

Systems Theory and Family Therapy Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

SAMPLE

- 1. What is a primary task assigned in the first session of solution-based therapy?**
 - A. Clients must fix their issues before returning**
 - B. Clients are asked to observe their lives for strengths to report**
 - C. Clients are required to outline their entire history**
 - D. Clients need to identify all their weaknesses immediately**
- 2. Froma Walsh suggests that good functioning families should avoid:**
 - A. Labeling and stereotyping family dynamics**
 - B. Open and honest communication**
 - C. Creating strong family routines**
 - D. Seeking outside support**
- 3. Which of the following is NOT one of the three primary therapeutic tasks in EFT?**
 - A. Creating and maintaining an alliance**
 - B. Restructuring interactions**
 - C. Eliminating all conflict**
 - D. Assessing and formulating emotion**
- 4. What is a key hypothesis of the Circumplex Model regarding balanced families?**
 - A. They function better than unbalanced families across the family life cycle**
 - B. They rarely communicate effectively**
 - C. They avoid facing developmental changes**
 - D. They require external guidance to function effectively**
- 5. Who are recognized as founders of Collaborative Therapy?**
 - A. Harlene Anderson and Lynn Hoffman**
 - B. Harry Goolishian and Sue Johnson**
 - C. Harlene Anderson and Harry Goolishian**
 - D. Sue Johnson and Lynn Hoffman**

- 6. According to the GARF rating, a score of 41-60 indicates what type of functioning?**
- A. Consistently thriving relationships**
 - B. Occasional satisfactory functioning with dysfunctions**
 - C. Significant satisfaction and competency in relationships**
 - D. A high level of emotional upheaval**
- 7. Which aspect does a genogram focus on during the assessment of a family?**
- A. Physical health only**
 - B. Patterns of mental health and family history**
 - C. Individual experiences unrelated to family**
 - D. Financial earnings of each family member**
- 8. What is the outcome of a successful family of origin (FOO) consult?**
- A. Increased awareness of the therapist's difficulties**
 - B. A family member's increased self-awareness**
 - C. Decrease in family communication**
 - D. Resolution of all marital conflicts**
- 9. According to collaborative therapy, how should therapists approach clients' knowledge?**
- A. As less valid than their own**
 - B. As equally valid as their own**
 - C. As generally less informed**
 - D. As irrelevant to the therapeutic process**
- 10. What does Circular Questioning aim to highlight within a family?**
- A. Inconsistent parenting styles**
 - B. Differences among family members**
 - C. Individual problems of each member**
 - D. Familial traditions and rituals**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is a primary task assigned in the first session of solution-based therapy?

- A. Clients must fix their issues before returning**
- B. Clients are asked to observe their lives for strengths to report**
- C. Clients are required to outline their entire history**
- D. Clients need to identify all their weaknesses immediately**

In solution-focused therapy, the first session plays a crucial role in setting the tone for the therapeutic process. Asking clients to observe their lives for strengths to report is fundamental because it aligns with the therapy's emphasis on solution-building and focusing on what works rather than dwelling on problems. This approach encourages clients to recognize and articulate their existing resources, capabilities, and positive experiences, fostering a sense of empowerment and hope right from the beginning. By guiding clients to identify their strengths, therapists help them enhance their self-efficacy, which is pivotal for motivating change. This task encourages clients to shift their perspective from a problem-centered view to a more positive one, setting the foundation for future sessions where strategies for change can be collaboratively developed. This proactive orientation not only promotes engagement in the therapeutic process but also helps clients envision a future where their strengths can lead to solutions. Other tasks suggested in the options would not be conducive to the goals of solution-focused therapy. For instance, requiring clients to fix their issues before returning could create a sense of pressure and defeatism, while outlining their entire history may lead to an overwhelming focus on the past rather than on possibilities for the future. Similarly, immediately identifying all weaknesses would foster a negative outlook, counterproductive to the objectives of solution

2. Froma Walsh suggests that good functioning families should avoid:

- A. Labeling and stereotyping family dynamics**
- B. Open and honest communication**
- C. Creating strong family routines**
- D. Seeking outside support**

Froma Walsh emphasizes the importance of healthy family dynamics and functioning, which includes recognizing and valuing the unique characteristics of each family member and the family unit as a whole. Labeling and stereotyping can lead to harmful perceptions and interactions within the family system. Such labels can restrict individuals and families, limiting their ability to adapt and respond to challenges. Additionally, these practices can foster resentment or conflict amongst family members, as they may feel misinterpreted or undervalued. In contrast, open and honest communication promotes understanding and strengthens relationships. Creating strong family routines is beneficial for providing stability and a sense of security, while seeking outside support can enhance coping strategies and lead to improved family dynamics. Therefore, avoiding labeling and stereotyping is essential for fostering a resilient and adaptive family environment, where all members can thrive.

