stressSCAN™

Summary Feedback Report

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Introduction

It is important to realise that optimal health and wellness encompasses more than just physical well being--it includes social, spiritual, behavioural, and intellectual health. Based on over 20 years of research, the results of StressScan provide an individual scorecard of important health resources and health risks shown to be associated with job burnout, physical illness, depression, anxiety, absenteeism and psychological well-being in recent published research.

What StressScan Measures

StressScan provides an overview of 15 important factors associated with optimal health and wellness. These scales include: 1) Stress; 2) Health Habits (including exercise/physical activity, sleep/relaxation, eating/nutrition, preventive practices and substance use); 3) Social Support Network; 4) Type A Behaviour; 5) Cognitive Hardiness; 6) Coping Style (including positive appraisal, negative appraisal, threat minimisation, and problem focused coping); 7) Psychological well-being; and 8) Response Distortion Index.

How Your StressScan Report is Organised

Your StressScan report will be organised into several sections to facilitate your understanding and interpretation of the results including:

- Summary of the 15 StressScan Factors
- Interpretation of Your Results
- Wellness Risks and Resources Summary
- StressScan Action Plan

Interpreting Your StressScan Report

Your results are summarised in the StressScan graph and described on the following pages. The graphs that follow compare your behaviours to those of others in our large normative database of working adults using standardised T-scores. StressScan norms are based on a large ethnically and culturally diverse sample of 1,111 men and women, ages 20 to 68, from diverse occupational industries and settings including government and non-profit.

The T-score is a standardised score allowing you to compare your own scores to a large normative database of working adults being used for this instrument. The T-score, for each StressScan scale, is the distance and direction from the average expressed in units of standard deviation. A T-score is sometimes called a "standardised score" with 50 representing the average.

If you have a T-score that is higher than 70, this score represents two standard deviations above the average and corresponds to the top 2 percent of all people scoring on that scale (in other words, in the 98th percentile. Such a score is considered very high). If your self-rating on a particular scale is higher than 50, your score is considered above average. If your self-rating on a particular scale is lower than 50, your score is considered below average.

The bar graph summary will compare your own responses to those of other working adults who have also completed StressScan.

When you are looking at your StressScan results, it is important to remember that for most of the scales, a high score represents a health resource and a low score suggests a potential health risk. On a few scales (Stress, Type A Behavior, Negative Appraisal), the opposite is true-a high score suggests the possible presence of a health risk, and a low score represents a health resource.
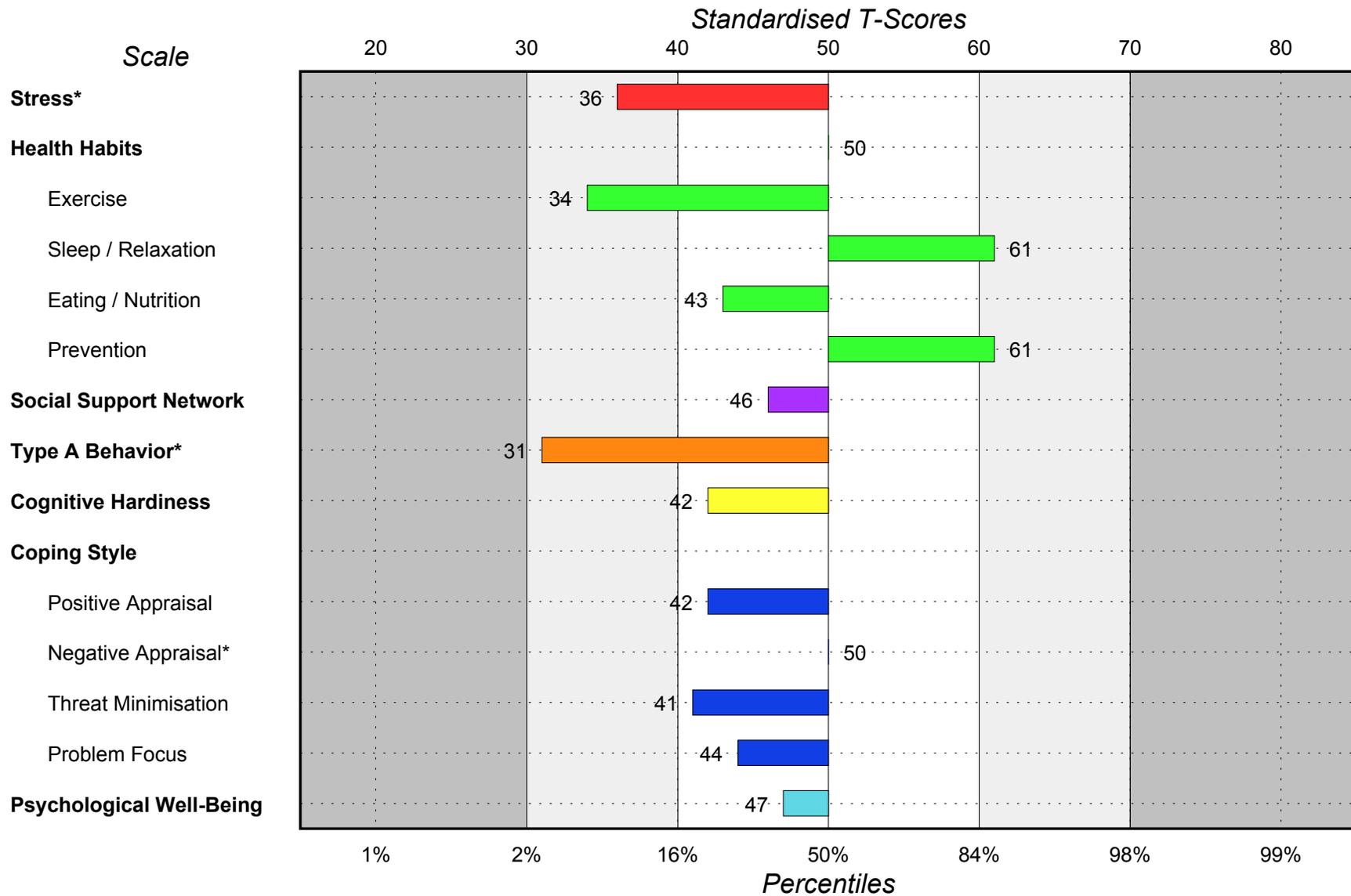
To further understand your StressScan results, the following scores can be interpreted as follows:

