

# LMSW Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



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## **Questions**

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- 1. In assessing risk factors for alcohol dependence among adolescents, the social worker would be most interested in?**
  - A. a biological family history of alcohol abuse**
  - B. the youth's developmental age**
  - C. the youth's involvement with friends who engage in deviant behavior**
  - D. the youth's school performance and social relationships**
- 2. When a social worker in a community center is insulted by a negative group member, the best response would be to:**
  - A. Allow the group to respond**
  - B. Communicate feelings of annoyance and suggest more appropriate ways of communicating**
  - C. Do nothing until it happens again**
  - D. Speak to the person after the meeting**
- 3. In reacting to a client's presentation of material in a psychotherapeutic or clinical situation, the social worker should primarily**
  - A. abstract the basic theme of the communication and reflect it in a broader perspective**
  - B. deal solely with the concrete data presented**
  - C. expand the data by interpreting on a deeper level**
  - D. reflect back to the client using the same language and words where possible**
- 4. A therapy patient who is overly talkative, restless, and grandiose might be suspected of which condition?**
  - A. Amphetamine intoxication.**
  - B. Alcohol intoxication.**
  - C. A psychotic episode.**
  - D. Dissociation.**
- 5. In joint or multiple interviewing, a social worker will focus on**
  - A. dividing the interviewing time evenly**
  - B. interactions between people and with the therapist**
  - C. issues to be resolved**
  - D. basic personality patterns of each individual**

**6. How might a therapist handle silence during the first group therapy session with new members?**

- A. Ask open-ended questions to prompt discussion**
- B. Announce the goals of the group**
- C. Perform group activities directly involving all members**
- D. Allow silence to assess comfort levels**

**7. Elliott is a college freshman in the process of joining a fraternity and is required to drink a full fifth of gin to complete his initiation. What should the social worker do?**

- A. Do nothing to intervene as this is a normal college ritual**
- B. Try to convince Elliott not to participate but do nothing further**
- C. Try to convince Elliott not to participate and notify the college administration of the event so it can be stopped**
- D. Try to convince Elliott not to participate and discuss the event with his parents**

**8. A client diagnosed with a character disorder begins to realize certain behaviors are no longer acceptable. The client then becomes depressed, experiences loss of appetite and has trouble sleeping. The social worker would see these symptoms as**

- A. an exacerbation of the client's problem**
- B. an indication of progress**
- C. the client becoming aware that the worker is not interested in offering treatment**
- D. the result of the worker's misinterpretation of the client's psychodynamic functioning**

**9. In establishing a working alliance with the client, the social worker should**

- A. allow for the client's ideas and goals, understanding that conditions change as clinical work proceeds**
- B. consider clinical objectives and get the client to agree to them**
- C. establish the conditions for proceeding**
- D. subtly try to encourage a positive relationship**

**10. What should a social worker do first if they observe a co-worker under the influence of drugs or alcohol?**

- A. Do nothing in anticipation that the worker's problems will be observed by the administrator**
- B. First speak to the colleague about obtaining assistance**
- C. First speak to the supervisor**
- D. Talk to the administrator**

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## **Answers**

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- 1. A**
- 2. A**
- 3. A**
- 4. A**
- 5. B**
- 6. A**
- 7. A**
- 8. A**
- 9. A**
- 10. A**

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## **Explanations**

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**1. In assessing risk factors for alcohol dependence among adolescents, the social worker would be most interested in?**

- A. a biological family history of alcohol abuse**
- B. the youth's developmental age**
- C. the youth's involvement with friends who engage in deviant behavior**
- D. the youth's school performance and social relationships**

In the context of assessing risk factors for alcohol dependence among adolescents, a biological family history of alcohol abuse is particularly significant. Research has shown that genetics plays a substantial role in the predisposition to alcohol use disorders. Adolescents with a family history of alcohol abuse may inherit genetic traits that increase their susceptibility to substance use. Understanding an adolescent's familial background regarding alcohol use can provide insight into their inherited behavioral tendencies, coping mechanisms, and the likelihood of their own alcohol misuse. This information is pivotal for early intervention strategies since those with familial connections to alcohol dependence may require more robust preventive measures and therapeutic support. While developmental age, peer associations, and school performance can also contribute to understanding an adolescent's risk, the strong impact of genetics and family history is essential for a comprehensive assessment of potential alcohol dependence.

