NCE Counseling and Helping Relationships Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide

BY EXAMZIFY

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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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

1. **Which statement about consultation is NOT true?**

    A. The need for consultation may occur in most any agency or business

    B. Consultation uses the same core counseling skills but context differs

    C. The consultation may focus on content or process or both

    D. Since there is no strong theory or model of consultation, an eclectic approach is best

2. **In substance use treatment, what core issues are commonly addressed in family and client work?**

    A. Age, education, and social class

    B. Dual diagnosis, denial, and motivation

    C. Family, support group, and extended family

    D. Faith, spirituality, and belief in God

3. **Which pair of major counseling theories has shown the most effectiveness in research when applied to clients with certain problems?**

    A. Reality and gestalt

    B. Behavioral/cognitive behavioral and rational emotive

    C. Person-centered and behavioral/cognitive behavioral

    D. Adlerian and rational emotive

4. **The feminine therapy approach emphasizes gender as central to counseling. Which statement is NOT central?**

    A. Personal issues have societal and political roots.

    B. The therapist maintains the expert role.

    C. Mental illness definitions are reformulated

    D. Oppression is viewed in an integrated fashion including privilege and gender expectations.

5. In the initial counseling session, clients are sometimes given a formal summary of what to expect from therapy, including goals, techniques, the counselor's qualifications, and limits of confidentiality. This information is called:

   A. Duty to warn

   B. Release of information

   C. Professional liability statement

   D. Statement of disclosure

6. Birth order theory links certain traits to family position. Which pairing describes individuals who are carefree and outgoing and those who are early maturers and high achievers who are never dethroned?

   A. Secondborns and only children

   B. Middle and only children

   C. Firstborns and youngest

   D. Secondborns and middle children

7. Counselors with different theoretical orientations view the use of tests in counseling/therapy differently. Psychoanalytically trained therapists tend to use projective techniques. Counselors with which theoretical orientation are apt to use tests and inventories?

   A. Adlerian

   B. Client-oriented

   C. Trait-factor

   D. Gestalt

8. In a multicultural counseling scenario, a Latina client asks personal questions about the counselor's family. This behavior is best understood as

   A. Limited acculturation

   B. Needing to know boundaries and ethics of counseling

   C. Needing to know the counselor as a person

   D. Familism, a strong attachment to her family

9. **Counseling by computer is increasing in popularity. In addition to potential ethical issues around counselor qualifications and confidentiality, the counseling relationship is most hindered by the absence of:**

   A. Proxemic behavior

   B. Facial expressions

   C. Interplay between verbal and nonverbal messages

   D. Dress

10. **As the middle child in the family, Ingrid felt her older brother always 'got the breaks' from their mother and father. Her younger sister was 'dadd's girl' and could do no wrong as far as he was concerned. In family counseling, Ingrid was asked to sculpt the family. It is likely that she:**

    A. Had her four family members hold hands in a circle with her inside

    B. Had a line of family members with her brother between the parents, sister by father and she a few paces from the line

    C. Had her four family members hold hands in a circle with her standing outside

    D. Had the three children stand together facing mother and father who stood side-by-side

Answers

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

Explanations

1. Which statement about consultation is NOT true?

    A. The need for consultation may occur in most any agency or business

    B. Consultation uses the same core counseling skills but context differs

    C. The consultation may focus on content or process or both

    D. Since there is no strong theory or model of consultation, an eclectic approach is best

Consultation in counseling rests on established theories and models that guide how consultants work with consultees, analyze needs, and implement solutions within systems. The statement that there is no strong theory or model is not accurate, because there are well-developed frameworks such as Caplan's mental health consultation, problem-solving approaches, and various systems-based models that describe roles, stages, and outcomes. Practitioners may integrate different methods, but these frameworks provide structure and evidence for practice rather than relying on an ad hoc eclectic mix. The other truths hold as well: consultation can occur in many types of agencies or businesses, it draws on core counseling skills while adapting to context, and it may focus on content, process, or both.