3. Which of the following is NOT one of the three primary therapeutic tasks in EFT?

- A. Creating and maintaining an alliance**
- B. Restructuring interactions**
- C. Eliminating all conflict**
- D. Assessing and formulating emotion**

In Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT), the three primary therapeutic tasks are designed to help couples connect emotionally and restructure their interactions. These tasks involve creating and maintaining a collaborative alliance, restructuring interactions to foster emotional responsiveness, and assessing and formulating emotions to understand the underlying feelings driving behaviors. Eliminating all conflict, on the other hand, is not aligned with the goals of EFT. Instead of seeking to eradicate conflict entirely, EFT recognizes that conflict is a natural part of relationships. The focus is on understanding and navigating conflicts in a way that enhances emotional connection rather than attempting to eliminate them altogether. This understanding of conflict allows couples to address their emotions and needs more effectively, ultimately leading to a more secure bond. By concentrating on emotional dynamics and improving interaction patterns, EFT aims to strengthen relationships rather than inaccurately portray them as conflict-free. Thus, identifying the non-existent task of eliminating all conflict underscores a fundamental misunderstanding of the therapeutic process in EFT, making it the correct answer to the question.

4. What is a key hypothesis of the Circumplex Model regarding balanced families?

- A. They function better than unbalanced families across the family life cycle**
- B. They rarely communicate effectively**
- C. They avoid facing developmental changes**
- D. They require external guidance to function effectively**

The Circumplex Model postulates that balanced families exhibit higher levels of cohesion and adaptability, which contributes to their overall functioning. These families are equipped to manage stressors and transitions across the family life cycle more effectively than unbalanced families. The model emphasizes that families who maintain a healthy balance between emotional closeness and independence, as well as flexibility in roles and rules, are better able to navigate challenges and foster positive growth within the family system. In contrast to this, the other options suggest characteristics that would not be associated with balanced families. For instance, effective communication is a hallmark of balanced families, highlighting the importance of sharing feelings and resolving conflicts. Additionally, balanced families are generally more open to facing developmental changes rather than avoiding them, indicating a willingness to adapt and grow together. Lastly, balanced families are often self-sufficient in managing their functioning, reducing their reliance on external guidance. Hence, the key hypothesis about balanced families aligns with their ability to maintain effective functioning throughout various life stages.

5. Who are recognized as founders of Collaborative Therapy?

- A. Harlene Anderson and Lynn Hoffman
- B. Harry Goolishian and Sue Johnson
- C. Harlene Anderson and Harry Goolishian**
- D. Sue Johnson and Lynn Hoffman

The founders of Collaborative Therapy are Harlene Anderson and Harry Goolishian, who are credited with developing and popularizing this therapeutic approach. Collaborative Therapy emphasizes the co-construction of meaning between therapists and clients, viewing the therapeutic process as a shared journey rather than a hierarchical relationship. This model encourages dialogue and mutual exploration, allowing clients to draw from their own narratives and experiences to facilitate change. Harlene Anderson's contributions include her focus on understanding the client's context and the relational dynamics involved in therapy, while Harry Goolishian emphasized the importance of language and conversation as central to therapy. Together, they laid the foundational principles of Collaborative Therapy that differ significantly from traditional, more directive therapeutic approaches. Other individuals mentioned in the choices, such as Lynn Hoffman and Sue Johnson, have made significant contributions to the field of family therapy but are not identified as the founders of Collaborative Therapy. Lynn Hoffman is known for her work in systemic and social constructionist approaches, while Sue Johnson is well-known for her work in Emotionally Focused Therapy. Their contributions, although impactful, do not align specifically with the foundational aspects of Collaborative Therapy as articulated by Anderson and Goolishian.