Very High   T-score above 70 (about 98% of the people who took StressScan got a lower score on this scale)

High   T-score above 60 (about 84% of the people who took StressScan got a lower score on this scale)

Moderately High   T-score above 55 (about 69% of the people who took StressScan got a lower score on this scale)

Average   T-score equal to 50 (about 31% of the people who took StressScan got a higher score on this scale and about 31% got a lower score)

Moderately Low   T-score below 45 (about 69% of the people who took StressScan got a higher score on this scale)

Low   T-score below 40 (about 84% of the people who took StressScan got a higher score on this scale)

Very Low   T-score below 30 (about 98% of the people who took StressScan got a higher score on this scale)

Unusual Response Patterns

StressScan has indexes that help identify unusual patterns of answers. Your scores in this area do not suggest that your answers fell into a very unusual pattern.

Summary Results

Standardised T-Scores

Scale	Value
Stress*	36
Health Habits	50
Exercise	34
Sleep / Relaxation	61
Eating / Nutrition	43
Prevention	61
Social Support Network	46
Type A Behavior*	31
Cognitive Hardiness	42
Coping Style	
Positive Appraisal	42
Negative Appraisal*	50
Threat Minimisation	41
Problem Focus	44
Psychological Well-Being	47

Percentiles: 1%, 2%, 16%, 50%, 84%, 98%, 99%

* High T-scores indicate a health risk. For all other scales, high T-scores indicate strengths, and low T-scores indicate health risks.

Your **StressScan** Results

Your score on each StressScan scale is discussed here to assist you in the interpretation. Remember that the T-score reflects a comparison between your score and the scores of others who have also taken this instrument in a wide variety of industries, settings, and work environments.

Work/Life Stress

T-Score

| Low | Average | High | 36 |
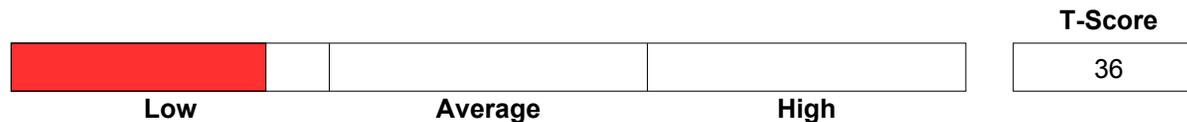
Interpretation of Your Score:
Stress is defined as the experience of major and minor irritants, annoyances, and frustrations (hassles) of daily living. StressScan measures your experience of daily hassles over a three-month period in six distinct areas: 1) Health; 2) Work; 3) Personal Finances; 4) Family; 5) Social Obligations; and 6) Environmental and World concerns.

Short-lived or infrequent episodes of work/life stress pose little risk. But when stressful situations go unresolved, the body is kept in a constant state of mental and physical activation, which increases the rate of wear and tear to biological systems. Ultimately, fatigue or damage results, and the ability of the body to heal and defend itself can become seriously compromised. As a result, the risk of injury, accident or disease increases.

Chronically high levels of work and life stress have been shown to be associated with decreased efficiency of the immune system and to contribute to a wide variety of physical, cognitive and emotional disorders. Evidence is rapidly accumulating to suggest that stress plays an important role in several types of chronic health problems--especially cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal disorders, autoimmune diseases, and gastrointestinal disorders.

A *lower* score on this scale is desirable to optimise both physical health and psychological well-being.

Compared to other people, you reported a low level of stress over the last three months. As a result, you are probably much less vulnerable to stress-related illnesses and disorders. You will benefit by continuing your practice of physical, emotional, spiritual, and behavioural coping techniques to maintain your low level of work and life stress.

You report *never or rarely* experiencing work or life stress over the last 3 months in the following areas:

Work/Life Stressors
Health
Financial
Family
Social
Environmental

Don't hesitate to continue to employ the valuable resources in these relatively stress-free areas of your life to help you minimise or even eliminate the health eroding effects of stress in the other areas.

