

Social comparison

What This Comparison Is Asking of Me

Adults | 10 to 15 minutes

A comparison may highlight a wish, an unfair expectation, a real barrier, or a misleading snapshot. You do not have to stop all comparing to learn from one moment. Focus on the effect of a specific comparison and what you need next.

Choose one comparison from online life, work, family, or another setting. Keep the other person's motives and full circumstances unknown.

Expand the picture

Notice the narrow feature being compared and the context you cannot see. Include differences in resources, health, timing, responsibilities, and opportunity.

Translate the signal

Ask whether the comparison points to an interest, need, boundary, or pressure you do not want to follow. Choose an action that serves your life rather than catching up.

1. What did I compare, and what conclusion did I draw?**2. What important context is missing from that comparison?****3. What wish, value, barrier, or pressure does it reveal?****4. What next action would fit my priorities rather than someone else's timeline?****Clinical use and adaptation**

Do not dismiss comparisons that reveal real inequity. Avoid reassurance through unfavorable comparison with others. Explore the role of discrimination, scarcity, perfectionism, and mood when relevant.