Assessment powered by NovoPsych

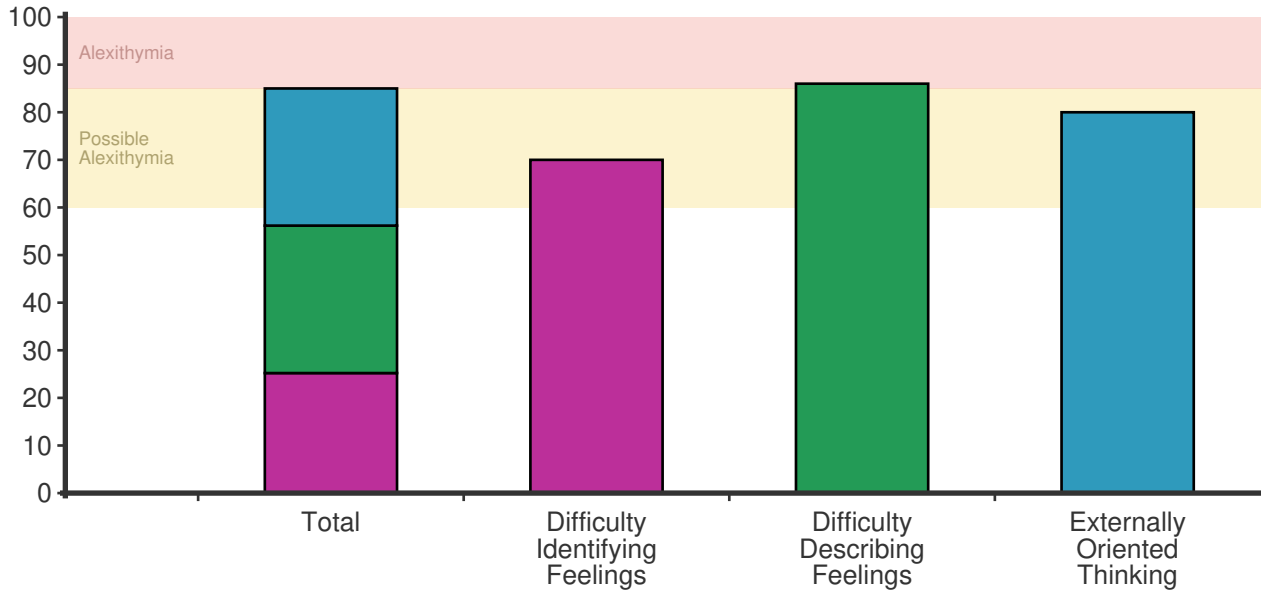
Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS)

Client Name	Generic Client	*Date administered*	14 Jun 2024
Date of birth (age)	1 Jan 1980 (44)	*Time taken*	5 min 4s
Assessor	Dr Simon Baker		

Results

	Score	Percentile	Descriptor
Total (20-100)	61	85	Alexithymia
Difficulty Identifying Feelings (7-35)	19	70	Elevated
Difficulty Describing Feelings (5-25)	18	86	Elevated
Externally Oriented Thinking (8-40)	24	80	Elevated

Alexithymia Percentiles



Interpretation

The client's responses on the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS) indicate that they are likely to be alexithymic. The client's total score is on the 85th percentile when compared to normative data for females, indicating that they are more alexithymic than 85 percent of females. Individuals scoring in this range are likely to be experiencing significant difficulties in recognising and describing their emotions. Being largely unaware of internal emotional experiences can strain interpersonal relationships, reduce empathy, increase the risk of depression and anxiety and create hurdles to engaging in therapy. Discussing alexithymia with the client may help in developing a shared conceptualisation of difficulties. They may benefit from developing skills related to emotional awareness and communication.

In percentile terms, the client's scores on the Difficulty Describing Feelings (86th percentile), Externally Oriented Thinking (80th percentile) and Difficulty Identifying Feelings (70th percentile) subscales are elevated.

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Interpretation (cont.)

Difficulty Describing Feelings. An elevated score on the Difficulty Describing Feelings subscale suggests that the client struggles to accurately express their emotions to others. This difficulty can create barriers to effective communication and interpersonal relationships.

Externally Oriented Thinking. An elevated score on the Externally Oriented Thinking subscale suggests that the client tends to focus on external events as opposed to their internal emotional state. While a preference for practical, externally focused thinking can be useful, emotional insight can be neglected as a result. High scorers may attribute their behaviour or decisions to external factors rather than reflecting on how their emotional states contribute to responses or points of view.

