy, stress (no strategy), nervous

**4. Health/Physical**

**Expected selves**

·      **General Body Descriptive** **–** Hair looking different, as short as I am this year, taller, growing a few inches, Handsome, good-looking, strong, athletic, faster, fit.

·      **Physical Health** **–** older, alive, healthy.

**Feared Selves**

·      **General Body Descriptive** **–** bad appearance, ugly, short

·      **Physical Health** **–** Sick a lot, so sick I can’t attend school, On medication again, Slower physically, weaker than I am, overweight, panic attacks, depression, death.

**5. Material/ Lifestyle**

**Expected selves**

·      **Lifestyle** **–**  Still living at home with my mom, moving to Canada, living somewhere, going places I have never been, changes (no strategy), having fun, sleeping schedule (not school-related), getting driver’s license

·      **Traits/life description –** active, fabulous, fine/ok, anything having to do with religion/god

·      **Material** **–** own a car, living in better new house, buy an Xbox.

·      **Hobbies/non-school activities –** better basketball [or other sport] player (strategy doesn’t link it to school), “a [sport] player” (no school strategy), successful in/at [sport], art, music, cheerleading, better at guitar, playing video games, professional video gamer, making Youtube videos, a good artist, a good musician, learning about technology (nothing school related)

**Feared Selves**

·      **Lifestyle** **–**  Moving from this house, homeless, not having fun

·      **Traits/life description** – bad, anything having to do with religion/god (losing faith), laziness (strategy is about being more active)

·      **Material** – don’t own a car, not living in better new house, don’t have an Xbox.

·      **Hobbies/non-school activities –** not better at basketball [or other sport] (strategy doesn’t link it to school), not doing art, not doing music, not cheerleading, not better at guitar, not playing video games, not being professional video gamer, not making Youtube videos, parties

**6. Non-Normative**

**Expected selves**

Do not use for expected selves-Use Negative Category

**Feared Selves**

·      **Non-normative** **–** getting pregnant, cigarettes, being killed, troublemaker, having sex, cursing, talking to strangers, death (strategy is about gangs, drugs, guns, etc.)

·      **Delinquent –** gangs, drugs, alcohol, jail, fights

·      **Vague negative –** trouble (no strategy), bad things (no strategy), bad influences (no strategy), bad people (no strategy), bad crowd (no strategy), drama (with strategy that links it to fights/trouble rather than gossip related drama), off track (no strategy), peer pressure, bad friends (if strategy suggest non-normative or delinquent involvement), off-track, bad students (if strategy suggests it’s about non-school behaviors), bad friends (if strategy reference non-school “trouble” or “bad things”)**,** problems (no strategy), bad habit (strategy about drugs, alcohol, bad people).

**7. Negative To-Be-Expected Possible Selves**

Expected possible selves responses that are worded negative or suggest an expected negative outcome should be placed in the negative category. The response could be categorized from any of the 7 possible selves categories. For example, students may respond “next year, I expect to still be involved in fights (negative-delinquent), or I expect to have few friends (negative-interpersonal relationships).  However, these statements are sometimes worded in a negative form. For example, a student may respond “next year, I expect to be not fighting (negative-delinquent), or not to be getting picked on (negative-interpersonal relationships).

**Responses that should not be coded**

·      **Far future selves –** going to college, future jobs (professional basketball player, doctor, lawyer), graduating from high school, senior year, junior year, sophomore year.

·     **Repeated answers –** e.g. only count “high school” once if it’s written four times

·      **Very Vague answers –** expect to be “the same”

**Coding Academic/Achievement Possible Self Plausibility**

Plausibility is meant as a general assessment of the usefulness of the achievement related visions and strategies the student describes as a ‘road map to achieving in school’ or plan of action. We coined the term ‘plausibility’ to convey the idea that possible selves differ in the extent that a youth could plausibly use these visions and strategies as a way to guide behavior toward the achievement goal (e.g. doing well in school). A score of 0 is reserved for youth with no strategies and only a single, vague academic possible self (or no academic possible selves at all). A score of 5 is reserved for youth with multiple academic possible selves and multiple strategies, including strategies that focus on both the academic aspects (e.g. doing homework) and also the social interpersonal aspects (e.g. asking the teacher for help, dealing with friends who don’t focus on school) of attaining the academic goal (and avoiding failure in the academic goal).

Counts include both expected and to-be-avoided or feared possible selves in the academic/school related domain and their connected strategies. **Possible selves that are related to job achievement and school activities (e.g. sports, clubs, etc.) are not counted for plausibility.** Each point on the scale is operationalized by a count of the possible selves and strategies (and their detail or concreteness, with behavioral implications).

