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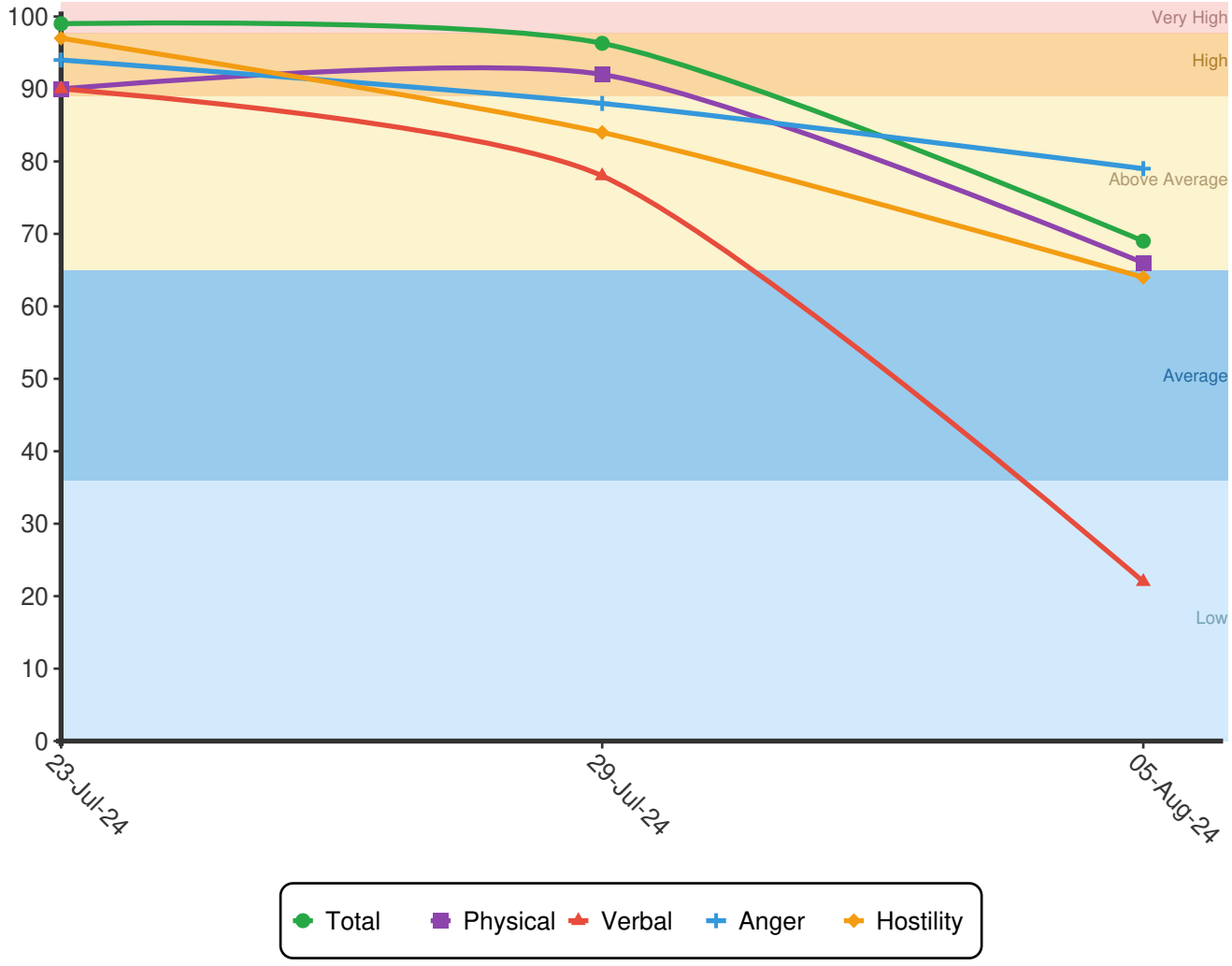
Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ)

Client Name	Generic Client	*Date administered*	5 Aug 2024
Date of birth (age)	1 Jan 1999 (25)	*Time taken*	27s
Assessor	EmersonDev BartholomewDev		

Results

	Score	Percentile	Descriptor
Total (29-145)	78	69	Above Average
Physical (9-45)	26	66	Above Average
Verbal (5-25)	11	22	Low
Anger (7-35)	20	79	Above Average
Hostility (8-40)	21	64	Average

Aggression Percentiles



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Interpretation

The client's Total aggression score is in the Above Average range. Compared to males, they scored on the 69th percentile. For the subscales, both their Physical and Anger scores are in the Above Average range, their Verbal score fell in the Low range, and their Hostility score fell in the Average range.

Since the initial administration on 23 July 2024, the client's Total aggression score has decreased significantly by 27 points. For the subscales, their Physical, Verbal and Hostility scores have decreased significantly.

Scoring and Interpretation Information

For comprehensive information on the BPAQ, see here.

BPAQ scores are presented both as an overall total (range 29 to 149) and at a subscale level. Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of aggressive statements and indicate a greater propensity for aggressive thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

Percentiles are presented, indicating the level of aggressiveness in comparison to a gender related normative sample. A percentile of 50 indicates typical (and healthy) levels of aggression, whereas a percentile of 90 indicates aggression in the top 10 percent of men or women (depending on gender). Such high percentiles indicate that aggression likely impacts relationships, personal or professional achievement and overall well-being.

Subscales:

Physical Aggression: (items 2, 5, 8, 11, 13, 16, 22, 25, 29) range 9-45
Tendency to engage in physical acts of aggression.

Verbal Aggression: (items 4, 6, 14, 21, 27) range 5-25
Propensity to engage in verbal arguments and confrontations.

Anger (1, 9, 12, 18, 19, 23, 28) range 7-35
The emotional aspect of aggression, including quick temper and frustration.