**2. When a social worker in a community center is insulted by a negative group member, the best response would be to:**

- A. Allow the group to respond**
- B. Communicate feelings of annoyance and suggest more appropriate ways of communicating**
- C. Do nothing until it happens again**
- D. Speak to the person after the meeting**

The best response in this situation is to allow the group to respond. By doing so, you facilitate a healthy discourse and provide an opportunity for other members to address the negative behavior. This can promote a collective understanding of group dynamics, encourage accountability from the member who insulted the social worker, and help maintain a respectful and supportive environment. Encouraging group members to respond can also empower them to speak up against inappropriate behavior, which is important in fostering open communication and mutual respect within the group. It is crucial for the social worker to guide the discussion towards resolution without circumventing group processes, as this can ultimately enhance the overall effectiveness of the group and strengthen relationships among members. In contrast, communicating feelings of annoyance may risk alienating members or escalating tensions. Doing nothing may allow the negative behavior to persist, which could be detrimental to group cohesion. Addressing the individual after the meeting lacks the immediacy and group context that can help reinforce appropriate communication.

**3. In reacting to a client's presentation of material in a psychotherapeutic or clinical situation, the social worker should primarily**

- A. abstract the basic theme of the communication and reflect it in a broader perspective**
- B. deal solely with the concrete data presented**
- C. expand the data by interpreting on a deeper level**
- D. reflect back to the client using the same language and words where possible**

The correct answer centers on the importance of synthesizing and contextualizing the client's communication in therapy. By abstracting the basic theme and reflecting it from a broader perspective, the social worker facilitates a deeper understanding for the client, encouraging exploration beyond the immediate details they present. This approach allows the client to gain insight into patterns and underlying issues, promoting therapeutic growth and awareness. In contrast, solely dealing with concrete data may lead to a limited engagement without addressing the emotional or thematic context of what the client is expressing. Interpreting on a deeper level can be beneficial in certain contexts, but it risks overshadowing the client's voice and understanding if not carefully balanced with their self-exploration. Reflecting back using the same language can be useful for validation, yet it may confine the discussion to the specific words used, limiting the opportunity for broader exploration and thematic understanding. The best approach involves taking the client's content and elevating it to a level that invites further dialogue and introspection.

**4. A therapy patient who is overly talkative, restless, and grandiose might be suspected of which condition?**

- A. Amphetamine intoxication.**
- B. Alcohol intoxication.**
- C. A psychotic episode.**
- D. Dissociation.**

The presence of characteristics such as being overly talkative, restless, and grandiose points toward symptoms that are often associated with stimulant use, particularly amphetamines. When someone is under the influence of amphetamines, they can become unusually energetic, euphoric, and talkative, exhibiting a rapid flow of thought and speech. This elevated mood can also be accompanied by increased activity levels and a heightened sense of self-importance or grandiosity. In contrast, alcohol intoxication typically leads to a more subdued state, with characteristics such as slurred speech and decreased motor skills, which do not align with the symptoms described. A psychotic episode could involve grandiosity or racing thoughts, but it is more commonly associated with delusions or hallucinations, which are not mentioned in the scenario. Dissociation is characterized by a disconnect from one's thoughts or sense of identity, leading to a lack of cohesive conversation or engagement, which also does not match the patient's described behavior. Thus, the signs presented strongly suggest amphetamine intoxication as the most likely condition.

**5. In joint or multiple interviewing, a social worker will focus on**

- A. dividing the interviewing time evenly**
- B. interactions between people and with the therapist**
- C. issues to be resolved**
- D. basic personality patterns of each individual**

In joint or multiple interviewing, the social worker's primary focus shifts to understanding the dynamics of the interaction among the participants as well as their engagement with the therapist. This approach allows for the exploration of relational patterns, communication styles, and conflicts that may arise within the group setting. By observing how individuals respond to one another, the social worker can gain insights into the underlying issues that may not be as readily apparent when individuals are interviewed separately. The interactions can reveal key information about relationships, power dynamics, and emotional responses, which are critical for effective assessment and intervention. The other options, while potentially relevant to the interviewing process, do not capture the essence of what makes joint or multiple interviewing distinct. For example, dividing interviewing time evenly might seem fair but doesn't reflect the importance of focus on relationships. Concentrating only on issues to be resolved or personality patterns limits the scope of understanding by ignoring how individuals interact with each other within the context of the interview.

**6. How might a therapist handle silence during the first group therapy session with new members?**

- A. Ask open-ended questions to prompt discussion**
- B. Announce the goals of the group**
- C. Perform group activities directly involving all members**
- D. Allow silence to assess comfort levels**

While asking open-ended questions can indeed encourage involvement and prompt discussion, the most effective approach during the first group therapy session with new members often involves allowing silence to assess comfort levels. This technique can provide valuable insights into how participants are feeling within the group setting. Silence can create a space for reflection and may help members process their thoughts and feelings without immediate pressure to respond. It also allows members to observe one another and gauge the group dynamics, which can be particularly important for new members. By allowing some quiet time, the therapist can help establish a safe environment where individuals feel comfortable to share when they are ready. In contrast, while announcing the goals of the group and performing activities can structure the session, these approaches might inadvertently overwhelm new members who are still acclimating to the group dynamic. Immediate activity might push individuals who are feeling insecure or uncertain to engage before they are ready, which may not foster an effective therapeutic atmosphere.