2. In substance use treatment, what core issues are commonly addressed in family and client work?

    A. Age, education, and social class

    B. Dual diagnosis, denial, and motivation

    C. Family, support group, and extended family

    D. Faith, spirituality, and belief in God

In substance use treatment, how beliefs about life, meaning, and ultimate concerns shape recovery shows up as a central focus in both client and family work. Faith and spirituality are often a key resource for motivation, coping with cravings and stress, and maintaining hope across the recovery journey. When clients bring their spiritual beliefs into therapy, counselors can explore values, forgiveness, and purpose, and may connect them with faith-based supports or leaders if that aligns with the client's wishes. Families are involved because shared spiritual practices or supportive religious communities can strengthen the home environment, improve communication around recovery goals, and reduce stigma or shame. Framing recovery around spirituality or religiously-inflected worldviews can thus influence engagement, resilience, and long-term sobriety, making it a common area addressed in both individual and family contexts.

3. Which pair of major counseling theories has shown the most effectiveness in research when applied to clients with certain problems?

A. Reality and gestalt

B. Behavioral/cognitive behavioral and rational emotive

C. Person-centered and behavioral/cognitive behavioral

D. Adlerian and rational emotive

Empirical support matters: cognitive-behavioral approaches have the strongest and most consistent research backing for treating a wide range of problems. Combining behavioral/cognitive-behavioral therapy with rational emotive therapy brings together two highly studied, evidence-based strategies. CBT focuses on how thoughts, emotions, and behaviors influence each other and uses structured techniques to modify them, while REBT specifically targets and disputing irrational beliefs that fuel distress. This combination has shown robust effectiveness across common issues like anxiety, depression, phobias, OCD, and other stress-related problems, making it the strongest choice when looking at what research supports. Other pairs mix therapies that have less consistent empirical support for effectiveness across diverse problems. For example, while person-centered and Adlerian approaches are valued for their client-centered, growth-focused perspectives, they generally lack the same breadth of rigorous outcome research as CBT-based methods. Likewise, reality therapy and gestalt have less extensive research backing for broad clinical effectiveness.

4. The feminine therapy approach emphasizes gender as central to counseling. Which statement is NOT central?

A. Personal issues have societal and political roots.

B. The therapist maintains the expert role.

C. Mental illness definitions are reformulated

D. Oppression is viewed in an integrated fashion including privilege and gender expectations.

Feminist therapy centers gender and power in understanding distress and emphasizes collaboration, with the client viewed as the expert on her own life rather than a passive recipient of the therapist's authority. This approach promotes shared decision-making and aims to empower clients, rather than having the therapist maintain an expert role. That stance aligns with the core ideas of feminist therapy, where personal issues are connected to societal and political contexts, mental illness definitions are examined and reformulated through a feminist lens, and oppression is understood in an integrated way that includes privilege and gender expectations. Therefore, the statement about the therapist preserving the expert role does not fit feminist therapy, making it the not-central option.

5. In the initial counseling session, clients are sometimes given a formal summary of what to expect from therapy, including goals, techniques, the counselor's qualifications, and limits of confidentiality. This information is called:

A. Duty to warn

B. Release of information

C. Professional liability statement

D. Statement of disclosure

Providing a formal summary of what therapy will involve—goals, techniques, the counselor's qualifications, and limits of confidentiality—illustrates informed consent in practice. This step gives clients essential information and allows them to decide to engage in treatment with an understanding of what to expect and the boundaries in place, including how confidentiality may be limited. That explicit statement or discussion is a disclosure about the therapy process, documenting the terms under which services will be provided and the boundaries of confidentiality. It helps set clear expectations, protects both client and counselor, and supports the client's autonomy in deciding to proceed. Other options refer to different concepts: the duty to warn relates to specific risk situations, release of information concerns sharing records with others, and a professional liability statement deals with liability issues rather than the therapy process itself. The term that best matches describing the therapy process and confidentiality limits as part of beginning treatment is the disclosure statement.

6. Birth order theory links certain traits to family position. Which pairing describes individuals who are carefree and outgoing and those who are early maturers and high achievers who are never dethroned?

A. Secondborns and only children

B. Middle and only children

C. Firstborns and youngest

D. Secondborns and middle children

Birth order theory connects a child's position in the family to typical personality patterns. Second-born children are often described as more carefree and outgoing because they're not the first to shoulder parental expectations and must carve out their own niche. Only children, having no younger siblings, are not dethroned and are commonly depicted as early maturers with strong achievement orientation, since they receive sustained parental attention and can channel it into high goals. The pairing described fits this well: someone who is carefree and outgoing aligns with second-borns, while someone who is an early maturer and high achiever who is never dethroned aligns with only children. Together, that combination matches the option describing second-borns and only children. Other pairings don't fit as neatly because they require traits that don't consistently map to those positions—for example, the oldest can be ambitious but is subject to possible dethronement by younger siblings, and middle children are often portrayed as sociable but not necessarily the high-achieving, never-dethroned profile.

