Supplement 2

Frequencies and weights of the WADES items.
Options are sorted according to the weights (low = unwise, high= wise). The most left-hand number is the order of presentation during administration.

#1 I'll be happy when…

| Option                                                                 | Frequency | Weight  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| People will admit it was all a joke                                   | 26        | -1.780  |
| I'll be able to escape from this house or this city                    | 282       | -1.203  |
| I'll be free to do whatever I wish                                   | 1,141     | -0.697  |
| Those who are not law-abiding will be punished                        | 103       | -0.667  |
| Those who are responsible for the pandemic will be punished            | 104       | -0.657  |
| I'll no longer have to be alone                                       | 177       | -0.622  |
| A vaccine will be found and infections will diminish                   | 4,127     | 0.338   |

#2 I'm convinced that most people…

| Option                                                                 | Frequency | Weight  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Deliberately infect others                                             | 15        | -1.316  |
| Are going insane                                                       | 639       | -0.931  |
| Believe that this is a conspiracy                                      | 397       | -0.343  |
| Don't care about the regulations                                       | 1,153     | -0.143  |
| Have negative and distressing thoughts                                 | 1,165     | -0.112  |
| Think that this situation is difficult but bearable                    | 2,390     | 0.378   |
| Help those who are in need                                             | 200       | 0.407   |

#3 I'm afraid that people…

| Option                                                                 | Frequency | Weight  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| I don't care about people                                              | 91        | -2.475  |
| I don't think anything at all                                          | 313       | -0.989  |
| Will hurt animals                                                      | 109       | -0.842  |
| I have no fears                                                        | 272       | -0.530  |
| Are going to start breaking the law and will be dangerous              | 485       | -0.468  |
| Will continue to get ill                                               | 1,155     | 0.149   |
| Haven't understood how serious the situation is                        | 3,508     | 0.222   |

#4 Above all, during this period what's needed is…

| Option                                                                 | Frequency | Weight  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Being able to vent and distract oneself                                 | 294       | -1.276  |
| Giving in to selfishness, while staying at home, ignoring the outside world | 188       | -0.705  |
| Having strong points of reference                                      | 1,077     | -0.147  |
| Frightening people so that they understand how serious the situation is | 429       | -0.114  |
| Solidarity                                                             | 444       | 0.081   |
| Knowing that solutions will be found                                   | 1,854     | 0.156   |
| Empathy, emotional support and reassurance                             | 1,714     | 0.204   |

#5 For kids, being isolated with their parents…

| Option                                                                 | Frequency | Weight  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Can be sheer torture                                                   | 175       | -1.517  |
| Is the most stressing thing at the moment                              | 166       | -1.423  |
| Is a problem, because they miss their peers                           | 333       | -0.382  |
| Has its pros and cons                                                  | 2,675     | -0.119  |
| Is positive, if the relationships are positive                         | 1,399     | 0.130   |
| Is great                                                               | 177       | 0.508   |
| Means having a chance to get to know each other more                   | 909       | 0.644   |
#6 For those who have children, being quarantined…

| 7 | Is exhausting | 195 | -1.488 |
|---|---------------|-----|--------|
| 5 | Interferes with work | 90 | -0.985 |
| 3 | Increases stress and tensions as well as the ability to communicate | 1,678 | -0.213 |
| 4 | Is a way of getting to know one’s children better | 655 | 0.037 |
| 6 | Allows them to relish being with them | 856 | 0.110 |
| 2 | Is a chance to teach them how to cope with a crisis | 523 | 0.313 |
| 1 | Allows them to share thoughts and rediscover values | 1,183 | 0.528 |

#7 At the moment I think beliefs…

| 7 | Are misleading and deceptive | 951 | -0.783 |
| 4 | Are exactly the same as before | 1,860 | -0.129 |
| 6 | Can save us from this situation | 73 | 0.085 |
| 3 | Are stirred by the current difficulties | 756 | 0.175 |
| 5 | Are the only way to face the current situation | 113 | 0.201 |
| 2 | Are diminishing the distance between religions | 246 | 0.325 |
| 1 | Are helpful if they refer to ethical principles and science | 1,827 | 0.385 |

#8 To those who lost a loved one in this situation, I would like to say that…

| 4 | You need to see a psychic | 17 | -1.877 |
| 3 | The loss of your loved one is just one among many other losses | 86 | -1.822 |
| 2 | The person who died is a victim of our politicians’ incompetence | 201 | -0.790 |
| 6 | I offer you my condolences | 1,735 | -0.445 |
| 5 | Time heals all wounds | 467 | -0.394 |
| 7 | I’ll pray for him | 475 | 0.363 |
| 1 | We need to share the pain and memories | 2,936 | 0.382 |