7. Elliott is a college freshman in the process of joining a fraternity and is required to drink a full fifth of gin to complete his initiation. What should the social worker do?

- A. Do nothing to intervene as this is a normal college ritual**
- B. Try to convince Elliott not to participate but do nothing further**
- C. Try to convince Elliott not to participate and notify the college administration of the event so it can be stopped**
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The choice to do nothing to intervene fails to recognize the potential risks and consequences associated with heavy drinking, especially in initiation rituals that can promote dangerous behaviors. Social workers have a commitment to advocate for individuals' well-being, particularly in vulnerable situations like college initiation rites, where peer pressure can lead to harmful outcomes. In this scenario, the correct approach would involve taking action beyond passive observation. This could include attempting to convince Elliott not to participate in the initiation ritual, which poses significant health risks, and notifying appropriate authorities, such as the college administration, to intervene and prevent potential harm to Elliott and others. Addressing such situations reflects a proactive stance in promoting safety and well-being, consistent with the ethical responsibilities of a social worker. It acknowledges that while some may consider these actions typical college behavior, the implications of binge drinking in group settings can lead to serious health issues, legal consequences, and perpetuate a culture of risky behavior. By intervening, a social worker would fulfill their role in protecting clients and advocating for healthier, safer community practices.

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**8. A client diagnosed with a character disorder begins to realize certain behaviors are no longer acceptable. The client then becomes depressed, experiences loss of appetite and has trouble sleeping. The social worker would see these symptoms as**

- A. an exacerbation of the client's problem**
- B. an indication of progress**
- C. the client becoming aware that the worker is not interested in offering treatment**
- D. the result of the worker's misinterpretation of the client's psychodynamic functioning**

The client's realization that certain behaviors are no longer acceptable—an indication of self-awareness—can often lead to emotional distress, including symptoms like depression, loss of appetite, and difficulty sleeping. These symptoms are a natural response when individuals confront aspects of themselves that they may not have acknowledged previously. Recognizing problematic behaviors is a critical step in the process of change, yet it can also trigger discomfort and emotional turmoil due to the internal conflict and guilt associated with those realizations. Therefore, experiencing these symptoms aligns with an exacerbation of the client's existing issues, as they grapple with the consequences of changing long-standing behaviors and begin to confront their character disorder. This response highlights the complexity of the therapeutic process and underscores that progress may come with temporary setbacks, such as heightened emotional distress. In this context, the social worker would view these symptoms as part of the client's growth and development, even though they represent a challenging phase, rather than a straightforward exacerbation of their original problems.

**9. In establishing a working alliance with the client, the social worker should**

- A. allow for the client's ideas and goals, understanding that conditions change as clinical work proceeds**
- B. consider clinical objectives and get the client to agree to them**
- C. establish the conditions for proceeding**
- D. subtly try to encourage a positive relationship**

The selection of allowing for the client's ideas and goals while being open to the fact that conditions may change as the clinical work proceeds reflects a fundamental aspect of social work practice. This approach emphasizes the collaborative nature of the therapeutic relationship, wherein clients are considered active participants in their own treatment. By valuing the client's input and recognizing that their aspirations might evolve during the course of sessions, the social worker fosters a sense of agency and empowerment. This flexibility is crucial for building trust and ensuring that the client feels heard and respected. It also aligns with the person-centered approach, which focuses on the experiences and feelings of the client, ultimately leading to a more effective working alliance. While other approaches might emphasize setting specific clinical objectives or subtly encouraging positivity, they may not fully address the importance of the client's perspective and the dynamic nature of the therapeutic process. Effective social work entails actively engaging clients in a manner that accommodates their changing needs and goals, which is vital for a successful alliance.

**10. What should a social worker do first if they observe a co-worker under the influence of drugs or alcohol?**

- A. Do nothing in anticipation that the worker's problems will be observed by the administrator**
- B. First speak to the colleague about obtaining assistance**
- C. First speak to the supervisor**
- D. Talk to the administrator**

In a situation where a social worker observes a co-worker under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the most appropriate action involves prioritizing the safety and effectiveness of the workplace. Choosing not to act, as implied in the first option, may allow a potentially dangerous situation to continue. This response is passive and can put clients, colleagues, and the overall work environment at risk. Taking proactive measures is essential in addressing such behavior, as it can jeopardize the quality of service provided and can raise ethical and safety concerns in the workplace. Engaging in discussions with supervisors or seeking assistance for the colleague directly emphasizes responsibility and a commitment to maintaining professional standards within the social work field. These steps ensure that proper channels are followed to address the issue effectively and sensitively. In this context, opting to speak to the supervisor or administrator about the situation would facilitate a structured approach to managing the issue, as it involves reporting the behavior to someone who is trained to handle such situations appropriately while ensuring the safety of everyone involved.

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