Lifestyle Practices/Health Habits

T-Score

	50

Low   Average   High
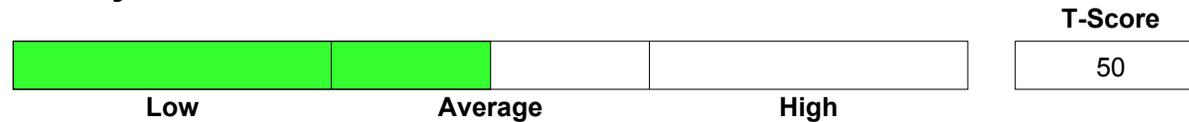
Interpretation of Your Score:

It is estimated that 40% of the factors that influence individual health are largely behavioural and lifestyle under your direct control. Each day you have an opportunity to put into practice specific lifestyle practices and behaviours that can significantly affect your moods, performance, long-term health and longevity.

Your StressScan report provides an overall Lifestyle Practices/Health Habits score and specific feedback on the following habits:

1. Exercise/Physical Activity
2. Sleep/Rest
3. Eating/Nutrition
4. Preventive Practices

The overall Health Habits score is the most useful one for getting an idea of how you compare to others in general.

It is important to keep in mind that specific health practices and lifestyle behaviours might require your attention even if your overall score is above average (e.g. if you are a smoker, engage in little or no physical activity on a regular basis or practice poor eating and nutritional habits).

A **higher** score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

You reported an average level of regular health maintenance habits. These lifestyle behaviours and health practices may provide an advantage to you in terms of long term health and longevity. As a result, you may wish to continue to focus on one or more lifestyle practices as part of your StressScan **Action Plan**. You will find a summary of each of your Health Habits briefly discussed below.

Exercise/Physical Activity

			T-Score
Low	**Average**	**High**	34
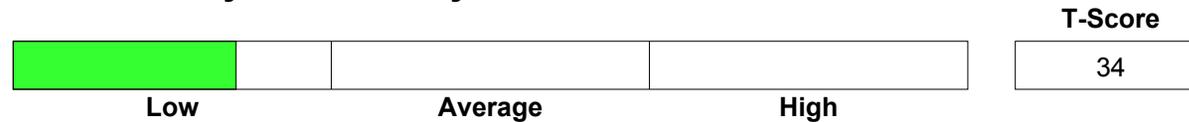
Interpretation of Your Score:

A large number of research studies have concluded that those who exercise vigorously several times a week or more have a 25% lower death rate than those whom are more sedentary or who engage in "non-vigorous" activities. Regular physical activity has also been shown to be associated with specific diseases and emotional health such as:

Heart disease and stroke: The risk of developing cardiovascular disease is reduced by about a third in people who exercise compared to those who do no exercise.

Weight Management: Regular exercise combined with a healthy diet is the best way of losing excess weight, and to maintain a healthy body weight.

Osteoporosis: Regular exercise helps to prevent osteoporosis (thinning of the bones). The pulling and tugging on the bones by the muscles helps to stimulate bone-making cells which strengthens the bones.

Cancer: Regular exercise roughly halves the chance of developing cancer of the colon (bowel cancer). There is also strong evidence that breast cancer is less common in women who exercise regularly.

Mental health: Exercise has been shown to decrease anxiety and mild depression. It has also been demonstrated to be associated with better quality sleep at night.

A *higher* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

The exercise/physical activity questions on the Health Habits scale ask about the frequency and amount of exercise you engage in to enhance flexibility, muscular tone and the cardiovascular system. Judging by your responses, your level of exercise is low. You may wish to increase your activity by identifying more active hobbies that appeal to you and by exercising 30-60 minutes at least three times a week. Before engaging in any strenuous exercise program, you should consult with a doctor, particularly if you were not previously fit.

Sleep/Relaxation

T-Score

Low   Average   High

| 61 |

Interpretation of Your Score:

Sleep is a vital physiological function with most adults, on average, requiring 7 to 8 hours of sleep at night. Younger individuals require more total sleep and this amount decreases to that needed by adults. The quality of sleep also changes with age (e.g. less deep sleep, more awakenings in older adults and elderly). Quantity and quality of sleep has been shown to be significant contributors to performance, mood and overall well-being.

People who don't get enough sleep may lack energy, be depressed or irritable, have trouble remembering everyday things, and get sick more often than people who get enough sleep. They seem to age faster and they may have problems concentrating at work or school. Some scientists believe a lack of sleep may have a role in diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and even obesity.

There are many causes of sleep deprivation. Some include: 1) Not allowing enough time for sleep; 2) sleep disorders; 3) excessive worry ; 4) depression; repeated awakenings from noise; 5) shift work, working at night and travel across time zones; 6) medications; and 7) medical illness causing pain, difficulty in breathing, etc.

Even a small loss of sleep can decrease waking performance and alertness. Research indicates that, for most people, one night with 2 hours less sleep than is usually required is sufficient to affect subsequent waking performance and alertness significantly. Lack of sleep also can increase the likelihood of accidents, particularly at work.

