

ASSOCIATION OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY REGULATORY BOARDS (AMFTRB) PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. Finding exceptions is a technique used to locate what in narrative therapy?**
 - A. Client's past failures
 - B. Situations where the problem does not exist
 - C. New clients for the therapist
 - D. Current trends in therapy
- 2. What was the inappropriate action taken regarding Cecilia's EAP report?**
 - A. Providing information without consent
 - B. Failing to assess the client's work issues
 - C. Documenting therapy sessions inaccurately
 - D. Not including pertinent details in the report
- 3. What technique is often used to reveal family dynamics in therapy?**
 - A. Role-playing
 - B. Sculpting
 - C. Transactional analysis
 - D. Behavioral modification
- 4. What therapeutic technique involves a therapist "joining" a family by imitating their communication and behavior?**
 - A. Mimesis
 - B. Empathy
 - C. Transference
 - D. Countertransference
- 5. What distinguishes second order change in a system?**
 - A. Shifts in individual behaviors
 - B. Meaningful change in the structure and functioning of a system
 - C. Changes limited to the family members' attitudes
 - D. Short-term adjustments to external pressures
- 6. What is a primary goal of Experiential Family Therapy?**
 - A. To increase individual therapy sessions
 - B. Change communication patterns within the family
 - C. Focus on financial planning as a family
 - D. Enhance family members' independence

7. What does Bowen recommend to disrupt emotional fusion in families?

- A. Encouraging family members to ignore their families-of-origin.
- B. Helping family members identify emotional hooks in their system.
- C. Reducing communication between family members.
- D. Focusing solely on the present family dynamics.

8. At what age group are the rates for completed suicide the highest?

- A. Under 25 years old
- B. 30-40 years old
- C. 45-54 years old
- D. 65 and older

9. In an Adlerian context, what characterizes a "stuck family"?

- A. Families embracing open communication
- B. Parents adopting roles based on their expectations of children
- C. Children leading family dynamics
- D. Constantly changing family boundaries

10. What does externalizing the problem in narrative therapy involve?

- A. Addressing the client's past traumas
- B. Identifying the source of emotional pain
- C. Making the problem an external, objectified entity
- D. Using established therapeutic frameworks for solving issues

Answers

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1. B
2. A
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. D
9. B
10. C

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Explanations

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1. Finding exceptions is a technique used to locate what in narrative therapy?

- A. Client's past failures
- B. Situations where the problem does not exist**
- C. New clients for the therapist
- D. Current trends in therapy

Finding exceptions is a key technique in narrative therapy that focuses on identifying moments or situations where the client's problems do not manifest. This approach allows clients to reflect on their experiences and recognize times when they were able to function outside of the problem's influence or when their lives were not dominated by the issues they face. By highlighting these exceptions, therapists help clients build a sense of agency and empowerment, ultimately supporting them in re-authoring their narratives to include a more positive and hopeful self-concept. This technique encourages clients to explore their strengths and past successes, which can serve as a foundation for change. It emphasizes the idea that while problems can feel overwhelming, they are not all-encompassing, and there are instances and conditions under which clients can thrive. By identifying these exceptions, clients can begin to see different possibilities for their lives beyond the limitations imposed by their struggles.

2. What was the inappropriate action taken regarding Cecilia's EAP report?

- A. Providing information without consent**
- B. Failing to assess the client's work issues
- C. Documenting therapy sessions inaccurately
- D. Not including pertinent details in the report

Providing information without consent is a serious breach of confidentiality and ethical standards in therapy. In situations involving Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), the therapist is often privy to sensitive client information that must be treated with the utmost confidentiality. When sharing reports or details with third parties, such as an employer or organizational structure, it is imperative that the therapist obtains explicit consent from the client to disclose any personal information. Without such consent, sharing details about a client's situation undermines the trust foundational to the therapeutic relationship and violates ethical guidelines that protect client privacy. This principle is especially critical in EAP settings, where the client may be in a vulnerable position regarding their employment and personal circumstances. Consent ensures that clients maintain control over their personal narrative, allowing them to decide what information is shared and with whom, ultimately protecting their rights as a client.

