SUMMIT
STUDY GUIDES

NCE

Full-Length Practice Exam

Exam 3

200 Questions

Weighted to the six NCE content domains • Original practice questions

2014 ACA Code of Ethics • DSM-5-TR • Content current as of October 2026

Summit Study Guides
summitstudyguides.com

SUMMIT
STUDY GUIDES

Copyright © 2026 Summit Study Guides. All rights reserved.

This practice material is licensed for the personal study use of the purchaser. No part of it may be copied, reproduced, shared, resold, uploaded to any website or file-sharing service, or used to train or build any product without prior written permission from Summit Study Guides. Brief quotations for review purposes are permitted with attribution.

Trademark Notice

NCE and National Counselor Examination are registered trademarks of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). Summit Study Guides is an independent publisher and is not affiliated with, sponsored by or endorsed by NBCC or the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE). The questions in this material are original practice items written to reflect the published NCE content outline; they are not actual exam questions and do not come from any NBCC examination.

Disclaimer

This material is provided for educational and exam-preparation purposes only. It is not clinical, legal or professional advice and should not be relied on for decisions about real clients. Ethics codes, diagnostic criteria, laws and regulations change and vary by jurisdiction. The content was reviewed for accuracy as of October 2026, but no warranty of any kind is made as to its completeness, accuracy or continued currency.

Using these practice questions does not guarantee that you will pass the NCE or any other examination. By using this material, you agree that Summit Study Guides and its authors are not liable for any loss, damage or outcome, direct or indirect, arising from its use, including from any errors, omissions or inaccuracies.

How to Use This Material

Answer each question on your own first, choosing the single BEST answer. The current NCE gives you 3 hours and 45 minutes for 200 questions, so this full-length exam is timed the same way: aim for about 1 minute per question. Then check your work against the separate answer key and read every explanation, including for the questions you got right, because the reasoning is what transfers to new questions on exam day.

NCE Practice Exam 3

200 questions • Answer key and explanations in the separate Answer Key file
Choose the single BEST answer for each question. Allow 3 hours 45 minutes, about 1 minute per question.

1. Hannah, 28, insists she must never make mistakes at work. Her REBT counselor asks, "How is holding on to the belief that you must never make a mistake helping you reach your goals?" Which type of disputing is the counselor using?

A. Empirical (evidence-based) disputing
B. Logical disputing
C. Functional (pragmatic) disputing
D. Philosophical disputing

2. Dr. Owens, an LPC, attended a one-day REBT workshop and now wants to use REBT as her main approach with several clients who have complex trauma histories. According to the ACA Code of Ethics, what should she do?

A. Refer all trauma clients elsewhere until she is licensed in REBT
B. Get each client's informed consent instead of more training
C. Get proper education, training, and supervised experience in the approach first
D. Use it freely, since REBT is an evidence-based treatment

3. Courtney, 31, has opioid use disorder after years of misusing prescription pain medication and recently overdosed. She tells her counselor she wants to stop using but has relapsed after two detox admissions. What is the most appropriate addition to her treatment plan?

A. Placing her on a waitlist for a 12-step group in place of medical care
B. Requiring her to complete 90 days of abstinence before her counseling sessions can resume
C. Another medically supervised detox with no follow-up medication
D. Referral for medication for opioid use disorder, such as buprenorphine or methadone

4. Jacobs and colleagues emphasize scanning as a basic group leadership skill. What does scanning involve?

A. Checking that the room arrangement allows all members to see one another
B. Observing the faces and body language of other members while one member is speaking
C. Periodically asking each member to rate how well the group is functioning
D. Reviewing each member's intake information before every session to anticipate issues likely to arise

5. Devon, 39, tells his counselor, "I know smoking is killing me, but it's the only thing that calms me down." Which counselor response is a double-sided reflection?

A. "What do you think would happen if you decided to quit smoking?"
B. "So smoking is absolutely the only thing in the whole world that can ever calm you down when you're stressed."
C. "You're worried about what smoking does to your health, and it also helps you cope."
D. "You're really worried that smoking is going to kill you."

6. Under the ASAM Criteria, what most clearly distinguishes medically monitored intensive inpatient services (Level 3.7) from clinically managed high-intensity residential services (Level 3.5)?

A. Level 3.7 adds 24-hour nursing care and physician availability
B. Level 3.7 is reserved for patients unstable enough to need acute hospital care
C. Level 3.7 delivers 20 or more hours a week of services in a day treatment format
D. Level 3.7 uses peer recovery staff in place of licensed clinical professionals

7. When conflict arises in family sessions, Mr. Hale responds with long, logical explanations, cites statistics, and shows no visible emotion, saying, "Feelings just cloud the issue." Satir would most likely describe his communication stance as

A. blaming
B. placating
C. irrelevant
D. super-reasonable

8. Lena, 38, learns that few people came to a friend's party. She tells her counselor it happened because she arrived late and "ruined the mood," though most guests left before she arrived. Which cognitive distortion is this?

A. Overgeneralization
B. Mind reading
C. Magnification
D. Personalization

9. For the past 8 months, Olivia, 44, has dreaded riding buses, standing in long checkout lines, and being in crowded malls because she fears she could not escape or get help if she became dizzy or lost control. She now has a friend run most errands for her. She has never had a full panic attack. Which diagnosis BEST fits?

A. Social anxiety disorder
B. Specific phobia, situational type
C. Agoraphobia
D. Panic disorder

10. Celeste, 29, tells her Adlerian counselor, 'Unless I'm perfect at everything, no one will ever love me.' In Adlerian terms, how is this conviction best described?

A. A basic mistake
B. An injunction
C. An irrational belief
D. An automatic thought

11. A counselor's client meets criteria for adjustment disorder. Her insurance plan will cover more sessions for major depressive disorder, so the counselor considers recording that diagnosis on the claim. What best describes this action?

A. An acceptable practice, provided the counselor documents the client's need for services
B. A billing matter left to the insurer, since diagnosis decisions are not regulated by law
C. An acceptable practice, provided the client gives written consent to the diagnosis change
D. Insurance fraud that exposes the counselor to legal liability and violates the ACA Code

12. Aiyana, 5, speaks fluently and often at home with her family in English, the language used at school. She has not spoken at all at kindergarten for 4 months, though she nods and points to communicate. Her teacher reports that her play and social interest are typical. Which diagnosis is most appropriate?

A. Language disorder
B. Autism spectrum disorder
C. Selective mutism
D. Social anxiety disorder

13. Which statement best reflects Vygotsky's view of cognitive development?

A. Development results mainly from reinforcement of increasingly complex responses
B. Development unfolds in universal stages driven mainly by biological maturation
C. Development must reach a given stage before instruction can be effective
D. Higher mental functions appear first between people and are then internalized by the individual

14. Walter, 60, attends counseling at his wife's insistence. He is cordial, engages easily with the counselor, and says he feels no distress and sees nothing about himself he wants to change. From Rogers' 1957 perspective, which condition for change appears weakest?

A. The counselor experiencing unconditional positive regard
B. The counselor being congruent in the relationship
C. The client being incongruent, vulnerable, or anxious
D. Two persons being in psychological contact

15. A counselor education program writes a new comprehensive exam. The faculty ask a panel of experienced counselor educators to review each item and judge whether, taken together, the items adequately sample all eight CACREP core content areas. What type of validity evidence is the program gathering?

A. Concurrent validity
B. Construct validity
C. Face validity
D. Content validity

16. For an outpatient client with recurring suicidal thoughts but no imminent risk, which element is most strongly supported for inclusion in the treatment plan?

A. A written safety plan with coping steps, contacts, and means safety
B. A schedule of weekly risk ratings with no other written crisis procedures
C. A signed no-suicide contract in which the client agrees not to act on urges
D. A plan to address suicidal thoughts only after mood symptoms have improved

17. Hannah, 20, asks her counselor, who is personally religious, "Do you think premarital sex is a sin?" Hannah has been struggling with guilt about her relationship. What is the counselor's best initial response?

A. Explore what the question means to Hannah and what she values
B. Answer honestly about his beliefs so he stays congruent with her
C. State firmly that counselors never share opinions on any topic
D. Suggest that she talk with clergy about the moral question

18. Mei, 30, recently immigrated from China and is seeing a counselor for adjustment concerns. In the first session, she asks whether the counselor is married and has children. The counselor typically declines all personal questions. Based on multicultural counseling literature such as Sue and Sue, how might Mei perceive a refusal to answer?

A. As appropriate neutrality that fits her cultural norms about helping
B. As guarded or untrustworthy, which may hinder the development of rapport
C. As a culturally sensitive respect for boundaries that she will likely share
D. As highly professional, which will make the counselor seem more credible

19. Maria, 34, tells her counselor at a community clinic, "I guess I'm just a terrible mother. I yelled at my kids again this morning." She looks down and her voice drops. Which response best reflects a person-centered approach?

A. "You feel ashamed about this morning and wonder what that says about you as a mother."
B. "What could you tell yourself instead of calling yourself a terrible mother whenever this happens?"
C. "What did the kids do this morning that led you to yell at them?"
D. "Everyone yells sometimes, and it doesn't make you a terrible mother."

20. According to Figley, which counselor capacity makes effective trauma work possible but also creates vulnerability to compassion fatigue?

- **A.** Empathy
- **B.** Directiveness
- **C.** Self-disclosure
- **D.** Unconditional positive regard

21. Grace, 47, says in a flat voice, "Fine, whatever you think," after her counselor suggests a new between-session assignment, and she looks away. What should the counselor do NEXT?