A **higher** score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

The Sleep/Relaxation questions ask about how regularly you are able to get adequate rest, sleep, and relaxation. Your responses indicate that you regularly experience a a high level of rest, sleep, and physical and mental relaxation. This helps you to feel, more often than not, fully rested, relaxed, alert, and able to concentrate. Continuing to taking time to physically and mentally relax, slow down, and get proper sleep will be a benefit whenever you encounter stress at work or at home.

Eating/Nutrition

T-Score

Low	Average	High

43
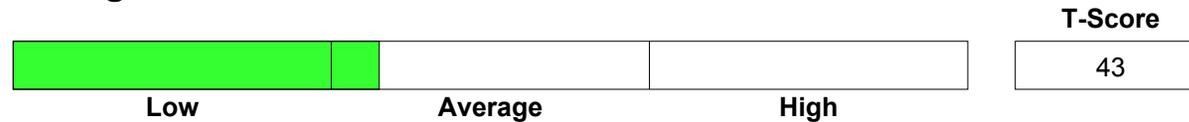
Interpretation of Your Score:

Nutritional balance and controlling excessive weight (obesity) are essential to maintain long term health and central to preventing major diseases, importantly diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke and some kinds of cancer. Healthy eating and nutritional practices also can play an important role in memory, fatigue, concentration, emotions, moods and alertness during the day.

A healthy diet can affect longevity-research suggests that regular consumption of a high variety of healthy foods is associated with a longer life span and lower death rates specifically from cardiovascular disease and cancer. From a long term health perspective, it appears more important to increase the number of healthy foods regularly consumed than to just reduce the number of less healthy foods regularly consumed.

Healthy eating and nutrition involves the following eight components: 1) high monsaturated fats found in many nuts and olive oils and low saturated fats found in most meat/dairy products; 2) moderate alcohol consumption; 3) high consumption of vegetables; 4) high consumption of cereals, grains and fibre; 5) high consumption of fruits; 6) high consumption of beans and pulses; 7) low consumption of meat; and 8) low consumption of dairy products.

A *higher* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and well-being.

The Eating/Nutrition questions on the Health Habits scale ask how often you eat well-balanced and nutritious meals and follow sound nutritional habits. You have reported a moderately low level of healthy eating and nutritional practices. You may tend to miss important meals, eat a non-balanced nutritional diet, or ignore the amounts of saturated fats, cholesterol, salt, and sugars that you consume. Small modifications in your eating and nutritional habits can have profound effects on your risk of developing and your ability to overcome chronic illness and diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Prevention

T-Score

| 61 |

Low   Average   High
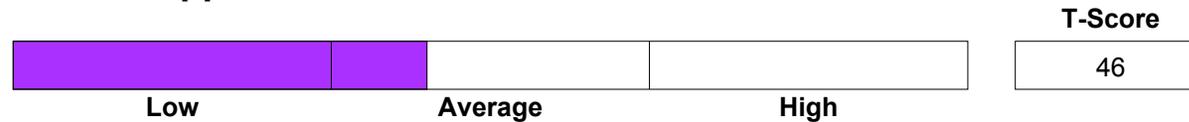
Interpretation of Your Score:

The prevention questions on the Health Habits scale ask how regularly you use common sense health and hygiene practices, and how often you use substances that may increase your health risk. The excessive use of substances such as caffeine or alcohol or habitual or excessive recreational use of prescription or non-prescription drugs are associated with an overall greater risk of experiencing health problems in general and stress-related illness in particular. In fact, over reliance on substances is often the first clear sign that some source of work or life stress is beginning to undermine your physical health and psychological well-being.

Some recent studies suggest that moderate use of alcohol several times a week may have some limited protective effects on the cardiovascular system. In general, for healthy people, one drink per day for women and no more than two drinks per day for men would be the maximum amount of alcohol consumption to be considered as ("healthy people" refers to non-pregnant women, individuals not addicted to alcohol, and people without pre-existing medical conditions). It is important to emphasise that any protective affects of alcohol in relation to cardiovascular disease are more a function of the frequency of drinking than the amount consumed - small amounts consumed several times a week are more beneficial than the same amount consumed over fewer occasions. Higher levels of alcohol consumption have been conclusively linked to more serious illnesses, accidents and adverse health outcomes.

A *higher* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

The level of preventive health practices reflected in your responses is high. This helps a great deal to decrease your risk of developing chronic health problems over the long term. You will benefit by continuing to follow common sense when it comes to maintaining your health.

Social Support

			T-Score
Low	Average	High	46

Interpretation of Your Score:

Social support has been shown to be a very important factor directly and indirectly influencing longevity, mental health and physical well-being. Indirectly, social support likely operates to eliminate or reduce stress by enabling reappraisal.

The importance of supportive social relations in respect to health has been demonstrated by a number of large-scale studies suggesting that the role of social support is comparable to the effect of such standard health behavior risk factors as smoking and cholesterol levels. Social support in the form of marriage, frequent daily contact with others, expression of feelings, and the presence of a confidant may all have protective value and directly enhance psychological well being, mood, confidence and quality of life.