Hostility (3, 7, 10, 15, 17, 20, 24, 26) range 8-40
Internalised feelings of ill will and suspicion towards others.

Aggression can be largely considered pathological, particularly when excessive, inappropriate, and linked to psychological disorders. However aggression is not inherently maladaptive and is heavily reliant on contextual factors (Allen et al., 2018). Anger can propel us to take defensive, bold and vigorous action, so at least some aggression may be adaptive in many contexts.

Findings involving correlations to aggression can provide broader behavioural and emotional insights. For example, aggression, as measured by the BPAQ, has been correlated with increased alcohol intake and trait neuroticism, while being negatively correlated to trait agreeableness (Tremblay & Ewart, 2005). Such findings place scores in a wider context and may suggest a benefit to additional questioning about substance use or interpersonal issues relating to emotional instability. In addition, anger is often considered to be a secondary emotion, whereby an uncomfortable feeling such as sadness is concealed through aggression. Indeed,

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Scoring and Interpretation Information (cont.)

aggressiveness is correlated with the presence of depression (Rice et al., 2013).

While BPAQ scores are primarily used to assess client aggression levels, identify aggression-related issues and monitor progress, it may also be used as a risk indicator. For example, high responses on items like “Once in a while, I can’t control the urge to strike another person (item 8)” indicates the client may be a risk to themselves and others. The subscales of Physical Aggression and Hostility are of particular note when assessing risk. Archer and colleagues (1995) who observed a significant correlation between BPAQ scores and recent involvement in a violent physical altercation.

Hostility has verified links to poor health outcomes with a particular impact on coronary artery disease and mortality due to all causes (Barefoot & Williams, 2022). People high on hostility have large cardiovascular and endocrine reactions to social provocations. These physiological reactions represent fight-or-flight states accompanied by angry and aggressive responses toward other individuals.

Levels of aggression are related to healthy relational concepts such as assertiveness, whereby people who score extremely low or extremely high on aggressiveness may lack adaptive assertiveness skills. Assertiveness is defined as “the ability to express one’s thoughts and feelings, both positive and negative, in a non-hostile way and without violating the rights of others” (Ollendick, 1983), while aggression involves violent, harmful actions or intentions towards others (Deluty, 1979). While aggression and assertiveness differ conceptually, it is important to acknowledge that they can often overlap in practice, especially in relation to Verbal Aggression (Ostrov et al., 2006). Assertive behaviours can be misinterpreted as aggressive due to their shared goal of exerting control or influence (Dirks et al., 2011; Ostrov et al., 2006). Consequently, very low levels of Verbal Aggression, as measured by the BPAQ, may also be associated with interpersonal difficulties. This is because extremely low Verbal Aggression scores may reflect the absence of assertive behaviours which are necessary for healthy social interactions. When considered along a continuum within the framework of assertiveness skills training, for example, extremely low levels of Verbal Aggression may be reflective of a passive communication style. As such, scoring one (out of five) on the item: ‘I tell my friends openly when I disagree with them’ (Item 4), may indicate a lack of assertiveness that is detrimental to healthy inter-relational dynamics.

Client Responses

		Extremely Uncharacteristic	Somewhat Uncharacteristic	Neither Uncharacteristic Nor Characteristic	Somewhat Characteristic	Extremely Characteristic
1	Some of my friends think I am a hothead	1	2	**3**	4	5
2	If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.	1	**2**	3	4	5
3	When people are especially nice to me, I wonder what they want.	1	2	3	**4**	5
4	I tell my friends openly when I disagree with them.	1	**2**	3	4	5

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Client Responses (cont.)

		Extremely Uncharacteristic	Somewhat Uncharacteristic	Neither Uncharacteristic Nor Characteristic	Somewhat Characteristic	Extremely Characteristic
5	I have become so mad that I have broken things.	1	2	**3**	4	5
6	I can't help getting into arguments when people disagree with me.	**1**	2	3	4	5
7	I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things.	1	2	**3**	4	5
8	Once in a while, I can't control the urge to strike another person.	1	**2**	3	4	5
9	I am an even-tempered person.	5	4	**3**	2	1
10	I am suspicious of overly friendly strangers.	1	**2**	3	4	5
11	I have threatened people I know.	1	2	**3**	4	5
12	I flare up quickly but get over it quickly.	1	**2**	3	4	5
13	Given enough provocation, I may hit another person.	1	2	**3**	4	5
14	When people annoy me, I may tell them what I think of them.	1	2	3	**4**	5
15	I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy.	1	**2**	3	4	5
16	I can think of no good reason for ever hitting a person.	5	4	**3**	2	1
17	At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life.	1	**2**	3	4	5
18	I have trouble controlling my temper.	1	2	3	**4**	5
19	When frustrated, I let my irritation show.	1	**2**	3	4	5
20	I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back.	1	2	**3**	4	5
21	I often find myself disagreeing with people.	1	**2**	3	4	5
22	If somebody hits me, I hit back.	1	2	3	**4**	5
23	I sometimes feel like a powder keg ready to explode.	1	**2**	3	4	5

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Client Responses (cont.)

		Extremely Uncharacteristic	Somewhat Uncharacteristic	Neither Uncharacteristic Nor Characteristic	Somewhat Characteristic	Extremely Characteristic
24	Other people always seem to get the breaks.	1	**2**	3	4	5
25	There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows.	1	2	3	**4**	5
26	I know that “friends” talk about me behind my back.	1	2	**3**	4	5
27	My friends say that I’m somewhat argumentative.	1	**2**	3	4	5
28	Sometimes I fly off the handle for no good reason.	1	2	3	**4**	5
29	I get into fights a little more than the average person.	1	**2**	3	4	5