- **A.** Gently note the shift and ask how the suggestion landed for her
- **B.** Take her agreement at face value and finalize the assignment
- **C.** Interpret her compliance as a lifelong pattern of people-pleasing
- **D.** Explain the evidence base so she sees the task's value

22. What is the main disadvantage of an unstructured intake interview compared with a structured one?

- **A.** It requires a computer-administered scoring program
- **B.** It cannot be adapted to the client's presenting concerns
- **C.** It makes building rapport with an anxious or guarded client more difficult
- **D.** It has lower reliability and may leave out important areas

23. Walter, 68, a widower, spends some evenings looking at photos and crying, and other days learning to cook, managing household finances, and joining a walking group. His adult children worry that his back-and-forth means he is "not grieving properly." Which framework BEST supports viewing this pattern as healthy?

- **A.** Kübler-Ross's stages of grief
- **B.** The dual process model of coping with bereavement
- **C.** Bowlby's phases of mourning
- **D.** Freud's concept of grief work and decathexis

24. Aaliyah, 13, has a mood disorder and is involved with juvenile court, special education, and child welfare services. Her mother feels overwhelmed by competing demands from each agency. Which approach is most consistent with best practice for coordinating Aaliyah's care?

- **A.** Separate treatment plans from each agency, with her mother acting as coordinator
- **B.** A wraparound process with a family-driven team that develops one coordinated plan
- **C.** Individual counseling focused on helping Aaliyah meet each agency's requirements
- **D.** Residential treatment so that all needed services can be delivered in one setting

25. Which statement best defines vicarious resilience?

- **A.** Growth in clients that results from observing their counselor's coping
- **B.** The counselor's ability to avoid all emotional reactions to clients' traumatic material
- **C.** Positive change in counselors from witnessing clients overcome trauma
- **D.** Resistance to burnout produced mainly by limiting trauma caseloads

26. Which factor is most consistently linked to a greater risk of vicarious trauma in counselors?

- **A.** Having more years of clinical experience
- **B.** A large proportion of trauma survivors on one's caseload
- **C.** Holding a doctoral rather than a master's degree
- **D.** Receiving regular trauma-informed supervision

27. Tamika, 38, has completed 28 days of residential treatment for alcohol use disorder. Using ASAM principles, the MOST appropriate aftercare recommendation is:

- **A.** transfer to medically managed inpatient services as a precaution
- **B.** remain in residential care until she reaches one full year of sobriety, regardless of her progress
- **C.** discharge with no further services because she has completed the program
- **D.** step down to an intensive outpatient program with recovery supports, based on reassessed needs

28. Andrea, 33, quit smoking 9 months ago and has not smoked since. She tells her counselor she still feels urges when she is around coworkers who smoke on breaks. According to the transtheoretical model, Andrea is in which stage?

- **A.** Termination
- **B.** Action
- **C.** Preparation
- **D.** Maintenance

29. Marcus, 29, who is deaf, has been denied a sign language interpreter for mandatory workplace trainings. His counselor helps him learn about his rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, identify the barrier, and rehearse how he will request the accommodation himself. Under the ACA Advocacy Competencies, this work BEST illustrates which domain?

- **A.** Client empowerment
- **B.** Client advocacy
- **C.** Collective action
- **D.** Systems advocacy

30. Clifford Beers's 1908 autobiography, A Mind That Found Itself, describing his treatment in psychiatric institutions, is credited with launching which movement?

- **A.** The community mental health movement
- **B.** The vocational guidance movement
- **C.** The human potential movement
- **D.** The mental hygiene movement

31. After receiving a signed release, a counselor needs to send a treatment summary for client Hana, 33, to her new psychiatrist. Which method best aligns with ACA Code of Ethics B.3.e on transmitting confidential information?

- **A.** Send it by regular email, using only Hana's initials in the subject
- **B.** Send it through an encrypted, secure messaging or email system
- **C.** Fax it to the psychiatrist's general office line without a cover sheet
- **D.** Text a photo of the summary to the psychiatrist's personal phone

32. Sergeant Alvarez, 33, has PTSD after a roadside bomb killed his friend. He believes, "It's my fault he died, because I asked him to switch seats." His counselor has him write an impact statement about what the event means to him and then uses worksheets to examine the evidence for and against his self-blaming belief. Which treatment is the counselor using?

- **A.** Cognitive processing therapy
- **B.** Stress inoculation training
- **C.** Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing
- **D.** Prolonged exposure therapy

33. Frank, 76, has a one-year history of cognitive decline with marked day-to-day fluctuation in alertness. His wife describes vivid, detailed visual hallucinations of children in the house, recent shuffling gait and stiffness, and episodes of acting out his dreams during sleep. Which etiology is most consistent with this picture?

A. Alzheimer's disease
B. Lewy body disease
C. Vascular disease
D. Frontotemporal lobar degeneration

34. In solution-focused brief therapy, the counselor's stance toward the client is best described as:

A. a collaborative, not-knowing partner who treats the client as expert
B. an expert who diagnoses the problem and prescribes solutions
C. a teacher who corrects the client's mistaken beliefs and goals
D. a neutral blank screen onto which the client projects conflicts

35. Perls described layers of neurosis that clients move through. The layer in which the client feels stuck and lost, having given up external support but not yet trusting self-support, is the

A. explosive layer
B. implosive layer
C. phobic layer
D. impasse layer

36. Ms. Okafor, a counselor at a high school health clinic, wants a brief, validated substance use screening tool developed specifically for adolescents. Which instrument is most appropriate?

A. CRAFFT
B. AUDIT
C. MAST
D. CAGE

37. Meta-analyses of the alliance-outcome relationship in individual psychotherapy (e.g., Flückiger et al., 2018) have most consistently found that the alliance

A. predicts outcome when clients rate it but not when counselors rate it
B. stops predicting outcome once initial symptom severity is statistically controlled
C. predicts outcome strongly in person-centered work but not in structured therapies
D. predicts outcome across varied approaches, including cognitive-behavioral ones

38. Ivy, 31, tearfully tells her counselor that her younger sister was just diagnosed with cancer. Which counselor statement reflects empathy rather than sympathy?

A. "I know exactly how you feel; my brother went through cancer too."
B. "I'm so sorry; that has to be the worst news anyone can get."
C. "Try to stay hopeful, because treatments have improved a lot."
D. "Hearing that news has left you shaken and frightened for her."

39. A counselor is determining the appropriate level of care for Rob, 44, who has alcohol use disorder. Which framework is specifically designed for this purpose?

A. The stages of change model, which matches level of care to the client's readiness
B. The AUDIT, which assigns a treatment setting based on the total screening score
C. The DSM-5-TR severity specifiers, which assign a level of care by symptom count
D. The ASAM Criteria, which use a multidimensional assessment across six dimensions

40. In motivational interviewing, the "righting reflex" refers to the

- **A.** counselor's urge to fix the client's problem by persuading or advising
- **B.** tendency of ambivalent clients to argue both sides of a decision
- **C.** client's return to old behavior after a period of successful change
- **D.** client's automatic defense of the status quo whenever change is suggested

41. Heather, 35, says, "I've been so depressed since my breakup." Her reality therapist responds, "It sounds like you've been depressing a lot lately. What have you been doing on the days you depress the most?" This wording reflects which tenet of choice theory?

- **A.** Feelings are part of chosen total behavior and change when acting and thinking change
- **B.** Depression is anger turned inward that must be expressed to be resolved
- **C.** Depression results from distorted automatic thoughts about the self, the world, and the future
- **D.** Depression is a learned helplessness response to uncontrollable events

42. Greg, 42, tells his counselor he has started questioning the career dream he pursued since his twenties, feels painfully aware of his mortality, and is reappraising his marriage and goals. Which concept from Levinson's theory best accounts for Greg's experience?

- **A.** The age 30 transition
- **B.** The early adult transition
- **C.** The culmination of middle adulthood
- **D.** The midlife transition

43. Zoe, 9, has refused to attend sleepovers or stay with a babysitter for the past six weeks. She has nightmares about being kidnapped, follows her mother from room to room, and worries her parents will die in an accident. She has no other worries about school, friends, or performance. Which diagnosis best fits?

- **A.** Social anxiety disorder
- **B.** Generalized anxiety disorder
- **C.** Specific phobia, situational type
- **D.** Separation anxiety disorder

44. A counselor helping Darnell, 45, quit smoking sets an initial goal of no more than 20 cigarettes per day and, once he meets it consistently, lowers the target to 15, then 10, then 5. Which single-subject design does this represent?

- **A.** ABAB reversal design
- **B.** Alternating treatments design
- **C.** Multiple baseline across behaviors
- **D.** Changing criterion design

45. Kevin, 21, a college student, reports 3 weeks of jitteriness, racing heart, insomnia, and sudden waves of anxiety during finals. He mentions drinking six to eight energy drinks a day since the term got busy; before that he had no anxiety problems. A recent physical was normal. Which provisional diagnosis is most appropriate?