**Plausibility Coding Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Plausibility Score | Count of Academic Expected or Feared Possible Selves (APS) | Count Strategies attached to these APS | Codes noted with \* mean code at this level only if at least one of the possible selves and/or strategies that are provided are detailed/concrete, that is if specific action is implied and possible selves are not redundant, otherwise code at the next lower level of plausibility. |
| 0 | 0 |  | EITHER 0 academic possible selves (APS)  OR  1 APS that is vague or general AND 0 APS strategy |
| 1 | 0 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | EITHER 1 APS and 1 APS strategy  OR  2 APS but no APS strategies |
| 2 | 0 |
| 2 | 1 | 2\* or more | EITHER 1 APS and 2 or more APS strategies\* OR  2 APS and 1- 2 APS strategies OR  3 APS and 0\*-1 APS strategies  OR  4 or more APS and 0 APS strategies |
| 2 | 1- 2 |
| 3 | 0\*-1 |
| 4 or more | 0 |
| 3 | 2 | 3\* or more | EITHER 2 APS and 3 or more APS strategies\* OR  3 APS and 2-3 APS strategies OR  4 or more APS and 1\*-2 APS strategies |
| 3 | 2-3 |
| 4 or more | 1\*-2 |
| 4 | 3 | 4 or more | EITHER 3 APS and 4 or more APS OR  4 APS and 2\*-4 APS strategies |
| 4 or more | 2\*, 3-4 |
| 5 | 4 or more | 4-5+ | 4 or more APS AND 4 or more strategies AND at least one strategy for an academic self is focused on interpersonal aspects of school context.  (Ex: listen to the teacher (or not talk back), avoid peers who skip, not listening to negative talk) |

## Examples of Academic Possible Selves for Coding Plausibility

**Expected Selves**

#### Grades – good grades, honor roll, straight A student

#### Homework/Tests – doing my work, working hard, doing all my assignments, getting high marks, any references to standardized tests

#### Making it to High school – Graduating, a freshman, selective enrollment high school, passing, in high school, names of specific high schools, service hours, community service

#### Attendance/punctuality – not missing class, being on time, not being late

#### Class Behavior – not talking, not getting detentions/suspensions, staying out of trouble (with strategy that suggests it refers to classroom), not talking while other are talking (with strategy that suggests it refers to classroom), participate more in class, listening

#### Relationship with teachers – respecting teachers, not talking back in class, doing what the teacher says, good behavior (strategy about attitude or respect)

#### Traits linked to achievement – hardworking, responsible (unless strategy is only about money/spending decisions or relationships), organized, successful, smart, attentive, never giving up, confident (school strategy), giving effort

#### Feared Selves

* **Grades** – bad grades, getting “F”s, failing
* **Homework/Tests** – not doing my work, not doing homework, low scores, any negative references to standardized tests
* **Making it to High school** – dropping out, repeating 8th grade, getting into a bad high school, names of specific bad high school, off-track (school related strategy)
* **Attendance/punctuality** – missing class, being late, distractions, waking up late, going to sleep late (school strategy)
* **Class Behavior** – bad students (strategy is conceivably about classroom behavior), getting detentions/suspensions, getting in trouble (with strategy that suggests it refers to classroom), talking, bad behavior (strategy about attitude or respect), attitude (strategy about teacher)
* **Relationship with teachers** – disrespecting teachers, talking back in class, not doing what the teacher says
* **Traits linked to achievement** – lazy, irresponsible, unorganized, unsuccessful, stupid, dumb, immature (strategy mentions school, being organized, being responsible, etc.), giving up, bad habit (no strategy that makes it non-school related), unconfident (school strategy), stressed (school strategy), disrespectful (strategy mentions adults)
* **Vague negative things** – bad students (no strategy or school strategy), bad things (school strategy) bad people (school strategy), bad/wrong crowd (school strategy), trouble (school strategy), arguments (school strategy), bad friends (school strategy), things getting in the way, things keeping me off-track, trouble (strategy makes it clear it’s trouble in class), problems (school strategy)

**General Examples of Strategies for Academic Possible Selves**

## In general, any reasonable strategy for attaining an academic possible self can be counted as

## a strategy.

## Achievement Focused Strategies for Academic Possible Selves – working hard, coming to school on time, studying, doing all my schoolwork/homework, asking teachers for help, paying attention, trying real hard, listening, staying out of trouble, turning in work on time, not talking, not getting into fights, follow directions, doing what others tell me to do, avoiding the bad students, working with parents, avoid being around negative/criminal people/activities, walk away from negative pressure situations, asking for help

**Examples of Detailed/Concrete Strategies for Academic Possible Selves**

Detailed/Concrete strategies refer to specific actions, specific places, or specific people:

## Doing all my homework, taking my time on assignments, follow teachers directions/expectations, paying attention, taking more notes, coming to school on time, not goofing around, don’t talk a lot in class, don’t get into fights, joining afterschool activities

**Examples of Interpersonal Strategies for Academic Possible Selves**

Interpersonal strategies include aspects of the social context (i.e. interpersonal interactions, public behavior, relationships):

## Participate in class, not letting anybody get in the way of my goals, listen more, pay attention, doing what I’m asked to do, listening, following directions, shadow day at high school, respect teachers, not playing around, asking for help from teachers/family/friends, not getting in trouble.