StressScan measures three important and related aspects of social support from five different sources (boss/supervisor, others at work, spouse/partner, family members/relatives, friends):

- Perceived availability of support from each of the five sources
- Use of your support network system (either provided or received)
- Satisfaction with each in meeting your needs (e.g., informational, instrumental, emotional)

A **higher** score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your social support network is made up of the people in your life that you can count on for emotional support, advice, information, love and assistance. This network includes people at work and people away from work. A high score suggests satisfaction with both the size and quality of your social support system. People who feel satisfied with their social support networks seem to experience better physical health and psychological well-being in the face of daily work and life stress. Your responses suggest that your level of satisfaction with your social support network is in the average range. This situation will tend to increase your ability to resist stress-related illnesses and disorders. Your overall health will continue to benefit if you can work to keep and improve your social support system by initiating friendships, sharing more about yourself, or developing more trust in your relationships with others.

Type A Behaviour

Low	Average	High

T-Score

31
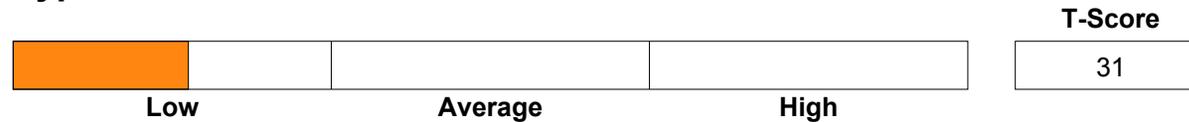
Interpretation of Your Score:

The Type A Behaviour pattern is typically characterised by excessive competitive achievement striving, an exaggerated sense of time urgency, impatience, aggressive behaviours, hostility, and observable behaviours such as muscle tenseness and accelerated rates of speech. Type A individuals tend to strive to achieve as much as they can in the least amount of time, to self-impose an overload of work, and to suppress feelings of fatigue.

High Type A Behaviour individuals tend to be very critical of themselves, tend to set high expectations for themselves and may believe others have these same high expectations of them as well. The Type A Behaviour components of expressed anger and hostility seem to be the most important factors shown to be consistently associated with cardiovascular disease and blood pressure in the most recent research.

StressScan measures three important components of Type A Behaviour including:

- Expressions of irritation, impatience and annoyance
- Cynicism and mistrust of others who are slow or incompetent
- Hard driving, competitive and achievement oriented

A *lower* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your Type A Behaviour score is low. This suggests that in the face of stress, threat, and challenge, you usually don't feel pressured, hurried, irritated, or impatient in coping with the demands of a typical day. This may help to make you quite a bit less vulnerable to stress-related illnesses and disorders. You will probably benefit by maintaining this way of responding to work and life challenges. In those times when you do feel hurried, impatient, or frustrated, take time to physically relax, and do not underestimate the value of saying calming things to yourself.

Cognitive Hardiness

T-Score

| | | | 42 |

Low   Average   High
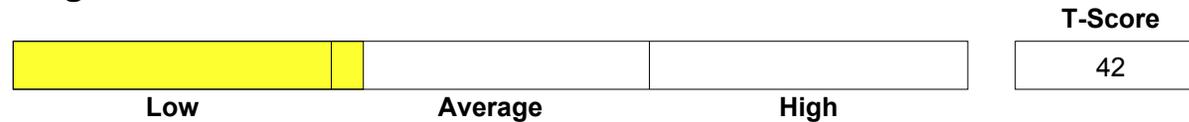
Interpretation of Your Score:

Cognitive Hardiness refers to a set of interrelated attitudes or beliefs about work and life that are relatively enduring from day-to-day. These include a sense of commitment and strong interest toward work, family, hobbies or projects that you are involved in on a day-to-day basis and having things you look forward to doing. When Cognitive Hardiness is present, daily life changes and events are perceived to be challenging rather than being experienced as threatening. This keeps you open to trying new experiences and helps you to recognise that change affords new opportunities rather than hindrances to work and life satisfaction. Finally, Cognitive Hardiness includes the belief that you have strong influence and control over your life, that what you do is directly related to what you achieve, that success in work and life is a result of individual behaviour, rather than, luck, fate, or chance and that you can effectively achieve success in both work and life.

This disposition appears to help buffer the potentially damaging impact of stress on well-being and directly generates effective coping behaviours. Individuals who score high on Cognitive Hardiness tend to cope with stress by direct problem-solving, rather than, by avoiding or ignoring the situation. They also tend to interact with others by giving and getting assistance and encouragement, rather than, by striking out or being overprotective.   Thus, high Cognitive Hardiness scores suggest the possession of the kind of generally hardy outlook on life that is associated with a lowered risk of job burnout, physical illness and psychological distress.

A *higher* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your Cognitive Hardiness score is in the moderately low range. According to your responses, you have more of a tendency than most people to interpret daily life events as threats to your well-being. From time to time, you may feel as though you don't fit in with your colleagues, friends, or even your family. This tends to increase your susceptibility to stress-related disorders. You will benefit if you can focus more on the positive aspects of your work and life. You should work to clarify your life goals and strengthen your commitment to things and people that are important to you. You will also benefit from finding ways to gain a stronger sense of control over the sources of your stress.