- **A.** Panic disorder
- **B.** Acute stress disorder
- **C.** Caffeine-induced anxiety disorder
- **D.** Generalized anxiety disorder

46. Eli, 7, has frequent nighttime fears. The counselor asks Eli to act scared on purpose at home each evening and asks his parents to act as if they are helping him, all as a kind of playful game. This intervention most closely reflects

- **A.** Minuchin's enactment
- **B.** Madanes's pretend technique
- **C.** the Milan team's circular questioning
- **D.** Haley's ordeal therapy

47. Elaine, 67, comes to counseling 7 weeks after her husband's death. She describes sadness that comes in waves when something reminds her of him, some trouble sleeping, and a smaller appetite. She still enjoys visits from her grandchildren, laughs about shared memories, and says she feels "lucky to have had him." She has no suicidal ideation or feelings of worthlessness. What is the most appropriate diagnostic conclusion?

- **A.** She meets criteria for major depressive disorder because the bereavement exclusion was removed
- **B.** She meets criteria for prolonged grief disorder because her grief is interfering with sleep
- **C.** Her presentation is consistent with normal grief and does not warrant a mental disorder diagnosis
- **D.** She meets criteria for adjustment disorder with depressed mood because the loss is an identifiable stressor

48. A crisis worker uses the Triage Assessment Form (Myer and colleagues) to rate the severity of Hannah's reactions after a house fire. The form directs the worker to rate impairment in which three domains?

- **A.** Affective, behavioral, and cognitive
- **B.** Physical, emotional, and spiritual
- **C.** Lethality, intent, and access to means
- **D.** Psychological, social, and occupational

49. Dr. Patel, who has a solo private practice with 25 active clients, accepts a faculty position in another state that begins in six weeks. Which plan best meets her ethical obligations?

- **A.** Transfer all files to a trusted colleague and let that colleague contact clients after she leaves
- **B.** Tell clients promptly, process termination, and coordinate transfers to new providers
- **C.** Mail each client a letter with a list of local referrals during her final week in the practice
- **D.** Continue seeing all current clients through telehealth from the new state after she relocates

50. Following a residential eating disorder program, Leah, 17, is transitioning to outpatient care. Which practice BEST reflects a "warm handoff"?

- **A.** Giving Leah and her parents a list of local eating disorder specialists and outpatient programs to contact
- **B.** Introducing Leah to her outpatient counselor, with consent, before or at the point of discharge
- **C.** Mailing her records to the outpatient provider after discharge
- **D.** Asking Leah to call the residential program if outpatient care does not work out

51. A counselor using an AB single-case design tracks Tyrell's daily panic attacks for two weeks before treatment and then during eight weeks of interoceptive exposure. Attacks drop from about five per week to one. Which conclusion is BEST supported?

- **A.** The reduction is consistent with a treatment effect, but other explanations cannot be ruled out
- **B.** Exposure definitively caused the reduction in attacks
- **C.** The results generalize to most clients with panic disorder
- **D.** No conclusion can be drawn without a control group of at least 30 clients

52. A researcher spends 14 months living in a rural Indigenous community, participating in daily activities and observing healing practices to understand how the community views mental health. Which qualitative approach does this reflect?

A. Ethnography
B. Phenomenology
C. Consensual qualitative research
D. Grounded theory

53. In Meyer's minority stress model, which of the following is an example of a PROXIMAL stressor experienced by a sexual minority individual?

A. Being passed over for promotion by a supervisor with anti-gay attitudes
B. Being the target of a verbal assault because of one's sexual orientation
C. Being refused an apartment rental after a landlord learns of one's partner
D. Internalized negative beliefs about one's own sexual orientation

54. Dr. Grant holds a PhD in medieval history and a master's degree in counseling. In her counseling practice's advertising she lists herself as "Dr. Grant, LPC." According to the ACA Code of Ethics, this listing is:

A. Acceptable, as long as her website elsewhere lists the field of her doctoral degree
B. Acceptable, because she has earned a legitimate doctorate from an accredited university
C. Inappropriate only if she charges higher fees than master's-level counselors
D. Inappropriate, because it implies doctoral-level competence in counseling

55. Counselor Elise receives notice that a former client has filed a malpractice lawsuit against her. What should she do FIRST?

A. Send a full copy of the client's record to the client's attorney to show her good faith
B. Notify her liability insurance carrier and follow its guidance on legal counsel
C. Call the former client to talk through the concerns and try to resolve the matter informally
D. Review her session notes and add details that will make her clinical decisions clearer

56. According to research on therapist self-disclosure summarized by Hill and Knox, disclosures are most likely to be helpful when they are:

A. infrequent and brief, followed by a return of focus to the client
B. offered early in the first session, before the client discloses much
C. about current personal struggles the counselor is still working through
D. frequent enough that the client sees the counselor as fully genuine

57. A clinical supervisor at a community agency will be at a conference for a week while her supervisee continues to see clients, several of whom have elevated risk. What should the supervisor do?

A. Establish an alternate on-call supervisor and clear procedures for handling emergencies
B. Instruct the supervisee to postpone any risk assessments until the supervisor returns
C. Direct the supervisee to call emergency services for any client concern that arises
D. Tell the supervisee to manage any emergencies independently and document them carefully

58. Nadia, 27, arrives for her first appointment visibly anxious and starts describing her marital problems as soon as she sits down. What should the counselor do FIRST?

A. Give her a standardized anxiety inventory to establish a baseline
B. Gently pause and review informed consent, including limits of confidentiality
C. Begin a mental status exam while her symptoms are clearly visible
D. Let her continue, since early disclosure builds rapport and momentum

59. Malik, 15, has been arrested twice for theft and assault, skips school, and associates with peers involved in delinquency. His probation officer asks for a treatment recommendation that can reduce out-of-home placement. Which approach has the strongest evidence for this goal?

A. Weekly individual insight-oriented therapy delivered in an office setting
B. A wilderness or boot camp program emphasizing discipline
C. Multisystemic therapy addressing family, school, and peer systems
D. A group composed only of other adolescents with conduct problems

60. C. Gilbert Wrenn coined which term to describe counselors who define reality by a single set of cultural assumptions and remain insensitive to cultural variations among clients?

A. Color blindness
B. Cultural assimilation
C. Cultural encapsulation
D. Cultural relativism

61. In his 1957 statement of the necessary and sufficient conditions for therapeutic personality change, Rogers specified which condition regarding the client?

A. The client and counselor have agreed on explicit goals for treatment
B. The client is in a state of incongruence, being vulnerable or anxious
C. The client is motivated to change specific, clearly defined behaviors
D. The client has gained insight into the childhood origins of the problem

62. In many states, communications made during group counseling may not be covered by privileged communication statutes. What is the main legal reason?

A. Group counselors are not licensed to hold privilege for clients
B. Group members are co-clients who automatically share one privilege
C. The presence of third parties can defeat the expectation of privacy
D. Federal law exempts all group settings from privilege protection

63. Lena, age 9, earns a score of 110 on a cognitive test. The standard error of measurement is 4.5 points. Within which range can the counselor be about 95% confident that Lena's true score falls?

A. About 95 to 125
B. About 101 to 119
C. About 96.5 to 123.5
D. About 105.5 to 114.5

64. The Duluth Model's Power and Control Wheel conceptualizes intimate partner violence primarily as

A. a pattern of coercive tactics used to gain and maintain power and control
B. a symptom of substance misuse that resolves once the drinking is treated
C. a deficit in anger regulation best treated through anger management training
D. a mutual escalation of conflict for which both partners share equal responsibility

65. Minimal encouragers such as head nods and "mm-hmm" primarily serve to:

A. convey the counselor's agreement with the client's view
B. redirect the client toward a more productive topic
C. signal attention and prompt the client to keep talking
D. condense the client's content and check for accuracy

66. Bonanno's prospective research on bereavement trajectories found that the most common response to the death of a spouse is:

A. Delayed grief, in which little initial distress is followed by later severe symptoms
B. Resilience, with relatively stable, healthy functioning throughout
C. Recovery, with elevated distress that gradually resolves over one to two years
D. Chronic grief, with persistent high distress lasting several years

67. Ethan, 17, has avoided doctors' appointments for years because he becomes intensely fearful at the sight of needles and has fainted twice during blood draws. His fear is causing him to fall behind on required vaccinations. Which specific phobia type best fits?

A. Situational type
B. Natural environment type
C. Other type
D. Blood-injection-injury type

68. After two years at a trauma clinic, counselor Sean notices he now distrusts strangers, checks his locks repeatedly, and sees the world as fundamentally dangerous, changes he links to his clients' stories. This most closely reflects:

A. burnout, an exhaustion arising mainly from workload and organizational strain
B. countertransference, an unconscious reaction rooted in the counselor's own history
C. vicarious trauma, a cumulative shift in the counselor's core beliefs and worldview
D. compassion fatigue, a depletion of the counselor's capacity for empathic engagement

69. When composing a long-term interpersonal therapy group, Yalom recommends which general approach to member selection?

A. Heterogeneity in all respects, including members' level of vulnerability and capacity to tolerate anxiety
B. Homogeneity in presenting problems, with heterogeneity in level of functioning
C. Heterogeneity in conflict areas and coping styles, with relative homogeneity in ego strength
D. Homogeneity in age and background to promote early cohesion and avoid conflict

70. Harold, 63, who has drunk heavily for decades, is brought to the ER confused, with an unsteady, wide-based gait and abnormal eye movements. His blood alcohol level is zero, his vital signs are normal, and he has no tremor or hallucinations. These signs most strongly suggest:

A. Alcohol withdrawal delirium from sudden cessation
B. Wernicke encephalopathy due to thiamine deficiency
C. Korsakoff syndrome, marked mainly by confabulation
D. Alcohol-induced psychotic disorder with confusion

71. Jerome, 38, says, "My boss keeps piling work on me and I keep saying yes. Then I get home and snap at my wife over nothing." Which response is best described as additive (advanced) empathy?