# Trouble Shooting

**Multiple Strategies for an Academic Possible Self**. If strategies include more than one thing the student is doing toward the academic self (e.g. ‘don’t talk in school and focus on school work’; do my homework and turn in my homework; do my classwork and my homework), then count each strategy as a separate strategy. Don’t however count rewordings of the self (I expect to be in high school by passing)

**Redundant strategies.** If strategies for a single possible self are redundant (“I will always do my homework…and make sure all my homework is done”), only count it as a single strategy. However, if the same strategy is given for different possible selves, then the strategy can be counted both times. For example, the response below would count as two possible selves and two strategies.

Example A Possible Selves Strategies

Next year I expect to be a) in the ninth grade Do all my homework

b) a great student Always do my homework

**Multiple Academic Possible Selves that might be Redundant**. Possible selves that are clearly redundant are only counted a single time (see example A), though if an argument can be made that the possible selves are different then they can each be counted. When a strategy is clearly redundant with a possible self, it is also not counted (see example B.

Example A Possible Selves Strategies

Next year I expect to be a) in the ninth grade

b) in high school

c) at Cass

Next year I want to avoid d) the 8th grade

e) being at Murray Wright

Since being in high school cannot be anywhere but 9th grade, ‘in the ninth grade’ and ‘in high school’ count only as one possible self. However, since ‘being in high school’ could be some other place other than Cass, ‘expecting to be at Cass’ counts as a second possible self. The feared self of wanting to avoid 8th grade counts because it is an additional focus-avoiding failure. Being at Murray Wright also counts because it is a specific school to be avoided. In this case, with no strategies, the child would be rated as having a plausibility score of 2 (with 4 possible selves and 0 strategies).

# Example B Possible selves Strategies

Next year I expect to be a) in Renaissance turn in application

Next year I want to avoid b) getting into any other school getting good grades

than Renaissance

c) getting lower than a 3.0 keeping good study habits

d) getting C’s keeping A’s and B’s

This child has 4 possible selves and 3 strategies because the strategy of “keeping A’s and B’s” is a restatement of avoiding C’s rather than a strategy. Getting lower than a 3.0 and getting C’s both count because there is a way to stay at 3.0 and above that includes C’s (just balanced by A’s) so these are slightly different avoided selves (plausibility is a 4).

# Example C Possible selves Strategies

Next year I expect to be a) in 9th grader work hard as an 8th grader

Next year I want to avoid b) in Murray Wright plan on getting out of Spain

c) the 8th grade work hard

d) dropping out staying in school

e) typing class taking one now

All of the academic possible selves are counted. All strategies are counted even if a strategy (e.g. working hard) appears more than once. The only time strategies are not double counted is when the possible selves themselves are redundant or exact opposites (e.g. a 9th grader, in the 8th grade). The only other strategies that are not counted are when the words do not form a strategy but explain or add detail as to why a possible self is important (such as next year, I expect to be a 9th grader student with a strategy ‘because I can learn more’). This student receives a plausibility score of 4.

**Coding Academic/Achievement Possible Self Balance**

Balance means having both a positive and a negative aspect of a future achievement-related goal. That means having both an expectation (next year to-be-expected) and a matching concern (next year to-be-avoided) that fit together or create a more coherent whole. If the student writes an expected self and a feared self that corresponds then they have balance.

**Examples of achievement possible self balance**

High school / Failing

Good grades / bad grades

Doing work / not doing work

Good behavior / getting detentions

Waking up earlier / being late to school

In general, one can be fairly liberal with coding balance. Some expected possible selves—particularly those that are vague (e.g. “in high school”, “succeeding”)—can be balanced with a range of to-be-avoided possible selves. For example, a next year expected possible self of “being in high school” could be balanced with “failing”, “getting bad grades”, “suspensions” or “not trying by best.”

If there is a legitimate case to be made that two possible selves represent a positive and negative aspect of a future achievement-related goal, then they can be coded as balanced. But if a good case cannot be made—for example, “always doing homework” and “coming to school late”—then they should not be coded as balanced.