Coping Style

Coping style is defined as the most common way you deal with work and life threats, pressures and challenges. There is no overall Coping Style score, just four scores in specific areas: 1) Positive Appraisal; 2) Negative Appraisal; 3) Threat Minimisation; and 4) Problem-Focused Coping. High scores suggest that you rely heavily on one or more of the related approach to coping in most situations that you perceive as challenging or threatening.

Positive appraisal, threat minimisation and problem-focused techniques may help you cope with daily work and life stress. In fact, avoidance may be a particularly powerful short-term strategy when you are faced with situations that are beyond your direct control. Problem-focused strategies may also assist you in directly modifying your own environment or behaviour. Negative appraisal is usually counterproductive to coping effectively with stress and may even directly contribute to some types of anxiety and depression.

Positive Appraisal

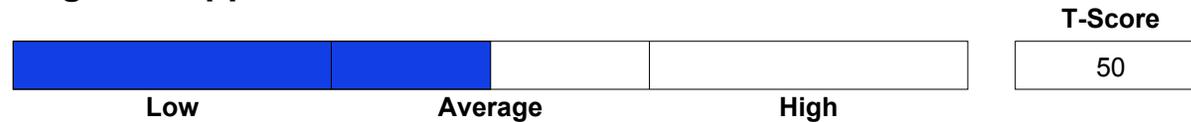|			T-Score
Low	Average	High	42
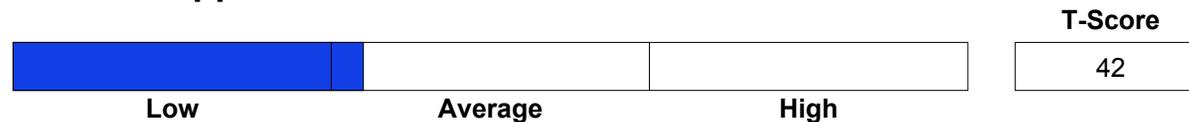
Interpretation of Your Score:
Positive appraisal means focusing on the positive to minimise what appear to be problems, pressures or challenges. People do this by saying or thinking positive things about the situation.

A *higher* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your score on this scale is in the moderately low range and indicates that you do not tend to use positive appraisal quite as often as other people when coping with daily work and life stress. It seems that you do not tend to minimise stressful events or situations when they occur. You may find it of benefit to discover positive things that you can say and think more often when you are dealing with both internal and external challenges.

Negative Appraisal

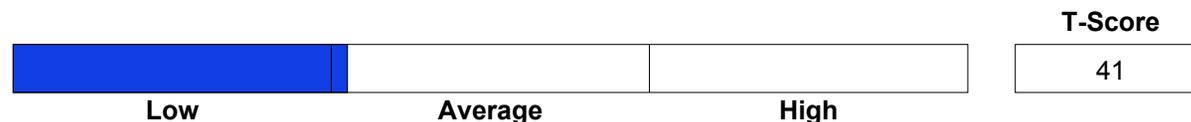**T-Score**

| Low | Average | High |

50

Interpretation of Your Score:

Negative appraisal is focusing or dwelling on the negative aspects of problems, pressures and challenges. When you use negative appraisal, you expect the worst to happen, blame or criticise yourself, and describe the situation to yourself using the words "should," "must," or "have to" quite frequently.

A *lower* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your Negative Appraisal score is in the average range. Your responses suggest that you use negative appraisal about as often as do most people when coping with daily work and life stress. You appear as likely as most people to blame or criticise yourself. As is true for most people, you will benefit from finding ways to become more aware of when you are trying to deal with a situation by using negative descriptions and self-talk. You will benefit if you refrain from doing so when you are dealing with both internal and external challenges.

Threat Minimisation

T-Score

| Low | Average | High |

41

Interpretation of Your Score:

Threat minimisation is achieved by deliberately recognising and minimising the significance of problems, pressures and challenges. When you make a joke about a difficult situation or consciously regard it as something that is over and done with, you are using threat minimisation as a way of coping.

A *higher* score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your Threat Minimisation score is in the moderately low range. You may find that you tend to dwell on what is bothering you, going over it in your mind again and again. Increasing your use of minimising strategies when confronted with stresses that you cannot control may help ease your mind, reduce your worry about stressful events and situations, and noticeably improve your health.

Problem Focused Coping

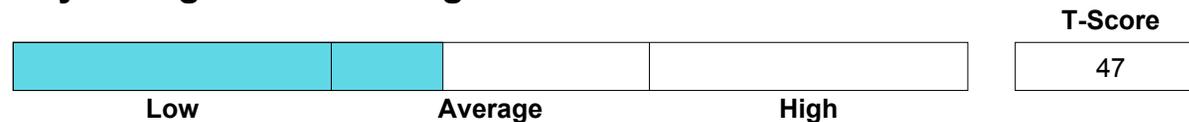|			T-Score
Low	**Average**	**High**	44
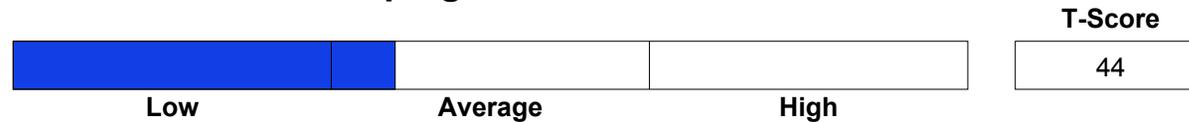
Interpretation of Your Score:

You are using problem-focused coping when you attempt to change a situation, take action, make decisions, and solve problems, respond to pressures, or meet challenges. Seeking advice, asking for help, developing a plan, constructively confronting others, changing your behaviour, figuring out a solution, and changing jobs or relationships are all examples of problem-focused coping.