A. "Why do you think you keep agreeing to take on all of the extra work?"
B. "You need to start setting limits at work before this goes much further."
C. "Maybe some of the anger you can't show your boss is coming out at home."
D. "You're feeling frustrated because your boss keeps giving you more work."

72. A counselor in a HIPAA-covered practice wants to share information from progress notes with a client's primary care physician to coordinate treatment. Under the HIPAA Privacy Rule, which statement is accurate?

A. The disclosure is permitted for treatment purposes without the client's written authorization
B. The disclosure is permitted only if the physician works within the same covered organization
C. The disclosure is permitted only if compliance with the minimum necessary standard is documented
D. The disclosure requires the client's written authorization, as do all disclosures to providers

73. Compared with classical psychoanalysis, brief psychodynamic therapies such as Strupp's time-limited dynamic psychotherapy are best characterized by which feature?

A. Avoidance of transference so that the treatment stays brief and contained
B. A circumscribed central focus, an active counselor, and a set time limit
C. Extended free association on the couch over a period of several years
D. Exclusive attention to present behavior without exploring earlier relationships

74. Three months after a sexual assault, a client persistently tells her counselor, "It was my fault for walking home alone." In DSM-5-TR, this symptom belongs to which PTSD symptom cluster?

A. Marked alterations in arousal and reactivity
B. Intrusion symptoms
C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli
D. Negative alterations in cognitions and mood

75. A school counselor notices that Ben, 9, cannot solve two-step word problems on his own but consistently succeeds when his teacher prompts him through the first step. In Vygotsky's theory, the range between what Ben can do independently and what he can do with guidance is called the

A. zone of proximal development
B. guided participation
C. more knowledgeable other
D. scaffolding process

76. A high school teacher gives quizzes at unpredictable times, sometimes twice in one week and sometimes not for two weeks. Students like Hana, 16, begin reviewing their notes a little every day. Which schedule best describes the contingency?

A. Fixed ratio
B. Fixed interval
C. Variable interval
D. Variable ratio

77. Ray, 45, is screened at intake with the CAGE questionnaire. He answers yes to the questions about feeling guilty about his drinking and having a drink first thing in the morning. How should the counselor interpret these results?

A. This falls below the screening threshold of three affirmative CAGE answers
B. This is a positive screen calling for a full substance use assessment
C. This confirms a diagnosis of moderate alcohol use disorder under the DSM-5-TR
D. This indicates active alcohol withdrawal requiring immediate medical detox

78. Elena, 26, reports that for the past nine months she has felt marked fear before attempts at vaginal intercourse, tightening of her pelvic floor muscles when penetration is attempted, and pain that has led her to avoid intimacy with her husband. A gynecological exam found no medical cause. Which DSM-5-TR diagnosis best fits?

A. Genito-pelvic pain/penetration disorder
B. Female sexual interest/arousal disorder
C. Specific phobia, other type
D. Vaginismus

79. Which statement BEST distinguishes licensure from certification for professional counselors in the United States?

A. Licensure applies to training programs, while certification applies to individual counselors
B. Licensure is voluntary for counselors, while certification is legally required to practice
C. Licensure is a state legal credential; certification is typically voluntary and national
D. Licensure is granted by NBCC, while certification is granted by state boards

80. Hannah, 70, widowed six months ago, says that some days she cries over photographs of her husband, while on other days she takes a cooking class and works on the household finances he used to manage. She worries that "taking breaks" from grieving means she did not really love him. Using Stroebe and Schut's model, the counselor would most likely explain that:

A. Moving back and forth between loss-focused and restoration-focused coping is normal and adaptive
B. Her inconsistent grieving is an early warning sign of prolonged grief disorder
C. She has completed the depression stage and is now entering the acceptance stage
D. Her restoration-focused days reflect denial that will need to be addressed in counseling

81. Priya, a 7th grader, earns a z-score of +1.00 on a standardized reading test. Her parents ask what percentile that is. About which percentile should the counselor report?

A. 84th
B. 98th
C. 34th
D. 68th

82. In motivational interviewing, developing discrepancy is best described as helping the client

A. compare his or her behavior with that of typical peers in the same situation
B. notice the gap between current behavior and personally held values or goals
C. identify inconsistencies in the client's account to resolve denial
D. recognize the difference between what the counselor and client believe

83. Jade, 22, is in dialectical behavior therapy. After a breakup, she calls her counselor with intense urges to self-harm. The counselor coaches her to splash cold water on her face, do intense exercise, and pace her breathing. These skills belong to which DBT module?

A. Emotion regulation
B. Mindfulness
C. Interpersonal effectiveness
D. Distress tolerance

84. Ivey's microtraining approach to teaching counseling skills is best characterized by:

A. learning one skill at a time, viewing models, practicing, and receiving feedback
B. mastering one complete theory of counseling before practicing any skills
C. completing personal therapy before beginning skills practice
D. observing experienced counselors for a full term before practicing

85. Keisha, 20, a college student, comes to the campus counseling center 12 hours after being sexually assaulted at an off-campus party. She is shaky, unsure whether she wants to report, and asks what she "is supposed to do now." What should the counselor prioritize FIRST?

A. Take a detailed account of the assault to document it for the Title IX office
B. Urge her to file a police report today while evidence is still available
C. Assess her safety and explain the medical and reporting options she may choose
D. Begin exposure work so that avoidance does not become established early

86. Lena, 36, has bipolar I disorder and takes lithium. Her last two manic episodes followed periods of irregular sleep during overnight shifts and travel. Besides medication management, which adjunctive psychotherapy is specifically designed to address this pattern?

A. Interpersonal and social rhythm therapy that stabilizes daily routines and sleep
B. Behavioral activation focused on scheduling more rewarding and energizing daily activities
C. Exposure and response prevention targeting her mood triggers
D. Client-centered therapy aimed at increasing her self-acceptance

87. Dr. Moreno clinically supervises Kim, a provisionally licensed counselor at a group practice. Kim fails to follow up on a client's escalating suicidal statements, and the client is harmed. The family sues Dr. Moreno as well as Kim. Under which legal doctrine can Dr. Moreno be held liable for Kim's negligence?

A. In loco parentis, meaning acting in place of a parent
B. Res ipsa loquitur, meaning the negligence is evident
C. Vicarious liability, also called respondeat superior
D. Duty to protect, as defined by the Tarasoff decision

88. A counselor on an inpatient interdisciplinary team believes the team's decision to discharge a client tomorrow is premature given the client's recent statements about suicide. According to the ACA Code of Ethics, the counselor should FIRST:

A. tell the client privately that she disagrees with the discharge and urge him to object
B. report the team's decision to the state licensing board as a potential safety violation
C. raise her concerns within the team and pursue other avenues only if they are unresolved
D. defer to the attending psychiatrist, who holds final authority over discharge decisions

89. Pedro, 28, has completed treatment for major depressive disorder after a third lifetime episode. As part of termination planning, which recommendation is MOST supported by research?

A. Continued antidepressant medication only, without psychological follow-up
B. No further contact, since remission indicates recovery
C. Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy or a similar relapse-prevention approach
D. Restarting weekly CBT sessions for the next 12 months to prevent another depressive episode

90. At the end of the fourth session of an eight-week closed counseling group, Simone announces that she will not be returning because the group is "not for her." What is the best leader response?

A. Agree to see her individually instead and keep the reasons for her departure confidential from the other members
B. Accept her decision without comment so the group does not feel pressured
C. Respect her right to leave while encouraging her to discuss the decision with the group before leaving
D. Tell her that she is obligated to complete the group because she signed a contract

91. Leah, 30, is describing a tense family dinner: "Everything was fine until my brother walked in." Her counselor leans forward slightly and says, "Your brother." Within Ivey's microskills framework, the counselor's response is best classified as:

A. an encourager that repeats a key word
B. a closed question about a family member
C. a paraphrase of the dinner conflict
D. a focusing statement on the client herself

92. Levinson's original theory in 'The Seasons of a Man's Life' was based primarily on

A. clinical case material from men in long-term psychoanalysis
B. biographical interviews with 40 men aged 35 to 45 in four occupations
C. cross-sectional questionnaires completed by more than 1,000 adults
D. a longitudinal study that followed Harvard graduates over several decades

93. Which theoretical framework did McCann and Pearlman use to explain vicarious trauma?

A. Constructivist self development theory
B. Transactional model of stress and coping
C. Job demands-resources model
D. Conservation of resources theory

94. Halfway through a study conducted by her counselor, Gloria, 34, says she wants to stop participating but worries that she will lose her counseling services if she withdraws. What is the counselor's most appropriate response?

A. Encourage her to finish so the data remain complete
B. Allow withdrawal only after the IRB grants approval
C. Assure her she may withdraw without affecting her services
D. Offer an added incentive for completing the study

95. In Perls' approach to dream work, the client is typically asked to

A. interpret the dream as a rehearsal for solving a current life problem
B. identify universal archetypes that appear in the dream's symbols and figures
C. become and speak as each part of the dream, treating each element as a projection of the self
D. free associate to each dream element so the counselor can uncover the latent content beneath it

96. Priya, 50, works full time, parents two teenagers, and has become the primary caregiver for her father, who has major neurocognitive disorder. She reports exhaustion, irritability, and guilt that she is "failing everyone." What should the counselor do FIRST?