Difficulty Identifying Feelings. An elevated score on the Difficulty Identifying Feelings subscale suggests that the client has trouble recognising and distinguishing between their emotional experiences. These difficulties can hinder reflection on the source of emotional reactions.

Scoring and Interpretation Information

For comprehensive information on the TAS, see here.

A total score from 20 to 100 is calculated by summing all 20 responses. Higher scores indicate a greater difficulty with identifying, describing and processing emotions.

Ranges for clinical significance (Bagby & Taylor, 1997) are as follows.

No Alexithymia: 20-51 (Percentiles: Male, 0-52.9; Female, 0-59.9; Combined, 0-56.9)
- Individuals scoring in this range are unlikely to experience significant difficulties identifying, describing and differentiating between emotions.

Possible Alexithymia: 52-60 (Percentiles: Male, 53-82.9; Female, 60-84.9; Combined, 57-83.9)
- Individuals scoring in this range may benefit from further clinical assessment to determine how their level of reflective capacity affects their functioning. These individuals may encounter difficulties with emotion awareness and differentiating between emotions, as well as expressing and regulating emotions.

Alexithymia: 61-100 (Percentiles: Male, 83-100; Female, 85-100; Combined, 84-100)
- Individuals scoring in this range may experience difficulties identifying and describing their feelings. They may experience emotions particularly in terms of their physical sensations and have difficulties with their regulation and communication. This individual may tend to focus their attention on external events rather than on internal experiences. The impact of this level of alexithymia may be observable in the individual's level of functioning and quality of relationships. In therapy, this individual may benefit from mindfulness-based interventions that help increase attunement to internal experiences, emotion-focussed interventions enabling the client to practise recognising and labelling emotions, and learning skills to regulate their emotions.

Difficulty Identifying Feelings: Items 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 13, and 14
- The ability to recognise and identify internal emotions and distinguish between different feelings and bodily sensations. In therapy, trouble noticing emotions can hinder formulation, articulation of issues and goal setting.

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Scoring and Interpretation Information (cont.)

Difficulty Describing Feelings: Items 2, 4, 11, 12, and 17
- The comfort and accuracy with which individuals can express their emotions to others. Includes the ability to find words for emotions and share those feelings effectively. Barriers to communication can hinder mutual understanding which may become an issue that leads to a lack of engagement in therapy.

Externally Oriented Thinking: Items 5, 8, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 20
- The extent to which individuals focus on external events rather than internal experiences. It reflects a tendency to avoid emotional introspection by concentrating on the outside world. High scorers may have a fixation on external stimuli as opposed to internal emotions, which may be a defence mechanism against experiencing emotions deeply. In addition, high scores may indicate low empathy.

Client Responses

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I am often confused about what emotion I am feeling.	1	2	**3**	4	5
2	It is difficult for me to find the right words for my feelings.	1	2	3	**4**	5
3	I have physical sensations that even doctors don't understand.	1	**2**	3	4	5
4	I am able to describe my feelings easily.	5	**4**	3	2	1
5	I prefer to analyze problems rather than just describe them.	5	**4**	3	2	1
6	When I am upset, I don't know if I am sad, frightened, or angry.	1	**2**	3	4	5
7	I am often puzzled by sensations in my body.	1	**2**	3	4	5
8	I prefer to just let things happen rather than to understand why they turned out that way.	1	2	**3**	4	5
9	I have feelings that I can't quite identify.	1	2	**3**	4	5
10	Being in touch with emotions is essential.	5	4	**3**	2	1
11	I find it hard to describe how I feel about people.	1	2	**3**	4	5
12	People tell me to describe my feelings more.	1	2	3	**4**	5

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Client Responses (cont.)

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
13	I don't know what's going on inside me.	1	2	**3**	4	5
14	I often don't know why I am angry.	1	2	3	**4**	5
15	I prefer talking to people about their daily activities rather than their feelings.	1	2	3	**4**	5
16	I prefer to watch "light" entertainment shows rather than psychological dramas.	1	2	**3**	4	5
17	It is difficult for me to reveal my innermost feelings, even to close friends.	1	2	**3**	4	5
18	I can feel close to someone, even in moments of silence.	5	4	**3**	2	1
19	I find examination of my feelings useful in solving personal problems.	5	4	3	**2**	1
20	Looking for hidden meanings in movies or plays distracts from my enjoyment.	1	**2**	3	4	5