

Intake Information

The information on these three pages is from:

Lukas, Susan. 1993. Where to Start and What to Ask: An Assessment Handbook. 1993. Norton Publishing.

Biopsychosocial Assessment

"The biopsychosocial assessment is based mostly on facts about the client's life and a description of the problem which *the client* has provided," (p. 13).

Mental Status Exam (MSE)

"The Mental Status Exam is essentially *your* observations," (p. 13).

Essential Areas to Address in the Mental Status Exam:

*Appearance: How does he look and behave?

*Speech: How does he speak?

*Emotions: What is his predominant mood? What is his predominant affect? (Mood = How does the client feel most of the time? Affect = How does the client appear to be feeling while he is with you?)

*Thought Process and Content: (Process = How does the client think? Content = What does he think about?)

*Sensory Perceptions: Are there any indications of illusions or hallucinations?

*Mental Capacities: Is he oriented x 3? What is your estimate of his intelligence? Can he remember and concentrate? How are his judgment and insight?

*Attitude toward the interviewer: How does the client behave?

Outline for a Mental Status Exam

Appearance

1. Does the client look healthy?
2. Does he look his age? If not, does he appear older or younger?
3. Does he have any obvious physical deformities? Describe.
4. Is he appropriately dressed?
5. Is his clothing clean?
6. Does he walk or move in an unusual way?
7. Does he sit in a comfortable posture?
8. Does he have any visible scars?
9. Do his height and weight appear to be appropriate?
10. Does he have any visible tics or unusual movements of the body, face, or eyes?
11. Does he make eye contact? If so, consistently or intermittently?
12. What is the client's facial expression? Does it change over the course of the interview?

Speech

1. Does the client speak?
2. Does he speak unusually rapidly or slowly?
3. Does he have a speech impediment?
4. Does he speak unusually loudly or softly?

Emotions

1. What is the client's predominant mood? Describe the comments and behavior on which you base this observation.
2. What is his predominant affect? Describe the comments and behavior on which you base this observation.
3. Does his affect vary over the course of the interview?
4. Does his affect seem excessive at any time? Describe.
5. Does he exhibit labile affect?
6. Is his affect appropriate to the content of the interview?

Thought Processes and content

1. Is the client's thought process circumstantial?
2. Is it perseverative?
3. Is his thinking tangential?
4. Does he demonstrate loose associations or flight of ideas?
5. Does he exhibit somatic delusions, or delusions of grandeur, persecution, or control? On what comments do you base this observation?
6. Does he appear to exhibit thought broadcasting or ideas of reference? On what comments do you base this observation?

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7. Does he suffer obsessive thoughts or experience compulsive behavior? If so, describe.
8. Is he phobic? If so, what is the nature of this phobia?
9. Are there indications of homicidal or suicidal ideation? On what comments do you base this observation?
10. Is there a particular subject that seems to preoccupy the client's thoughts? On what comments do you base this observation?

Sensory Perception

1. Does the client appear to have any hearing problems?
2. Does the client appear to have any sight problems?
3. Does the client suffer from illusions or hallucinations?

Mental Capacities

1. Is the client oriented to time, place, and person?
2. Does the client appear to be of average intelligence?
3. Does he exhibit a capacity for concentration within the normal range?
4. Does he exhibit appropriate, recent, and remote memory? If not, on what comments do you base this observation?
5. Does his judgment appear impaired in any way? If so, on what comments do you base this observation?
6. Does he have an appropriate sense of self-worth? If not, on what comments do you base this observation?
7. Does he appear to understand the consequences of his behavior?
8. Does he exhibit a capacity for insight?

Attitude toward the interviewer

1. What is the client's attitude toward you?
2. Does it change over the course of the interview?
3. Does he respond to empathy?
4. Does he appear to be capable of empathy?

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