A. Begin family sessions focused on redistributing household chores to the teenagers
B. Recommend that she move her father into a memory care facility right away
C. Assess her caregiver strain, mood, sleep, and available supports, including respite
D. Teach mindfulness meditation as the main intervention for her caregiver stress

97. When counseling clients adjusting to a new chronic illness diagnosis, which understanding of Kubler-Ross's stage model is most accurate?

A. The model was originally derived from interviews with people adjusting to chronic illness
B. Acceptance must be reached before psychoeducation about the illness can be effective
C. The stages are not universal or fixed in sequence, and many people do not experience all of them
D. Clients who skip the denial stage are at elevated risk for poor long-term emotional adjustment

98. To study school counselors' caseloads, a researcher randomly selects 12 of the state's 150 school districts and then surveys every school counselor employed in those 12 districts. Which sampling method is this?

A. Stratified random sampling
B. Multistage purposive sampling
C. Simple random sampling
D. Cluster sampling

99. A counselor evaluates a year-long social skills program for kindergartners by comparing September and June ratings of the same children; there is no comparison group. Reviewers note that much of the improvement might have occurred anyway. Which threat are they most likely describing?

A. Testing
B. Maturation
C. Regression
D. History

100. Which treatment approach has the strongest research support for hoarding disorder?

A. Clearing the home in one large cleanout organized by family members
B. Insight-oriented therapy exploring the symbolic meaning of saved objects
C. Specialized CBT addressing acquiring, sorting, discarding, and beliefs about possessions
D. Standard exposure and response prevention protocols designed for contamination OCD

101. During intake, a counselor learns that a family delayed seeking help for their son's depression because their cultural community strongly believes emotional problems should be kept within the family. In Bronfenbrenner's model, this belief operates at the level of the

A. chronosystem
B. mesosystem
C. exosystem
D. macrosystem

102. Ruth, 60, was assaulted 9 months ago. She had some sleep trouble and jumpiness at first, but she did not meet full criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder until about 7 months after the assault, when intrusive memories, avoidance, and persistent self-blame emerged. Which specifier applies?

A. With dissociative symptoms
B. With peripartum onset
C. Persistent (chronic)
D. With delayed expression

103. Contemporary relational Gestalt therapy differs most notably from the style Fritz Perls demonstrated in the 1960s in that it

A. emphasizes a dialogic I-Thou relationship and support over confrontation
B. replaces experiments with cognitive restructuring of distorted beliefs
C. abandons the focus on present-centered awareness in favor of exploring the past
D. relies primarily on preplanned exercises applied in a fixed sequence

104. The main goal of re-authoring conversations in narrative therapy is to:

A. develop and thicken a preferred alternative story of the client's life
B. help the client gain insight into unconscious conflicts rooted in early childhood
C. teach the client new skills through modeling
D. replace irrational beliefs with rational ones

105. Priya, 29, tells her counselor during an intake that she feels "totally fine, honestly great," while tears run down her face and her voice cracks. How should the counselor document her affect on the mental status exam?

A. Euthymic and appropriate to content
B. Labile, shifting rapidly between emotions
C. Incongruent with her stated mood
D. Blunted, with reduced emotional intensity

106. Counselor education programs often ask students to build their own family genogram. What is the main purpose of this assignment?

A. To surface family patterns that may shape reactions to clients
B. To practice assigning DSM-5-TR diagnoses to family members
C. To satisfy a licensure requirement for personal counseling
D. To meet an ACA requirement that counselors disclose their history

107. Irvin Yalom described four ultimate concerns, or givens of existence: death, freedom, meaninglessness, and

A. isolation
B. responsibility
C. anxiety
D. authenticity

108. Ana, 27, tells her counselor she was accepted to a graduate program across the country: "I've wanted this forever. My mom's been sick, though." The counselor responds, "You're really excited about this!" Ana replies flatly, "Yeah, I guess." What best explains Ana's response?

A. A closed question should have preceded any reflection of feeling.
B. Ana is showing resistance that the counselor should now confront.
C. The counselor's reflection should have been phrased in the past tense.
D. The reflection captured only one side of her mixed feelings.

109. An Adlerian counselor's interpretation is most consistent with Adlerian theory when it:

A. describes the behavior as a learned response maintained by reinforcement
B. names the unconscious sexual or aggressive drive that fuels the behavior
C. is offered tentatively and focuses on the purpose or goal the behavior serves
D. links the behavior to an absolute demand, such as a "must" or "should"

110. A counselor who works with undocumented immigrant families meets with state legislators to support a bill that would let community clinics serve clients regardless of immigration status. Within the MSJCC socioecological model, this intervention operates primarily at which level?

A. Interpersonal
B. Public policy
C. Institutional
D. Community

111. Tiedeman and O'Hara divided career decision making into two major periods. Which pairing correctly names these periods?

A. Circumscription (narrowing) and compromise (adjustment)
B. Anticipation (preoccupation) and implementation (adjustment)
C. Crystallization (specification) and establishment (maintenance)
D. Tentative (exploration) and realistic (commitment)

112. A counselor at a community agency is assigned Amina, 31, a recently resettled Somali refugee referred for sleep problems and intrusive memories. The counselor has little experience with refugee clients and will work with a professional interpreter. What is the most appropriate approach?

A. Refer her to a counselor who shares her cultural and linguistic background
B. Continue with her while seeking consultation and culturally relevant training
C. Apply standard trauma protocols, since effective counseling is universal
D. Rely on the interpreter to explain Somali cultural norms during the sessions

113. A CBT counselor uses the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II) to track a client's progress. Which description of this instrument is accurate?

A. A projective measure of a client's underlying depressive schemas
B. A true-false scale measuring hopelessness over the past month
C. A 21-item self-report of depressive symptom severity over the past two weeks
D. A clinician-rated structured interview that yields a formal DSM-5-TR diagnosis

114. Tom, a White high school teacher, describes himself as fully committed to racial equality. He volunteers to mentor students of color and frequently asks Black colleagues to explain racism to him, but he has never examined what being White means for him personally. Which of Helms's White racial identity statuses best fits Tom?

A. Contact
B. Pseudo-Independence
C. Autonomy
D. Immersion/Emersion

115. An external reviewer examines a qualitative team's raw transcripts, coding memos, and decision logs to verify that the reported themes can be traced back to the data rather than to the researchers' preconceptions. Which trustworthiness criterion is the reviewer evaluating most directly?

A. Transferability
B. Data saturation
C. Confirmability
D. Credibility

116. Jordan, 19, says, "My drinking isn't a problem. Everyone in my dorm drinks like I do." The counselor replies, "So there's absolutely no reason at all to think about your drinking." Which MI technique is the counselor using, and what is the main risk?

A. Reframing; it can seem to dismiss the client's peer group
B. Coming alongside; it can appear to endorse the client's continued drinking
C. Shifting focus; it can leave the drinking topic unresolved
D. Amplified reflection; if delivered sarcastically it can increase discord

117. In the final phase of stress inoculation training, Luis, 35, a paramedic, practices his coping skills in increasingly stressful real situations and makes a plan for handling setbacks. Which phase of SIT is this?

A. Skills acquisition and rehearsal
B. Application and follow-through
C. Cognitive restructuring
D. Conceptualization

118. Under the HIPAA Privacy Rule, how long must a covered entity retain required documentation such as its privacy policies, Notice of Privacy Practices, and signed client authorizations?

A. Ten years from creation, the same period HIPAA sets for clinical treatment records
B. Three years after the client's final session, unless the state's licensing law specifies a longer period
C. Six years from the date of creation or the date it was last in effect, whichever is later
D. Seven years after the client's final session, or until a minor client turns 21

119. After Rachel, 33, describes a conflict with her manager, her counselor says, "So your manager changed the deadline without telling you and then criticized you in front of the team. Is that close?" The final phrase, "Is that close?", serves primarily to:

A. move Rachel's attention from content toward her feelings
B. prompt Rachel to explore the deeper meaning of the conflict
C. invite Rachel to confirm or correct the counselor's understanding
D. signal a shift in the session from listening skills to influencing skills

120. Renee, 40, is beginning CPT after a serious car accident in which her passenger died. After psychoeducation in the first session, the counselor gives a practice assignment designed to capture her beliefs about why the event happened and how it changed her views of herself, others, and the world. This assignment is the

A. impact statement
B. safety plan
C. written exposure script
D. trauma hierarchy

121. In the professional literature on boundaries, a boundary crossing is distinguished from a boundary violation in that a boundary crossing:

A. Occurs outside the counseling office rather than during a scheduled session
B. Departs from typical practice but is not harmful and may benefit the client
C. Involves a nonsexual rather than a sexual departure from the professional role
D. Is initiated by the client rather than by the counselor or the agency

122. Jordan, 24, announces at session 5 that he plans to stop counseling because he "feels better." The counselor believes his trauma symptoms remain significant. The MOST appropriate response is to:

A. continue scheduling sessions until he finishes the planned protocol
B. respect his choice, share her clinical view, discuss options, and leave the door open
C. tell him that ending now is against clinical advice and that he may not return to the practice later
D. agree without discussion to avoid damaging the alliance

123. Marcus, 37, a licensed counselor, has recurrent major depressive disorder that has been in sustained remission with medication and therapy for three years. His work is consistently rated well. He asks whether his diagnosis means he must stop practicing. What is the most accurate response?