#9 At bed-time…

| 6 | I feel overwhelmed by anxiety | 194 | -0.802 |
| 7 | I spend a lot of time online | 1,241 | -0.701 |
| 1 | I wonder for how long I’ll be able to bear this situation | 400 | -0.694 |
| 3 | I constantly think about the current situation | 177 | -0.004 |
| 4 | I think that sooner or later this situation will end | 1,418 | 0.223 |
| 2 | I prepare for the next day, setting myself some goals | 1,888 | 0.369 |
| 5 | I feel better thinking about my loved ones | 546 | 0.502 |

#10 The feelings I have had more often are…

| 6 | Frustration | 347 | -1.213 |
| 5 | A sense of emptiness | 281 | -1.101 |
| 7 | Distress | 219 | -0.458 |
| 4 | A sense of uncertainty | 808 | -0.066 |
| 1 | Alternatingly positive and negative | 2,519 | 0.026 |
| 2 | Concerns about the health of my loved ones | 1,157 | 0.472 |
| 3 | A sense of solidarity and communion with others | 593 | 0.515 |

#11 When I think of the current situation, I feel…

| 7 | Bored | 283 | -1.478 |
| 4 | Abandoned | 80 | -1.058 |
| 5 | Angry | 299 | -1.006 |
| 6 | Confused | 807 | -0.346 |
| 3 | Helpless and vulnerable | 871 | -0.176 |
| 2 | Thankful that my loved ones are in good health | 1,789 | 0.268 |
| 1 | Hopeful that this health crisis will be resolved | 1,842 | 0.400 |
#12 The most unacceptable behaviours I heard about were...

| Behaviour                                                                 | Score |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Extremely controlling behaviours on behalf of the police force            | 298   |
| The idealisation of health workers                                        | 88    |
| Exaggerated patriotism                                                    | 454   |
| Overreactions to coughing or sneezing                                    | 339   |
| The raiding of supermarkets                                               | 1,498 |
| Moaning about the restrictions we are subjected to                        | 1,559 |
| People underestimating the epidemic                                       | 1,751 |

#13 During this period, what makes me feel better is...

| Activity                                                                 | Score |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Not hearing about the epidemic                                            | 340   |
| Spending time doing my favourite things                                  | 1,149 |
| Distracting myself with work                                              | 406   |
| Painstakingly disinfecting myself and my house                            | 119   |
| Thinking that my loved ones have not been infected by the virus           | 405   |
| Helping others                                                            | 289   |
| Knowing that my loved ones are fine                                       | 3,245 |

#14 The thought that I find most distressing during this period is...

| Thought                                                                   | Score |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| That the quarantine will make us go insane                                | 370   |
| That compared to the past, in the future there will be less freedom       | 1,931 |
| That the virus will destroy mankind                                      | 142   |
| That I could die all alone                                               | 228   |
| That the virus is nature’s revenge on the destructiveness of humankind   | 586   |
| That I could infect other people                                         | 566   |
| That my loved ones or I can get ill                                      | 1,941 |

#15 The best thing about having to stay home is...

| Activity                                                                 | Score |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Being able to avoid the people we dislike                                 | 143   |
| None                                                                     | 487   |
| Being able to rest                                                       | 341   |
| The testing of one’s frustration tolerance                               | 489   |
| Being master of my time again                                            | 1,647 |
| Being able to dedicate more time to the people we love                    | 923   |
| Realising what is really important in life                                | 1,948 |

#16 I'm reassured by the fact that...

| Fact                                                                       | Score |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| There is nothing that I find reassuring in this situation                 | 219   |
| I have already lived most of my life                                      | 28    |
| I'm no longer the only person who senses hidden dangers                   | 94    |
| This situation is difficult for everyone                                  | 871   |
| I'm reacting a lot better than I expected                                  | 1,017 |
| People who care about me are close by                                     | 976   |
| My family and I are adopting all precautionary measures                   | 2,698 |

#17 I would like the people I live with to...

| Request                                                                    | Score |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Leave me alone                                                            | 255   |
| Stop making me feel how distressed they are                              | 296   |
| Be more attentive to me                                                   | 94    |
| Do nothing because I live alone                                           | 348   |
| Cooperate to a greater extent in household chores                         | 389   |
| Be able to face this crisis in a positive way                             | 898   |
| Continue behaving responsibly, like they have done up to now              | 3,620 |
#18 I'm very sad when I think...

| 3 That I don't really mind this situation | 100 | -1.415 |
| 1 That young people can't go out because of the elderly | 85 | -1.240 |
| 4 That I can't take advantage of the beautiful weather | 343 | -1.175 |
| 6 About the financial loss | 675 | -0.722 |
| 7 About those who are all alone | 474 | -0.187 |
| 5 That the ill are dying all alone in isolation | 1,737 | 0.090 |
| 2 About the victims of the epidemic and their family and friends | 2,551 | 0.426 |

#19 During this crisis I ended up...

| 7 About wanting to die | 75 | -1.940 |
| 1 Thinking that for some people death could be a deliverance | 206 | -0.846 |
| 2 Thinking that I need some psychological support | 503 | -0.613 |
| 4 That humankind may become extinct | 263 | -0.421 |
| 6 About feeling vulnerable and fragile | 1,360 | -0.001 |
| 3 Thinking about making a substantial donation for the first time in my life | 309 | 0.128 |
| 5 About reconsidering my priorities in life | 2,858 | 0.294 |

