

Module Four: Assessment

Introduction to Clinical Psychology
PSY 455
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Overview of the Assessment Process


- An Assessment has the following parts:
- Referral Question
- Clinical Interview
- Mental Status Exam
- Intellectual Assessment
 - Achievement Assessment
- Personality Assessment

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Definitions, Part 1

- Assessment
 - The overall process of determining a client's capabilities
- Evaluation
 - Sitting with a client to determine capabilities
 - The specific session


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Definitions, Part 2

- Testing
 - Applying a given set of problems to a client to determine capabilities


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The Referral Question

- Sine Qua Non of assessment
- Comes from a number of sources
- Provides the basis for completing the assessment
 - Evaluations change based on what the referral question asks
- Examples

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Interview

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Main task is to identify the presenting problem ■ Helps to provide a diagnosis ■ Gives the first data point ■ Single most important means of data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Can do with a number of people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Client ○ Family members ○ Teachers ○ Former therapist
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Interview vs. Conversation

- Interview is designed to obtain certain goals
- Interview may require discussion of unpleasant thoughts, feelings, or events
- Interviewer is in control
- One-sided

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Structured vs. Unstructured Interviews

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Structured<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increased reliability & validity○ Decreased flexibility○ May miss idiosyncratic info○ May increase defensiveness and resistance○ Allows for comparisons○ Used in research and clinical settings○ Can be scored by computer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Unstructured<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Decreased reliability & validity○ Increased flexibility○ Picks up idiosyncratic information○ Increases rapport○ Creates favorable changes and encourages self-exploration○ Used in clinical settings |
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Hints to Help

- Use open-ended questions
- Only ask a single question
- Talk in the client's language
- Choose the right probing question
 - Avoid "Why"
 - Focus on facts
- Avoid negative phrasing

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Hints to Help

- Encourage precision
- Keep questions brief
- Keep on the lookout for new leads

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Areas to Assess in the Interview

- Here is where you include information from the clinical interview
 - Psychological/emotional History
 - Suicide Assessment
 - Medical history
 - Alcohol and drug use
 - Family history
 - Developmental history
 - Social history
 - Education history
 - Employment history
 - Sexual history
 - Legal history
 - Financial history


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Types of Assessment Instruments

- Use both idiographic and nomothetic instruments
 - Idiographic—look at the unique aspects of the individual
 - Nomothetic—look at how the individual compares to the population.


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Mental Status Exam

- First description of client
 - Describes from outside (more objective) to inside (more subjective)
- Areas:
 - Attitude, Behavior, and Activity
 - Mood, Affect, and Emotional Reactions
 - Speech and Language
 - Thought Process, Content, and Perception


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Mental Status Exam

- Sensorium
- Cognitive and Mental Functioning
- Insight and Judgment
- Mini-Mental Status Examination (MMSE)
 - 30-item brief measure of mental status
 - But not the ONLY way you assess mental status


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Intelligence Assessment

- An evaluation of a client's cognitive function
- Major tests:
 - Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale/ Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children/ Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence
 - Stanford-Binet
 - Kaufman Adult Intelligence Test/Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children


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Intelligence Assessment

- WAIS/WISC/WPPSI
 - Follow the same theory
 - General intelligence (g)
 - Then indices
 - Verbal Comprehension Index
 - Perceptual Reasoning Index
 - Processing Speed Index
 - Working Memory Index
 - Then Subtests
 - Block Design (PRI)


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Intelligence Assessment

- Similarities (VCI)
- Digit Span (WMI)
- Matrix Reasoning (PRI)
- Vocabulary (VCI)
- Arithmetic (WMI)
- Symbol Search (PSI)
- Information (VCI)
- Visual Puzzles (PRI)
- Coding (PSI)


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Evaluating Intelligence Assessments

- Psychometrics
 - Reliability
 - Internal Consistency
 - Test-Retest
 - Split Half
 - Validity
 - Construct
 - Face


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Achievement Assessment

- An assessment of a client's academic abilities
- Major Tests:
 - Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement
 - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test


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Achievement Assessment

- Areas assessed
 - Math
 - Calculation
 - Applied Problems
 - Reading
 - Reading Comprehension
 - Reading Rate
 - Writing
 - Written Expression
 - Spelling


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Personality Assessment

- An assessment of the qualities that comprise an individual's personality and components of psychopathology
- Two types:
 - Projective tests
 - Objective tests


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Personality Assessment

- Major Projective Tests
 - Rorschach Inkblot Test
 - Exner Comprehensive System
 - Thematic Apperception Test
 - Incomplete Sentences
 - House-Tree-Person Projective Test


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Personality Assessment

- Major Objective Tests
 - Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory
 - Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory
 - Personality Assessment Inventory


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Personality Assessment

- Neuroticism, Extraversion Openness Personality Inventory
- Narrow Band Assessments
 - Psychopathology:
 - Depression
 - Beck Depression Inventory
 - Anxiety
 - Beck Anxiety Inventory


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Personality Assessment

- ADHD
 - Clinical Assessment of Attention
 - Behavioral Assessment Scale for Children
 - Brown ADD Scales
- Normal Personality
 - Big Five Personality Traits
 - IPIP


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Report Writing

- Why a report?
 - Answer referral question
 - Provide useful info
 - Structured
 - Objective
 - In-depth review of client
 - Clarifies behavior and explains why it occurs
 - Recommendations


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Uses of Psychological Assessment, Part 1

- High Stakes Testing
 - Usually assessments involve making decisions about what happens in people's lives
- Learning Disability Assessment
 - Primary School
 - Secondary School
 - Tests


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Uses of Psychological Assessment, Part 2

- Social Security Disability Testing
 - Mental Disability
 - Tests
- Parenting/Custody Evaluations
 - Court involvement
 - Dangers
 - Tests


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Uses of Psychological Assessment, Part 3

- Medical Evaluations
 - Bariatric Surgery
 - Pain Management Surgeries
 - Pain Pump
 - Spinal Stimulator
 - Tests


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Uses of Psychological Assessment, Part 4

- Forensic Evaluations
 - Competency to Stand Trial
 - Insanity
 - Not Guilty By Reason of Insanity
 - Guilty But Mentally Ill
 - Tests

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Uses of Psychological Assessment, Part 5

- **Diagnosis**
 - What we usually think of when we think assessment
 - Tests
- **Treatment Outcome**
 - How we determine if psychotherapy is effective
 - Tests

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