A. He must report the diagnosis to his licensing board every year regardless of his functioning
B. He may practice while self-monitoring, since a diagnosis alone is not impairment
C. He must suspend practice until he no longer needs any medication
D. He must tell all clients his diagnosis during informed consent

124. According to Kohlberg's longitudinal research, most adolescents and adults in the United States reason primarily at which level of moral development?

A. Preconventional
B. Principled
C. Postconventional
D. Conventional

125. Renee, 24, is deciding whether to continue a pregnancy. She tells her counselor that she has always put others' needs ahead of her own, but now believes that caring for herself matters as much as caring for others and that hurting herself is also a moral harm. In Gilligan's framework, Renee's current reasoning best reflects

A. orientation to individual survival
B. the transition from selfishness to responsibility
C. the morality of nonviolence
D. goodness as self-sacrifice

126. In a malpractice case, how is the 'standard of care' for a professional counselor generally defined?

A. The procedures listed in the policy manual of the employing agency
B. What a reasonably prudent counselor would do in similar circumstances
C. The highest level of practice shown by recognized experts in counseling
D. The level of service the client expected when entering counseling

127. Greg, 40, cannot decide what to eat or wear without asking his wife, wants her to make his financial and career decisions, agrees with her even when he disagrees out of fear of losing her support, and urgently sought a new partner when a previous relationship ended. He reports this pattern has been lifelong. Which diagnosis best fits?

A. Avoidant personality disorder
B. Borderline personality disorder
C. Histrionic personality disorder
D. Dependent personality disorder

128. During a home visit, a counselor finds a client unresponsive, with pinpoint pupils and very slow, shallow breathing; a syringe is on the floor nearby. What is the most appropriate immediate action?

A. Place the client in a cold shower to restore alertness
B. Call the client's emergency contact before calling for help
C. Call 911 and administer naloxone if it is available
D. Stay and monitor the client's breathing until they wake

129. A counselor is preparing to begin prolonged exposure with Imani, 30, who has PTSD after a sexual assault. Which element is most important to include in informed consent for this treatment?

A. That the counselor will decide which memories are processed without her input
B. That the counselor can guarantee symptom remission within twelve sessions
C. That distress may temporarily increase early in treatment before it decreases
D. That she must complete all sessions once she signs the treatment agreement

130. Midway through a pilot of a new eight-session parenting group, Rosa, the program coordinator, gathers participant feedback and observes sessions so she can revise the content and format before the program is offered agency-wide. This is an example of

A. formative evaluation
B. needs assessment
C. impact evaluation
D. summative evaluation

131. A counselor working with the Novak family insists on a co-therapist, shares his own fantasies and associations as they arise in session, and responds to the family's seriousness with playful, absurd comments meant to loosen rigid patterns. His approach most closely resembles that of

A. Salvador Minuchin
B. Murray Bowen
C. Jay Haley
D. Carl Whitaker

132. Wei, 30, has a significant visual impairment and is scheduled to take a timed, paper-and-pencil aptitude test as part of career counseling. What is the most appropriate approach?

A. Exclude aptitude testing from his career plan because no fair option exists
B. Administer it in the standard format so his scores match the norm conditions
C. Provide a suitable accommodation and note its effect on interpreting norms
D. Read the items aloud, but report the results as a standard administration

133. According to Bordin, the working alliance consists of agreement on goals, agreement on tasks, and which third component?

A. Counselor congruence and genuineness
B. The bond between client and counselor
C. Positive transference toward the counselor
D. Client insight into the presenting problem

134. Mia, 16, picks at the skin on her arms and face for long periods, especially when bored or tense, leaving scabs and scars. She has tried many times to stop and feels embarrassed by the marks. She is not trying to fix perceived flaws in her appearance and does not pick to feel pain or relieve thoughts of self-harm. Which diagnosis is most appropriate?

A. Nonsuicidal self-injury
B. Trichotillomania (hair-pulling disorder)
C. Body dysmorphic disorder
D. Excoriation (skin-picking) disorder

135. Tokens in a token economy maintain behavior primarily because they function as:

A. Primary reinforcers that satisfy a biological need
B. Intrinsic reinforcers tied to the activity itself
C. Negative reinforcers that remove an aversive condition
D. Generalized conditioned reinforcers exchangeable for backup items

136. Harper, 34, lies awake in bed for over an hour most nights, scrolling on her phone and worrying. Her counselor instructs her to use the bed only for sleep and sex and to get up and go to another room if she is not asleep within about 20 minutes. Which behavioral technique is this?

A. Paradoxical intention
B. Progressive muscle relaxation
C. Sleep restriction
D. Stimulus control

137. In Safran and Muran's stage-process model, successful resolution of a withdrawal rupture typically involves the client

A. moving from expressed anger toward acknowledging underlying vulnerability
B. agreeing to a revised treatment contract that sets new session goals
C. accepting the counselor's interpretation of the client's defensive pattern
D. moving toward directly asserting underlying wishes or dissatisfaction

138. In Choosing a Vocation (1909), Frank Parsons described a three-part process for selecting an occupation. Which sequence matches his model?

A. Anticipate options, implement the decision, and integrate into the new setting
B. Understand oneself, learn about occupations, and reason accurately about how the two relate
C. Fantasize about roles, try out tentative options, and make a realistic choice
D. Explore interests, crystallize a preference, and implement the choice in a job

139. Luis, 26, was brought to the hospital by his family after 4 days of elevated mood, almost no sleep, racing speech, and a fixed belief that he has been chosen as a prophet to save the world. He was admitted that day because of dangerous behavior. He has no history of psychotic symptoms outside this period. How should this episode be classified?

A. As a hypomanic episode, because the symptoms lasted fewer than 7 days
B. As schizophreniform disorder, because delusions are present with marked disorganization
C. As a manic episode, because hospitalization was required and psychotic features are present
D. As brief psychotic disorder, because the episode lasted less than 1 month

140. Kyle, 23, a White counseling intern, tells his supervisor, "I've never really thought about being White. Racism is mostly a thing of the past, and I just see people as people." He seems curious about, but largely unaware of, race. In Helms's White Racial Identity Development model, Kyle's comments best fit which status?

A. Contact
B. Reintegration
C. Disintegration
D. Pseudo-Independence

141. A counselor helps the parents of Ava, 4, stop attending to her bedtime tantrums. On the third night of the plan, the parents report that Ava screamed louder and longer than ever before. What should the counselor tell the parents?

A. This is an expected extinction burst, so they should continue ignoring the tantrums consistently
B. The plan is not working, so they should add a mild punisher such as removing a toy
C. This is spontaneous recovery, so they should briefly comfort her and then resume ignoring
D. The plan is too abrupt, so they should attend to every other tantrum to fade attention

142. Rachel, 39, an ICU nurse for twelve years, says she feels emotionally drained by the end of every shift, has started calling patients "the problem in bed four," and believes nothing she does makes a difference. She denies sadness outside work and enjoys weekends with her family. Her description BEST fits:

A. adjustment disorder with depressed mood
B. career plateauing
C. major depressive disorder
D. burnout

143. Minuchin's research on "psychosomatic families," including families of children with anorexia nervosa, identified which set of family characteristics?

A. Double-bind communication, marital schism, marital skew, and secrecy
B. Enmeshment, overprotectiveness, rigidity, and lack of conflict resolution
C. High expressed emotion, criticism, hostility, and emotional overinvolvement
D. Disengagement, chaotic rules, inconsistent discipline, and open hostility

144. William Glasser attributed most of the emotional problems that bring clients to counseling to:

A. unsatisfying or missing present relationships
B. unresolved trauma from early childhood
C. irrational beliefs learned from parents and other early caregivers
D. a history of inconsistent reinforcement

145. Sam and Taylor report that on a few occasions, heated arguments about money ended with both of them pushing each other. Neither reports fear of the other, and there is no pattern of monitoring, isolation, or intimidation. In Michael Johnson's typology, this violence is best classified as

A. intimate terrorism
B. violent resistance
C. mutual violent control
D. situational couple violence

146. Tasha, 29, started lamotrigine for bipolar II disorder three weeks ago. During a session she mentions a new, spreading rash and mild fever but says she will wait to mention it at her psychiatry appointment next month. What should the counselor do?

A. Suggest an antihistamine and continued monitoring, since rashes are common with mood stabilizers
B. Recommend she stop the lamotrigine and resume it once the rash clears
C. Urge her to contact her prescriber or seek medical care right away
D. Note the rash in her record and review it at the next session

147. The core DSM-5-TR Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) is organized around which set of domains?

A. Cultural definition of the problem; cause, context, and support; coping and past help seeking; current help seeking
B. Acculturation level; racial identity stage; language proficiency; religious affiliation and degree of observance
C. Client worldview; counselor self-awareness; counseling relationship; counseling and advocacy interventions
D. Presenting symptoms; cultural explanation of the problem; family history of mental disorder; level of adaptive and social functioning

148. A group counselor records how many sessions each of five members attended: 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12. Treating these five scores as the entire population, what is the variance?

A. 10
B. 8
C. 40
D. 2.83

149. A counselor learns that her client's ex-boyfriend, who is angry about the counseling, has been following her to her car after sessions and has left threatening notes on her windshield. The client is unable to stop his behavior. What is the most appropriate action?