A **higher** score on this scale is desirable to optimise long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your score is in the moderately low range. This suggests that you do not tend to take direct action to change or modify your environment. Finding ways in which you can constructively alter your own behaviour or the behaviour of others in stressful circumstances is likely to reduce your overall level of stress.

Psychological Well-Being

			T-Score
Low	**Average**	**High**	47

Interpretation of Your Score:

The Psychological Well-Being scale is a measure of life satisfaction in general. A high score indicates that you are satisfied with yourself and feel able to relax and enjoy life. Those with high scores feel happy with their families, work, interpersonal relationships, successes and achievements. In general, people with a strong sense of psychological well-being report fewer stress-related illnesses than those without such a strong sense.

You report an average level of psychological well-being compared to others. Still, your long-term physical health could benefit from any efforts you can make to pinpoint areas of your life where you are not satisfied. Commit yourself to taking effective steps to improve those situations.
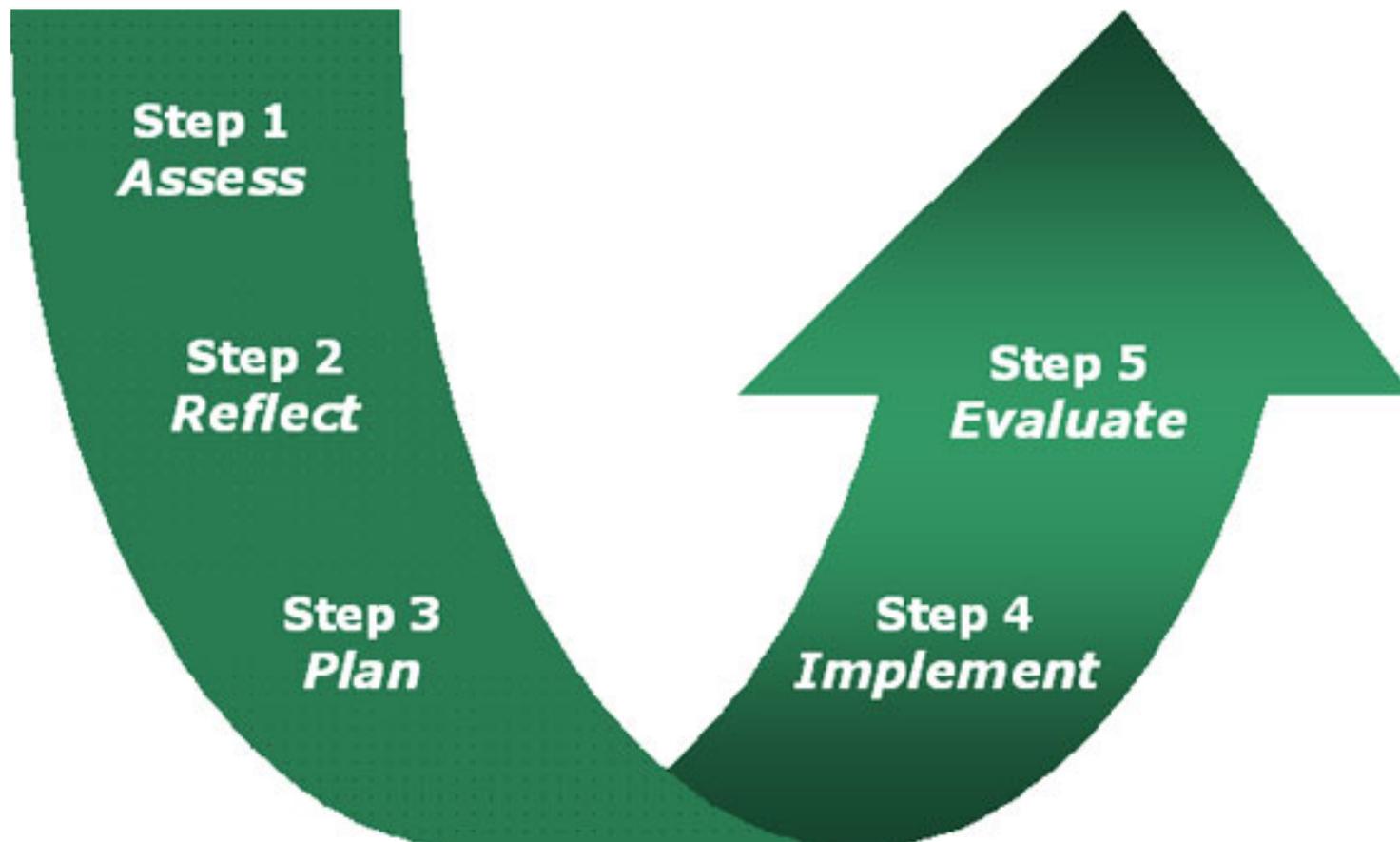
Summary of Wellness Risks and Resources

Your StressScan profile provides you with feedback about important wellness factors that may affect your ability to cope with stress and maintain a level of both physical and psychological well-being. This information can be useful in helping you to develop a commitment to maximise your optimal wellness level. Your **Wellness Resource** areas may tend to offset your **Wellness Risks** to a certain extent. More importantly, these areas may provide resources that can be used to address areas of risk for you in your efforts to strengthen and optimise your overall level of wellness. If you have none listed below, this suggests your scale scores on StressScan are within a moderate range compared others who have taken this instrument.