6. According to the GARF rating, a score of 41-60 indicates what type of functioning?

- A. Consistently thriving relationships
- B. Occasional satisfactory functioning with dysfunctions**
- C. Significant satisfaction and competency in relationships
- D. A high level of emotional upheaval

A score of 41-60 on the Global Assessment of Relational Functioning (GARF) scale indicates occasional satisfactory functioning with some dysfunction present. This range suggests that while individuals or families may experience moments of effective communication and positive interactions, there are still notable challenges and difficulties that impact their overall relational dynamics. The GARF scale is designed to assess the quality of interpersonal relationships and overall relational health, where scores below this range typically indicate more profound challenges. Thus, the 41-60 score reflects a level where individuals can navigate relationships and function together at a satisfactory level at times, yet still experience dysfunction that can hinder their overall relational quality. Understanding this helps practitioners identify the necessity for therapeutic interventions aimed at enhancing communication and problem-solving skills within the family or relational system.

7. Which aspect does a genogram focus on during the assessment of a family?

- A. Physical health only**
- B. Patterns of mental health and family history**
- C. Individual experiences unrelated to family**
- D. Financial earnings of each family member**

A genogram is a visual representation that maps out a family's structure, relationships, and interactions across generations. Its primary focus is on understanding complex patterns, particularly those related to mental health and significant family history events. This might include information about family dynamics, emotional relationships, and psychiatric conditions, allowing therapists to recognize patterns that might influence current family functioning. By analyzing the genogram, a therapist can identify hereditary patterns, particularly in mental health, which can inform treatment approaches. This holistic and systemic view enables an understanding of how family history and dynamics contribute to individual and collective experiences of mental health within the family system. Other options, such as focusing solely on physical health, individual experiences unrelated to family, or financial earnings, do not capture the comprehensive relational and emotional aspects central to the genogram's assessment function. The genogram is distinctly designed to uncover and visualize the interplay of family relationships and their potential impact on mental health and collective history.

8. What is the outcome of a successful family of origin (FOO) consult?

- A. Increased awareness of the therapist's difficulties**
- B. A family member's increased self-awareness**
- C. Decrease in family communication**
- D. Resolution of all marital conflicts**

A successful family of origin consultation typically leads to a family member's increased self-awareness. This process assists individuals in recognizing how their backgrounds, including interactions and dynamics within their family of origin, shape their beliefs, behaviors, and emotional responses in their current relationships. The increased self-awareness can enhance a person's understanding of their role within their family system and how past experiences inform their current relational patterns. In this context, self-awareness is crucial because it empowers individuals to reflect on their past experiences without being overwhelmed by them. By understanding how their family of origin influences their present behavior, they can make informed choices about their relationships and contribute more positively to family dynamics. This outcome is significant as it lays the groundwork for deeper exploration of individual issues and paves the way for improved family interactions and growth. It does not guarantee resolution of all marital conflicts or a decrease in communication; rather, it enhances individual clarity and insight, which can lead to healthier discussions and interactions moving forward.

9. According to collaborative therapy, how should therapists approach clients' knowledge?

- A. As less valid than their own**
- B. As equally valid as their own**
- C. As generally less informed**
- D. As irrelevant to the therapeutic process**

In collaborative therapy, the core principle is that clients are viewed as the experts of their own experiences and knowledge. This perspective emphasizes that clients have valuable insights about their lives, relationships, and the issues they face. By considering clients' knowledge as equally valid as that of the therapist, this approach fosters a partnership where both the therapist and the client contribute to the understanding and solution of the client's problems. This equality in the therapeutic alliance cultivates a respectful and supportive environment, empowering clients to take an active role in their healing process. It enhances their sense of agency and self-efficacy, which is crucial for effective therapy. Therapists in this model encourage clients to explore and articulate their thoughts and feelings, leading to a more productive therapeutic dialogue and collaboration.

10. What does Circular Questioning aim to highlight within a family?

- A. Inconsistent parenting styles**
- B. Differences among family members**
- C. Individual problems of each member**
- D. Familial traditions and rituals**

Circular Questioning is a technique primarily used in family therapy that focuses on the relationships and interactions among family members rather than isolating individual problems. This method encourages therapists to pose questions that help highlight how each family member perceives one another's behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, thereby drawing attention to the differences in perspectives within the family system. By using Circular Questioning, therapists explore how individual behaviors and emotions are interconnected, allowing family members to see how their interactions affect each other. This process can reveal varying viewpoints on family dynamics and relationships, making it a powerful tool for fostering communication, understanding, and empathy among members. This approach contrasts with focusing solely on an individual's problems or parenting inconsistencies, as it emphasizes the complex web of relationships within the family rather than looking at isolated issues or traditions. Therefore, highlighting differences among family members through their unique perspectives is the core aim of Circular Questioning.