A. Terminate immediately without referrals, because her personal safety overrides other duties
B. Terminate counseling, provide referrals, and take steps to protect her own safety
C. Continue counseling, because ending services during a conflict would constitute abandonment
D. Continue counseling but shift all sessions to telehealth so that in-person contact is avoided

150. Lin, 34, immigrated from China ten years ago. She avoids the local Chinese community, speaks only English at home, and says she wants her children to "be completely American, not Chinese." According to Berry's model of acculturation, Lin's approach BEST reflects which strategy?

A. Integration
B. Marginalization
C. Separation
D. Assimilation

151. To help Grace, 27, overcome a phobia of snakes, her counselor first handles a harmless snake while Grace watches, then guides her step by step to touch and eventually hold it herself. Which approach does this represent?

A. Flooding
B. Covert sensitization
C. Participant modeling
D. Aversive conditioning

152. Hays's ADDRESSING framework helps counselors consider multiple cultural influences on a client. Which set of factors is included in this framework?

A. Affect, development, resilience, environment, social support, and spirituality
B. Ancestry, dominance, race, emotion, status, and intergenerational trauma
C. Acculturation, dialect, region, education, sexuality, and immigration history
D. Age, disability, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and national origin

153. Which statement best describes the evidence base for treating specific phobias in adults?

A. Cognitive restructuring without exposure produces better outcomes than in vivo exposure
B. Psychodynamic therapy addressing displacement of unconscious conflict is the first-line approach
C. Medication combined with talk therapy is required because exposure alone is rarely effective
D. In vivo exposure is the treatment of choice, and it is often effective in a single session

154. Paula, 45, a manager, insists that tasks be done exactly her way, rewrites her staff's reports to meet her standards, and works so many hours that she has no friendships. She sees her approach as the right way to do things and is frustrated only that others are careless. She denies intrusive thoughts or repetitive rituals. Which diagnosis best fits?

A. Obsessive-compulsive disorder
B. Hoarding disorder
C. Generalized anxiety disorder
D. Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder

155. Marisol, 36, has taken escitalopram for eight months and feels much better. She asks her counselor, "Can I just stop taking it now?" What is the best response?

A. Tell her that SSRIs can be stopped safely at any time because they are not addictive
B. Encourage her to talk with her prescriber, who can plan a gradual taper
C. Advise her to continue the medication indefinitely because depression always recurs
D. Suggest she taper by cutting her dose in half for one week on her own

156. Jordan, 16, meets with a school counselor after being found with alcohol at a school event. The counselor wants a brief substance use screening tool developed and validated specifically for adolescents. Which instrument is most appropriate?

- **A.** CRAFFT screening interview
- **B.** MAST
- **C.** CAGE questionnaire
- **D.** MMPI-3

157. Counselor Maya resolves a difficult dilemma about accepting a gift from a client. According to the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, which action reflects the Code's expectation regarding her decision-making process?

- **A.** Submit the dilemma to the ACA Ethics Committee for a binding decision
- **B.** Use a credible ethical decision-making model and document the process
- **C.** Follow her own judgment, since the Code leaves the process unspecified
- **D.** Obtain a written ruling from the state board before taking any action

158. For adults with bulimia nervosa, which psychotherapy has the strongest research support as a first-line treatment?

- **A.** Motivational interviewing as a stand-alone treatment
- **B.** Family-based treatment
- **C.** Psychodynamic psychotherapy
- **D.** Cognitive-behavioral therapy, including enhanced CBT (CBT-E)

159. Nora, 40, is struggling after a miscarriage. Her counselor, who had a miscarriage five years ago, is considering disclosing this. Which consideration should guide the decision most?

- **A.** Whether the counselor's theoretical orientation endorses therapist self-disclosure
- **B.** Whether enough time has passed for the counselor to discuss the loss without becoming tearful
- **C.** Whether the disclosure would serve Nora's therapeutic needs rather than the counselor's
- **D.** Whether Nora has directly asked about the counselor's own reproductive history

160. In the third edition of motivational interviewing, which process centers on eliciting the client's own reasons and motivations for change?

- **A.** Planning
- **B.** Focusing
- **C.** Evoking
- **D.** Engaging

161. Which statement BEST distinguishes an open group from a closed group?

- **A.** Open groups permit outside socializing, while closed groups forbid all contact between sessions
- **B.** Open groups add members as others leave; closed groups keep the same members
- **C.** Open groups allow members to discuss any topic, while closed groups follow a fixed curriculum
- **D.** Open groups have no screening process, while closed groups require pre-group interviews for all

162. The parents of 15-year-old Eli ask counselor Noor to help change Eli's sexual orientation because it conflicts with their religious beliefs. Eli says he is gay and is distressed by family conflict. What is Noor's MOST appropriate response?

- **A.** Agree to orientation-change work because the parents hold legal authority over their minor child's treatment
- **B.** Decline orientation-change work and offer counseling for the family distress
- **C.** Provide orientation-change counseling only if Eli verbally agrees in front of his parents
- **D.** Refer the family to a religious counselor who is willing to provide orientation-change counseling

163. According to DSM-5-TR, malingering should be strongly suspected when which combination of factors is present?

A. Symptoms that cannot be explained medically, high health anxiety, and frequent visits to multiple physicians

B. Inconsistent symptom reports, a history of childhood trauma, and dissociative episodes under stress

C. A medicolegal context, a marked gap between claimed distress and objective findings, poor cooperation, and antisocial personality disorder

D. Deliberately produced symptoms with no clear external reward and a wish to take on the sick role

164. Mei, 23, tells her counselor that she will decide whether to accept a job offer in another state only after discussing it with her parents and grandparents, and that she expects to follow their wishes. The counselor's first impulse is to view this as a lack of autonomy. What should the counselor do FIRST?

A. Recommend family therapy to address boundary problems

B. Assess her for features of dependent personality disorder

C. Help her develop skills for making independent decisions

D. Consider whether family-centered decision-making reflects her cultural values

165. A counselor needs to reschedule an appointment with Bryce, a new client. His intake paperwork does not say whether messages may be left at his home number, which he shares with roommates. What should the counselor do?

A. Leave a detailed message, since rescheduling is not clinical information

B. Leave only a first name and callback number with no agency reference

C. Leave a message giving the agency's name and the new appointment time

D. Ask a roommate who answers to have Bryce call the counseling center

166. The parents of Sofia, 7, join a 10-week group where they learn nondirective child-centered play skills such as reflecting feelings and structuring. They then hold weekly 30-minute play sessions at home, and the counselor reviews video of those sessions with them in supervision. This approach is best described as:

A. Parent management training

B. Parent-child interaction therapy

C. Theraplay

D. Filial therapy

167. Which situation most clearly constitutes client abandonment?

A. Ending with a client who failed to pay after notice, discussion, and referrals

B. Abruptly ending with a client in crisis, with no plan for continued care

C. Terminating with a client who has met all of his agreed-upon treatment goals

D. Referring a client whose needs exceed the counselor's training and competence

168. Hannah, 38, shares an early recollection: at age 5 she was accidentally left behind in a grocery store, and no one in her family noticed she was missing for an hour. How would an Adlerian counselor most likely use this memory?

A. As an accurate record of a trauma that must be relived to achieve catharsis

B. As evidence of a repressed oedipal conflict that the counselor should interpret

C. As a projective window into Hannah's present beliefs about herself, others, and life

D. As a cognitive distortion to be disputed using a structured thought record

169. Two graduate assistants observe and rate preschoolers' aggressive behavior throughout a semester-long intervention study. By the final weeks, both observers have become less strict in what they count as aggression, and the ratings drop. Which threat to internal validity does this represent?

A. Maturation
B. Testing
C. History
D. Instrumentation

170. Darnell, 24, tells the intake counselor that the evening news anchor has been sending him personal messages through the stories she chooses to report. Which type of delusion does this describe?

A. Delusion of reference
B. Thought broadcasting
C. Erotomanic delusion
D. Grandiose delusion

171. Which statement about gender and suicide in the United States is accurate?

A. Men attempt suicide more often, and women die by suicide at higher rates
B. Women attempt suicide more often, but men die by suicide at higher rates
C. Women attempt suicide more often and also die by suicide at higher rates
D. Men and women attempt and die by suicide at about the same rates

172. In choice theory, the personal mental "picture album" of specific people, activities, possessions, and beliefs that a person believes will best satisfy his or her needs is called the:

A. phenomenal field
B. perceived world
C. style of life
D. quality world

173. Tom, a counselor whose father died of alcohol-related illness, realizes that he changes the subject whenever his 45-year-old client mentions drinking. What is the most appropriate next step for Tom?

A. Tell the client that his father's drinking makes the topic hard for him
B. Recognize the avoidance as countertransference and consult his supervisor
C. Keep following the client's lead, since the client decides what is important
D. Refer the client to an addiction specialist so the topic is covered

174. Two supervisors independently rank 15 counseling trainees from best to worst on overall clinical skill. Which statistic best describes the degree of agreement between the two sets of rankings?

A. Spearman rank-order correlation
B. Pearson product-moment correlation
C. Point-biserial correlation
D. Phi coefficient

175. During an intake, a counselor notices that Daniel, 40, a Diné (Navajo) client, rarely makes direct eye contact and pauses for long periods before answering questions. Which interpretation is MOST appropriate at this point?

