

Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20)

The TAS-20 is a self-report questionnaire designed to assess alexithymia, that is, difficulty identifying and expressing one's emotions. It comprises 3 dimensions: difficulty identifying feelings, difficulty describing feelings and an externally oriented thinking style.

Number of questions	20 questions
Estimated duration	5 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Toronto Alexithymia Scale
Authors	Bagby, R. M., Taylor, G. J., & Parker, J. D. A. (1994)

Preview of the 20 questions

Often, I don't see my feelings very clearly.

Strongly disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Strongly agree

I have trouble finding the words that really match my feelings.

Strongly disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Strongly agree

I experience physical sensations that even doctors do not understand.

Strongly disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Strongly agree

I can easily describe my feelings.

Strongly disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Strongly agree

I prefer to analyze problems rather than settle for describing them.

Strongly disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Strongly agree

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Send your patient a link: they answer from their phone or computer, and you receive the scored results by email.

View the questionnaire on mentaal.org ›

Scoring & interpretation

TAS-20 scoring is based on a 5-point Likert-type scale, with each item rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). It is important to note that five items (4, 5, 10, 18 and 19) are reversed and need to be recoded before calculating the overall score.

The total score is obtained by adding up the responses to the 20 items after recoding the reversed items. This overall score can range from 20 to 100, with a high score indicating a greater level of alexithymia.

The questionnaire is divided into 3 subscales corresponding to the three main dimensions of alexithymia:

- Factor I: difficulty identifying feelings (items 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 13 and 14)
- Factor II: difficulty describing feelings (items 2, 4, 11, 12 and 17)
- Factor III: externally oriented thinking (items 5, 8, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19 and 20).

Score interpretation is based on defined clinical cutoffs:

- A total score between 20 and 51 indicates no alexithymia.
- A score between 52 and 60 suggests possible alexithymia.
- A score between 61 and 100 indicates the presence of alexithymia.

Finally, the highest subscore among the three factors indicates the specific dimension in which the person assessed has the most difficulty. This helps guide the clinical analysis and refine therapeutic interventions.

Usage

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 Laura V. - Online Psychologist