Wellness Risk Areas	Wellness Resources
Physical Activity/Exercise	Work/Life Stress
Eating/Nutrition	Sleep/Rest
Cognitive Hardiness	Prevention
Threat Minimisation	Type A Behaviour
	Non-Smoker

Using Your StressScan Report to Optimise Your Wellness

Your StressScan report provides you with information on 15 wellness factors that can affect your ability to cope with stress and maintain a high level of physical health and psychological well-being. Initiating and maintaining new behaviour is often challenging-particularly when our level of motivation and level of confidence about being successful are low. By following the steps below, you can maximise the success of your StressScan *Action Plan*.

Using Your StressScan Report to Optimise Your Wellness (Continued)

Step 1: Assess

Review your StressScan summary graph and **Wellness Risks** and **Wellness Resources** and place an (X) in the **Wellness Priorities** column next to all the factors you are interested in changing. In the last column, place a (+) next to all the factors you are most motivated <u>and</u> confident you can successfully change (those you are immediately willing to begin doing something about). Next, identify your top two Wellness Priorities in the spaces below:

StressScan Factor	Wellness Priorities (X)	Priorities that you are <u>most</u> motivated about changing and confident you can be successful (+)
Stress		
Health Habits		
Exercise		
Sleep/ Relaxation		
Eating/ Nutrition		
Prevention		
Social Support Network		
Type A Behaviour		
Cognitive Hardiness		
Coping Style		
Positive Appraisal		
Negative Appraisal		
Threat Minimisation		
Problem Focus		
Psychological Well-Being		

Top Wellness Priorities

A. _____

B. _____

Using Your StressScan Report to Optimise Your Wellness (Continued)

Step 2: Reflect

Now that you have selected one or two specific StressScan factors that you are prepared to begin making immediate behaviour change, answer the following reflective questions below to maximise your success and begin creating a detailed StressScan **Action Plan**.

1. What will be the positive outcomes of changing my behaviour in the StressScan area(s) I have selected?

2. How can I make my behavioural change goal realistic and achievable?

3. How can I track and monitor my progress on my behavioural change goal?

4. What are some possible barriers to successfully changing my behaviour?

5. What actions and steps can I take to anticipate and prevent these barriers from interfering with my successful behaviour change effort?

6. How can family members, friends, or co-workers assist me to successfully change my behaviour?

7. How will I reward myself for successfully maintaining my behaviour change goal for 30 days?

8. What can I do to continue to motivate myself to keep a high level of commitment to my wellness goal, even if I temporarily slip back into my old habits?

Using Your StressScan Report to Optimise Your Wellness (Continued)

Step 3: Plan

You are now ready to complete your StressScan *Action Plan*. Concentrate on one wellness factor at a time and complete your plan carefully and thoughtfully. Keep in mind that in order to be effective, your action plan activities and goals must be *SMART* (specific, measurable, action oriented, realistic and time bounded).

StressScan Factor:	
Specific Behavioural Change Goal/Activities:	**Target Dates:**
How I Will Track and Measure My Behavioural Change Goal Success:	
Results/Outcomes:	

Using Your **StressScan** Report to Optimise Your Wellness (Continued)

Steps 4 & 5: Implement and Evaluate

You are now ready to begin implementing and then evaluating the efforts of your StressScan *Action Plan*. Anticipate and prepare for situations that might challenge your commitment and ability to sustain your new habits. Evaluate your progress and reward yourself for your successful accomplishments. Utilise the following strategies to prevent relapse and ensure long-term success of your action plan.

- *Practice coping with unavoidable high-risk situations*
    - Think about what you could say and do when faced with temptation.
    - Use relaxation and other stress management techniques to handle strong emotions (e.g. anxiety).
    - Get advice and watch others.
    - Develop a set of self-instructions that will help you in high-risk situations.
    - Test your coping skills in actual high-risk-of-relapse situations (e.g. a smoker could interact with other smokers without smoking; a dieter could go out with friends having fast food and just have a healthy choice; a business traveler could schedule some light exercise into his/her busy day; a student studying during final exams can go to bed early enough to get adequate sleep, etc.).

- *Prepare in advance for a lapse (to avoid a relapse)*
    - Attempt to limit the loss of control and reduce the feeling that you have failed. Instead, if you slip, just admit that you have made a mistake.
    - Make an agreement to limit the slip (e.g. one dessert, one day without exercise).
    - Make an agreement to use family and friends to help you succeed.
    - Learn from this experience. Learn your weaknesses and plan how to overcome them.
    - Recommit yourself to your StressScan *Action Plan*