A. These behaviors suggest social anxiety and indicate a need for social skills training
B. These behaviors indicate resistance and should be gently confronted early in counseling
C. These behaviors may reflect cultural norms of respect rather than pathology
D. These behaviors suggest a depressed mood and warrant an immediate depression screening

176. Lena, 29, tells her counselor, 'I know my drinking is getting out of hand and it's hurting my health, but it's the only way I can relax after work. I keep going back and forth about it.' In the transtheoretical model, which stage is Lena most likely in?

A. Action
B. Precontemplation
C. Preparation
D. Contemplation

177. Gerald, 42, is described by his wife as rigidly orderly, stubborn, and unusually reluctant to spend money. A classical psychoanalytic counselor would most likely attribute this pattern to conflict during which psychosexual stage?

A. Anal
B. Genital
C. Phallic
D. Oral

178. Ivan, 42, was prescribed buspirone for generalized anxiety disorder. He tells his counselor he takes a tablet only when he feels very anxious and that "it doesn't do anything." What should the counselor understand about buspirone?

A. It requires consistent daily use, and benefits emerge over several weeks
B. It is primarily a sedative and should be taken at bedtime
C. It works within minutes but must be taken with food
D. It is a benzodiazepine that gradually loses its effectiveness through tolerance

179. Frankl used which term for a widespread inner emptiness and boredom, sometimes appearing as the "Sunday neurosis" that surfaces when the busy workweek ends?

A. Existential vacuum
B. Ontological anxiety
C. Noogenic neurosis
D. Existential guilt

180. A counselor keeps records for a 9-member counseling group. Which record-keeping practice is MOST appropriate?

A. Keep no written notes so that no member's privacy can ever be breached
B. Keep a separate note for each member that avoids identifying other members
C. Keep one shared group note and place a copy in every member's chart
D. Record all members' full names and disclosures in every individual note

181. In Cross's original Nigrescence model, which stage is distinguished by translating a secure, internalized Black identity into a long-term commitment to activism and social change?

A. Immersion-Emersion
B. Internalization
C. Integrative Awareness
D. Internalization-Commitment

182. In the TF-CBT acronym PRACTICE, the "C" that appears near the end of the sequence refers to

A. cognitive coping and processing
B. caregiver psychoeducation
C. conjoint child-parent sessions
D. crisis safety planning

183. Darnell, 40, has taken lithium for bipolar I disorder for several years. After two days of a stomach virus during a heat wave, he reports vomiting, diarrhea, a coarse hand tremor, slurred speech, and an unsteady gait. What should the counselor recognize?

A. These are expected side effects that typically resolve within a week
B. These symptoms suggest an emerging mixed episode caused by inadequate lithium dosing
C. These symptoms suggest tardive dyskinesia from long-term lithium use
D. These symptoms suggest possible lithium toxicity requiring immediate medical care

184. Rosa, 33, describes how she shielded her younger brother from their father's rages when they were children. Her counselor says, "I feel moved hearing how hard you worked to protect him." This counselor statement is best classified as:

A. a self-involving statement of the counselor's present reaction to the client
B. a self-disclosing statement about the counselor's own personal history
C. a reflection of the feelings Rosa expressed about her childhood
D. an interpretation linking Rosa's childhood role to her current relationships

185. Which statement best describes the MMPI-3?

A. A brief, narrow-band screening tool for depressive symptoms in primary care
B. A measure of normal personality preferences based on Jung's type theory
C. A projective technique in which clients respond to ambiguous stimuli
D. A broad-band adult self-report inventory of psychopathology

186. Sam, 27, fears blushing in front of others and constantly monitors his face for redness, which makes the blushing worse. His counselor asks him to try deliberately to blush as deeply as possible at his next team meeting. Which technique does this represent?

A. Flooding
B. Paradoxical intention
C. Cognitive defusion
D. Aversive conditioning

187. Kim and Daniel seek couples counseling. Kim criticizes and pursues Daniel for more closeness, and Daniel withdraws and goes silent, which intensifies Kim's pursuit. A counselor using Emotionally Focused Therapy would most likely begin by:

A. Exploring each partner's level of differentiation of self within the family of origin
B. Assigning a paradoxical directive that Kim should pursue Daniel even more intensely
C. Tracking the pursue-withdraw cycle and the attachment fears beneath each partner's behavior
D. Teaching structured speaker-listener communication skills and assigning weekly practice at home

188. Staff at a residential facility propose that residents must earn tokens to purchase their meals and access to their beds. A consulting counselor raises concerns. Which concern is most accurate?

A. Response cost is more effective than token earning for adolescents in residential care
B. Meals and beds are primary reinforcers, so they would make the token system too powerful
C. Tokens should be exchanged only for social reinforcers to avoid materialism
D. Basic rights cannot be made contingent; backup reinforcers must go beyond entitlements

189. In session, Lauren, 28, reveals that she has saved up a large supply of her prescription pills, plans to take them tonight while her roommate is away, and says she is "done." She refuses to go to an emergency department or call anyone. What is the counselor's MOST appropriate action?

A. Take immediate steps to secure an emergency evaluation, breaking confidentiality as needed
B. Respect her autonomy and document her refusal after reviewing crisis line numbers
C. Develop a written safety plan with her and schedule a follow-up appointment for early the next morning
D. Have her agree to a no-harm contract and remove the pills from her home herself

190. Noah, 45, asks his counselor to email him homework worksheets to his personal email account. The practice's email is not encrypted. Noah says he understands the risks and prefers email anyway. Under HIPAA, what may the counselor do?

A. Send the emails, but only after Noah signs a waiver releasing the counselor from liability
B. Send the emails, because homework worksheets never contain protected health information
C. Send the emails after warning him of the risks and documenting his preference
D. Refuse, because HIPAA prohibits sending any PHI by unencrypted email

191. Ellis developed rational therapy, the forerunner of REBT, in the 1950s after becoming dissatisfied with his training in:

A. Psychoanalysis
B. Gestalt therapy
C. Person-centered therapy
D. Behavior therapy

192. Which pair of values defines the T-score scale?

A. Mean of 0, standard deviation of 1
B. Mean of 50, standard deviation of 10
C. Mean of 100, standard deviation of 15
D. Mean of 5, standard deviation of about 2

193. Nia, 8, has become anxious and clingy since her mother's employer moved her mother to night shifts, which leaves her mother less time and energy at home. Nia has never been to her mother's workplace. In Bronfenbrenner's model, the employer's decision is an influence from Nia's

A. exosystem
B. microsystem
C. macrosystem
D. mesosystem

194. Counselor Priya has been seeing Mrs. Alvarez for depression for a year. Mrs. Alvarez's attorney asks Priya to conduct a child custody evaluation and recommend to the court that Mrs. Alvarez receive primary custody. What should Priya do?

A. Decline, because counselors do not evaluate current or former clients for forensic purposes
B. Agree to the evaluation if Mrs. Alvarez signs a written informed consent describing the forensic role
C. Agree to the evaluation if she also interviews the father so the evaluation is balanced between parents
D. Agree to the evaluation, because her year of treatment gives her the most complete knowledge of the client

195. A probation officer calls a federally assisted substance use disorder treatment program and asks whether Derek, 27, is enrolled and attending sessions. Derek has signed no consent for disclosure to probation. What should the counselor do?

A. Provide the information, since criminal justice agencies are exempt from Part 2
B. Decline to confirm or deny that Derek is a patient without valid written consent
C. Confirm Derek's enrollment, but share no details about his attendance or progress
D. Share attendance information only, since it is not considered clinical information

196. Luis, 55, tells his counselor that he bought a handgun last week, has written goodbye letters to his children, and plans to shoot himself this weekend when his wife is out of town. He refuses to surrender the gun and says he will not go to a hospital voluntarily. What is the counselor's most appropriate action?

A. Arrange an emergency evaluation for involuntary hospitalization
B. Wait to contact his wife until he provides written consent
C. Develop a written safety plan and schedule a session in two days
D. Ask him to sign a no-suicide contract before leaving the session

197. A HIPAA-covered group practice plans to move its client records to a cloud-based electronic health record vendor that will store and maintain the data. What must the practice obtain before the vendor handles client information?

- **A.** A certification from the state licensing board approving the vendor's software
- **B.** A signed release from each client authorizing the vendor to view their records
- **C.** A business associate agreement in which the vendor agrees to safeguard the information
- **D.** A waiver from HHS permitting storage of records outside the practice's office

198. According to Gerald Caplan's crisis theory, an acute crisis state typically resolves, either adaptively or maladaptively, within approximately what period?

- **A.** Three to six months
- **B.** Four to six weeks
- **C.** Twelve to eighteen months
- **D.** Three to seven days

199. Sofia, 15, has anorexia nervosa and has been cleared by her pediatrician for outpatient care. Her family begins family-based treatment (the Maudsley approach). Which feature characterizes the first phase of this treatment?

- **A.** The therapist identifies the family dynamics that caused the eating disorder
- **B.** Parents temporarily take charge of restoring Sofia's weight and nutrition
- **C.** Sofia attends individual cognitive therapy while parents attend a separate support group
- **D.** Sofia chooses her own meals to build autonomy and reduce power struggles

200. When a counselor reviews progress data with a client and the client disagrees with what the scores suggest, the BEST approach is to:

- **A.** re-administer the measure until the scores match the client's view
- **B.** explore the discrepancy with the client and treat the data as one source of information
- **C.** discard the measure, since the client's perspective takes priority
- **D.** rely on the scores, since standardized measures are generally more objective than a client's self-report