#20 In order to calm myself down, I...

| 7 Help myself with substances (alcohol, tablets, tobacco, or by overeating) | 218 | -1.242 |
| 3 I do whatever I feel like, when I feel like it | 337 | -0.885 |
| 6 I try not to think about anything | 614 | -0.561 |
| 5 I live in the here and now | 736 | -0.008 |
| 1 Spend my time engaging in constructive activities (sport, cooking, arts and crafts) | 3,484 | 0.222 |
| 4 I talk to others about my concerns | 363 | 0.229 |
| 7 I pray or meditate | 165 | 0.319 |

#21 The most positive aspect of this period is...

| 5 Being able to sleep or do absolutely nothing | 176 | -1.429 |
| 3 That I'm not forced into seeing people | 196 | -1.195 |
| 2 There is nothing positive about this nightmare | 372 | -1.167 |
| 6 Rediscovering what I'm passionate about | 518 | -0.288 |
| 7 That infections are decreasing | 1,217 | -0.198 |
| 4 Spending more time with my family | 1,029 | 0.287 |
| 1 Rediscovering values like the solidarity among people | 2,381 | 0.438 |

#22 The most useful thing I have done...

| 7 Is sleeping, to avoid thinking | 104 | -1.659 |
| 3 I'm incapable of being useful | 243 | -1.347 |
| 4 Is not listening to the news | 322 | -0.872 |
| 1 Is being on my own, avoiding all contact with family and friends | 986 | -0.121 |
| 2 Is constantly listening to the news and checking the number of infected | 325 | -0.112 |
| 6 Is helping people in need | 745 | 0.189 |
| 5 Is being law-abiding and making sure that others are too | 3,114 | 0.264 |

#23 When I think of my neighbours...

| 4 I wish they would mind their own business | 166 | -0.886 |
| 6 I never think about them | 973 | -0.785 |
| 2 I wish they were less noisy | 447 | -0.292 |
| 3 I wish they'd be more sociable | 414 | -0.115 |
| 7 I don't have neighbours | 189 | -0.077 |
| 1 I worry that they could be a source of infection | 342 | 0.129 |
| 5 I hope they are well | 3,415 | 0.301 |
#24 Apart from following the regulations established by authorities, it would be helpful if one could…

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Pretend the virus never existed | 32 | -2.027 |
| 5 | Find those who are responsible for the epidemic | 67 | -1.232 |
| 7 | No longer listen to the news | 258 | -1.066 |
| 2 | Ignore the difficulties and avoid the drama | 245 | -0.862 |
| 4 | Engage in different activities and keep busy | 1,897 | -0.211 |
| 6 | Strengthen one’s religious beliefs | 67 | 0.189 |
| 1 | Consider the positive sides of difficult situations | 3,343 | 0.305 |

#25 This period will teach us...

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | That no one can save us | 34 | -1.755 |
| 5 | That one can’t trust people | 47 | -1.477 |
| 3 | Nothing at all, people don’t change | 1,351 | -0.749 |
| 4 | That the world isn’t a safe place | 71 | -0.450 |
| 6 | To show more solidarity and be less selfish | 752 | 0.146 |
| 2 | To be more conscientious and have more common sense | 1,715 | 0.261 |
| 1 | To recognise our limits and that we are not invincible | 1,935 | 0.326 |
The rationale of optimal scoring

The computation method of optimal scores is rather complex and the interested reader can find a thorough illustration in an introductory volume on correspondence analysis (e.g., Greenacre, 2007). For the purposes of our study, considering its unidimensional approach, with a single factor to be extracted, we can summarise the computational procedure as follows.

1. At first, for each answer, we chose one option as typical of situational wisdom. For the sake of simplicity, let us suppose that for each question the wisest answers are indicated by the letter A.
2. A unitary score is assigned to the wise answer, and zero to all others.
3. Compute the total score of the questionnaire for each participant.
4. For question 1, which has (for instance) five options as answers, compute the mean of the total score for all people who chose option A. Then the mean for those who chose option B and so forth.
5. Repeat the computations for all items.
6. Consider the computed mean of option A in item 1 as a better score to be assigned to option A in item 1.
7. Repeat the re-assignment for all the options, across all items.
8. Restart the procedure from point 4, and compute new scores for all options and all items, until no changes occur in the values.

After stabilisation occurs, high wisdom options will differ from low wisdom options: very wise people chose wise options and unwise individuals chose unwise options. In order to avoid unacceptable solutions (all zeros or infinite values), we must apply two constraints: the first one is to set the mean of the scores at zero. The second constraint must be applied to avoid null variance and therefore the variance is set to one. It should be noted that no matter what the initial values were, the iteration will always arrive at the same stabilised solution.

The data files are available here:

https://osf.io/rgw4t