3. What technique is often used to reveal family dynamics in therapy?

- A. Role-playing
- B. Sculpting**
- C. Transactional analysis
- D. Behavioral modification

Sculpting is a therapeutic technique that is particularly effective in visualizing and revealing family dynamics during therapy sessions. This method allows family members to physically position themselves or objects in a way that represents their relationships, feelings, and interactions with one another. By creating a "sculpture" of the family system, therapists can identify underlying issues, dynamics, and roles that may be contributing to familial challenges. This approach encourages participants to express their perceptions and emotions non-verbally, which can facilitate deeper insights and discussions about the family's functioning. For example, a child may position themselves distanced from the parents, indicating feelings of isolation or conflict within the family. This visualization can prompt conversations and explorations into the identified dynamics, enabling the family to engage in more constructive communication and problem-solving. In contrast, while role-playing can also reveal dynamics through enactment, it is more focused on specific scenarios rather than a comprehensive portrayal of relationships. Transactional analysis primarily examines the different states of the ego and their interactions, while behavioral modification focuses on changing particular behaviors rather than exploring family dynamics as a whole.

4. What therapeutic technique involves a therapist "joining" a family by imitating their communication and behavior?

- A. Mimesis**
- B. Empathy
- C. Transference
- D. Countertransference

The technique referred to in the question, which involves a therapist "joining" a family by imitating their communication and behavior, is known as mimesis. This approach is often used in family therapy to establish rapport and create a sense of understanding between the therapist and the family members. By mimicking the family's communication patterns, the therapist can help to validate their experiences and perspectives, ultimately fostering a more conducive environment for therapy. Mimesis can facilitate better engagement, as family members may feel more comfortable and understood when they see their own styles mirrored by the therapist. This technique allows the therapist to become an integral part of the family dynamic, which can be particularly useful in uncovering underlying issues and promoting change. Other options, such as empathy, transference, and countertransference, relate to different therapeutic concepts, but they do not specifically involve the process of imitation or joining in the same manner as mimesis. Empathy refers to the ability to understand and share the feelings of another, while transference involves the client projecting feelings about someone else onto the therapist. Countertransference, on the other hand, pertains to the therapist's emotional entanglement with the client's issues. All these concepts are essential in therapy but do not embody the im

5. What distinguishes second order change in a system?

- A. Shifts in individual behaviors
- B. Meaningful change in the structure and functioning of a system**
- C. Changes limited to the family members' attitudes
- D. Short-term adjustments to external pressures

Second order change is characterized by a fundamental transformation in the way a system functions, which often involves altering the underlying structure, rules, or dynamics that govern that system. This type of change moves beyond mere modifications of individual behaviors or surface-level adjustments. It signifies a more profound evolution that modifies the relationships, patterns, and interactions within the system, leading to new ways of understanding and engagement among its members. When considering choices, the notion of shifts in individual behaviors represents first order change, where individuals may adapt or change their actions without altering the overall system dynamics. Similarly, changes limited to family members' attitudes also reflect a first order change, as attitudes alone may not reshape the interactions or foundational structure of the family system. Short-term adjustments to external pressures may demonstrate an adaptive response that does not reflect an intrinsic change within the system itself, as they may revert back once the pressure is alleviated. In contrast, a meaningful change in the structure and functioning of a system signifies a genuine transformation that impacts how members relate to one another, communicate, and solve problems. This is the essence of second order change, making this choice the most accurate representation of what distinguishes it.

6. What is a primary goal of Experiential Family Therapy?

- A. To increase individual therapy sessions
- B. Change communication patterns within the family**
- C. Focus on financial planning as a family
- D. Enhance family members' independence

Experiential Family Therapy primarily aims to change communication patterns within the family, fostering more authentic and open interactions among family members. This therapeutic approach emphasizes the importance of shared emotions and experiences, encouraging individuals to express their feelings and needs within the familial context. By improving communication, family members can better understand each other's perspectives, which helps in resolving conflicts and strengthening relationships. The focus on enhancing communication is rooted in the belief that many family issues arise from misunderstanding and emotional disconnects, so transforming these dynamics is essential for healthy family functioning. Thus, this therapeutic approach is about bringing families together and helping them engage with one another on a deeper emotional level. In comparison, while increasing individual therapy sessions, focusing on financial planning, or enhancing independence may have their respective benefits, they do not align with the core objectives of Experiential Family Therapy, which is centered on communication and emotional connections.