7. **Counselors with different theoretical orientations view the use of tests in counseling/therapy differently. Psychoanalytically trained therapists tend to use projective techniques. Counselors with which theoretical orientation are apt to use tests and inventories?**

   A. Adlerian

   B. Client-oriented

   C. Trait-factor

   D. Gestalt

Using standardized tests and inventories to identify stable traits and guide decisions is what characterizes the trait-factor orientation. This approach treats counseling as a way to measure aptitudes, abilities, interests, and values, then fit the individual to suitable occupational or educational options based on those measurements. It relies on objective, normative data and systematic interpretation of scores to make recommendations, rather than exploring unconscious content or focusing on the therapeutic relationship and client self-discovery. Psychoanalytic therapists tend to rely on projective techniques to reveal unconscious material. Client-centered counselors emphasize the therapeutic relationship and the client's self-directed growth, often with non-directive conversation. Gestalt therapy focuses on present awareness and experiential experimentation. Given that emphasis on measurement and problem-solving through data, trait-factor orientation is the best fit for using tests and inventories.

8. **In a multicultural counseling scenario, a Latina client asks personal questions about the counselor's family. This behavior is best understood as**

   A. Limited acculturation

   B. Needing to know boundaries and ethics of counseling

   C. Needing to know the counselor as a person

   D. Familism, a strong attachment to her family

The behavior reflects a desire to connect with the counselor as a real person. In many Latinx contexts, building trust and safety in therapy happens through personal warmth and knowing the person behind the role. When a client asks about the counselor's family, she's testing for genuineness and relational closeness to determine if a trusting bond can be formed. It's not primarily about boundaries and ethics, acculturation level, or familism itself; it's about establishing a human connection that makes the therapeutic relationship feel safe and approachable. The counselor can respond with appropriate, professional self-disclosure that supports rapport while maintaining boundaries.

9. Counseling by computer is increasing in popularity. In addition to potential ethical issues around counselor qualifications and confidentiality, the counseling relationship is most hindered by the absence of:

A. Proxemic behavior

B. Facial expressions

C. Interplay between verbal and nonverbal messages

D. Dress

The key idea here is that effective counseling hinges on how well verbal content and nonverbal signals align and reinforce each other. In face-to-face work, counselors rely on smiles, tone, pace, eye contact, and body language to gauge how a client is really feeling and to respond with empathy and attunement. When counseling is done by computer, many of these nonverbal cues are reduced, delayed, or altered, making it harder to read affect, build trust, and respond with warmth. The biggest hurdle, then, is the absence or disruption of the seamless interplay between what is said and how it is nonverbally expressed, because this interplay conveys meaning, validates the client, and sustains the therapeutic relationship. Proxemic behavior, facial expressions, and dress each matter to some extent, but they're part of nonverbal signals rather than the mechanism by which meaning is interpreted and trust is built. The overarching challenge in online counseling is the loss of coordinated verbal and nonverbal communication, which underpins rapport and accurate understanding.

10. As the middle child in the family, Ingrid felt her older brother always 'got the breaks' from their mother and father. Her younger sister was 'dadd's girl' and could do no wrong as far as he was concerned. In family counseling, Ingrid was asked to sculpt the family. It is likely that she:

A. Had her four family members hold hands in a circle with her inside

B. Had a line of family members with her brother between the parents, sister by father and she a few paces from the line

C. Had her four family members hold hands in a circle with her standing outside

D. Had the three children stand together facing mother and father who stood side-by-side

In family sculpture, the way the client arranges people shows how she perceives the family's connections, closeness, and loyalties. The middle child who feels the older brother consistently gets breaks and the younger sister is favored would depict those divisions spatially. Placing the brother between the parents signals he holds a central, privileged position in the family dynamic. Positioning the sister by the father suggests a closer alliance or favoritism toward her from the father. If Ingrid stands a few paces away from the line, it communicates a sense of being separate or less connected to the family's core relationships. This setup best reflects her experience of being overlooked and of clear divisions among the siblings and parents. Other arrangements would suggest different meanings—being inside a circle could imply inclusion or central belonging, standing outside might indicate isolation without specifying the same parental loyalties, and having all three children together facing the parents could indicate a shared stance or alliance rather than Ingrid's feeling of being left out.

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:

https://ncecounselinghelpingrelationships.examzify.com

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