7. What does Bowen recommend to disrupt emotional fusion in families?

- A. Encouraging family members to ignore their families-of-origin.
- B. Helping family members identify emotional hooks in their system.**
- C. Reducing communication between family members.
- D. Focusing solely on the present family dynamics.

Bowen's family systems theory emphasizes the importance of understanding and managing emotional fusion, which occurs when family members become overly connected and dependent on one another, leading to a loss of individuality. To address this, Bowen recommends helping family members identify emotional hooks in their system. These emotional hooks are patterns of behavior or feelings that bind family members together, often leading to reactive behaviors and lack of differentiation. By recognizing these hooks, individuals can gain insight into how their emotions and actions are intertwined with their family dynamics. This awareness allows family members to better understand their roles within the family and promotes a healthier balance between connection and autonomy. The focus is on fostering individuality while still valuing familial connections, which ultimately helps to create healthier interactions and a more functional family system. The other options do not align with Bowen's approach; for instance, ignoring one's family-of-origin contradicts the importance of understanding one's roots in Bowen's theory. Reducing communication could exacerbate emotional fusion rather than disrupt it, as well as focusing solely on present dynamics can overlook essential historical patterns that contribute to current problems.

8. At what age group are the rates for completed suicide the highest?

- A. Under 25 years old
- B. 30-40 years old
- C. 45-54 years old
- D. 65 and older**

The highest rates for completed suicide are often found in the age group of 65 and older. This trend can be attributed to several factors that disproportionately affect older adults, including social isolation, chronic health issues, loss of loved ones, and mental health disorders such as depression. Additionally, older individuals may experience a combination of life stressors that accumulate over time, leading to an increased risk for suicidal thoughts and actions. Research indicates that within this age group, particularly among men, the prevalence of completed suicide is notably high. The stigma surrounding mental health in older generations and a lack of access to mental health resources can further exacerbate the situation, as older adults might be less likely to seek help. Various studies have shown that as age increases, so does the risk, highlighting the importance of addressing mental health needs within this demographic to help prevent these tragic outcomes.

9. In an Adlerian context, what characterizes a "stuck family"?

- A. Families embracing open communication
- B. Parents adopting roles based on their expectations of children**
- C. Children leading family dynamics
- D. Constantly changing family boundaries

In the context of Adlerian therapy, a "stuck family" is characterized by parents adopting roles based on their expectations of children. This reflects a family dynamic where parental expectations and roles can hinder the fluidity of relationships and impede growth. In such families, the parents may rigidly define the roles that children must play, based on their own beliefs about what is appropriate or expected. This creates a static environment that does not allow for healthy development or adaptation among family members, leading to difficulties in communication and individual growth. This dynamic often results in a lack of differentiation among family members, where the children's ability to express themselves or develop their own identities is stifled by the predetermined roles that the parents have set. The emphasis on meeting parental expectations rather than fostering open dialogue and supportive relationships can lead to feelings of frustration, resentment, and emotional distance, contributing to the family's "stuck" state. On the other hand, the characteristics denoted by the other options do not align with the concept of a "stuck family." Families embracing open communication would foster growth and adaptability rather than contribute to stagnation. Similarly, children leading family dynamics or constant changes in family boundaries would suggest a level of flexibility and evolution within the family system, which contrasts with

10. What does externalizing the problem in narrative therapy involve?

- A. Addressing the client's past traumas
- B. Identifying the source of emotional pain
- C. Making the problem an external, objectified entity**
- D. Using established therapeutic frameworks for solving issues

In narrative therapy, externalizing the problem refers to the process of separating the individual from their issues by viewing the problem as an external entity rather than a part of the person's identity. This approach allows clients to discuss the problem in a way that empowers them, as it shifts the focus away from their internal struggles and emphasizes that they are not defined by their problems. By conceptualizing the problem as something outside of themselves, clients can gain distance and perspective, which can lead to increased agency and the capacity to change their relationship with the issue. This externalization can manifest in conversations where clients might refer to their anxiety or depression as "the anxiety" or "the depression," thus making it a separate entity that they can confront and manage. While addressing past traumas, identifying sources of emotional pain, or using established therapeutic frameworks may be relevant in therapy, they do not specifically capture the essence of externalizing the problem as it pertains to narrative therapy. The key component of this technique lies in objectifying the problem, which opens up new possibilities for understanding and change.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

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We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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