
Diagnosis and Treatment Planning in Counseling

Third Edition

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Preface

The scope of the counseling profession, as well as the importance of diagnosis and treatment planning, has grown enormously since the 1986 publication of the first edition of this book. Credentialing for mental health counselors is now available in nearly all states. Training in diagnosis and treatment planning is provided by nearly all graduate programs in Counselor Education. New professional organizations, new opportunities, and new challenges are available to counselors.

The purpose of the third edition of this book is to help counselors and other mental health professionals to acquire up-to-date information on their field, to develop sound knowledge of diagnosis and treatment planning, and to acquire relevant clinical knowledge and skills that are essential to their effectiveness. Diagnosis and treatment planning are core skills for counselors, skills that permeate all counseling roles and functions. Consequently, this book takes a broad look at that process, reviewing tools and competencies associated with diagnosis and treatment planning in individual counseling, group counseling, family counseling, career counseling, and organizational development.

In addition to providing essential knowledge and skills that will enhance counseling practice, this book should be very helpful to counselors preparing to take examinations for licensure and certification in counseling. Knowledge of the material presented in this book on diagnosis, treatment planning, mental status examinations, and ethical standards will be particularly useful to people taking the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination, which focuses heavily on these areas.

The following are brief descriptions of the 13 chapters in this book.

Chapter 1, *The Evolving Role of the Counselor*, reviews efforts to develop a definition of mental health counseling. An overview of the history of the counseling profession is provided, as well as information on the expanding role of the counselor, professional associations, credentialing for both counselors and counselor education programs, and the current impact of managed care on the profession. This chapter concludes with a review of important counselor competencies.

New roles for mental health counselors are the focus of Chapter 2, *Opportunities for the Mental Health Counselor*. This chapter looks at new and

growing client groups, employment settings, and problem areas of relevance to the mental health counselor. The chapter also discusses the types of mental health professionals and the mental health treatment team.

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)* is the focus of Chapter 3, *Diagnostic Systems and Their Use*. This chapter reviews the benefits and pitfalls of diagnosis as well as the history of diagnosis. The chapter then explains the essential features of each of the diagnoses in the current edition of the *DSM*.

The Use of Assessment in Diagnosis and Treatment Planning, Chapter 4, discusses tools and inventories for qualitative and quantitative assessment that can enhance the process of diagnosis and treatment planning. The chapter also provides information on planning an assessment and on interpreting client information.

Intake Interviews and Their Role in Diagnosis and Treatment Planning are the focus of Chapter 5. The nature and importance of the intake interview are reviewed, and an outline for an extended intake interview is provided. Also included in this chapter are a transcript of an intake interview and written reports of both brief and lengthy intake interviews. In addition, a format for a mental status examination is presented, along with an example.

Chapter 6 addresses The Nature and Importance of Treatment Planning. The DO A CLIENT MAP, a structured format for treatment planning, is presented.

In Chapter 7, Theories and Strategies of Individual Counseling are discussed. Information on the major approaches to individual counseling is presented, including important concepts, key interventions, and appropriate use. Examples of treatment plans are provided.

Diagnosis and Treatment Planning for Families is the topic of Chapter 8. Guidelines and tools are provided for assessing family functioning. Important approaches to family counseling are discussed, including their appropriate use. An example of an assessment and treatment plan for a family is provided, as well as cases for discussion.

Chapter 9 focuses on Assessment and Treatment of Groups. This chapter encompasses ways to describe and diagnose the needs of groups, counselor roles in group treatment, and important approaches to group counseling. An example of the assessment and treatment planning for a counseling group is provided.

Counseling for Career and Organizational Development is the topic of Chapter 10, written in collaboration with Shannon Peters and Brian Peters. Although formal diagnoses of pathology are rarely made in career counseling and organizational development settings, here too counselors maximize their effectiveness through the use of assessment and treatment planning. Theories of career and organizational development counseling are presented, as well as a case study.

Documentation, Report Writing, and Record Keeping in Counseling are reviewed in Chapter 11. This chapter discusses the importance of writing and

record keeping in counseling and provides models for progress notes, interim reports, assessment reports, professional disclosure statements, safe-keeping contracts, case conferences and other reports prepared by counselors.

Chapter 12, a completely new chapter in this edition of the book, discusses the Importance of Ethical and Professional Development for Counselors. Whether mental health professionals are engaged in diagnosis, treatment, or any of the other roles of the counselor, they must always have the ethical standards of the profession in mind and follow those standards in their work. The second part of this chapter focuses on you, the reader. It presents information on counselors' professional development and provides a format for you to plan out your own professional development.

Future Trends and Predictions in Counseling are presented in Chapter 13. This chapter reviews the predictions made in the first and second editions of this book and discusses their current status. In addition, predictions are made about the future of the counseling profession, based primarily on information and issues discussed throughout this book.

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- My clients, who helped me to really understand diagnosis and treatment planning, many of whom are reflected in composite versions in the cases presented in this book.
- The participants in my courses and workshops on diagnosis and treatment planning who contributed greatly to my knowledge of how to teach diagnosis and treatment planning.

About the Author

Dr. Linda Seligman received the Ph.D. degree in Counseling Psychology from Columbia University. She is a faculty member at Walden University and a faculty associate at Johns Hopkins University. In addition, she is a professor emeritus at George Mason University, where she was codirector of the doctoral program in education and head of the graduate program in Counseling.

Dr. Seligman is a licensed psychologist and licensed professional counselor. She has experience in a variety of clinical settings, including psychiatric hospitals, community mental health centers, substance abuse treatment programs, foster care, corrections, and private practice. She is currently the Director of the Center for Counseling and Consultation, a private practice with offices in Fairfax, Virginia, and Bethesda, Maryland.

Dr. Seligman's research interests include diagnosis and treatment planning, counseling people with chronic and life-threatening illnesses, and the mind-body-spirit connection. She has completed 10 books, including *Selecting Effective Treatments*; *Technical and Conceptual Skills for Mental Health Professionals: Systems, Strategies, and Skills of Counseling and Psychotherapy*; *Promoting a Fighting Spirit*; and *Developmental Career Counseling and Assessment*. She also has authored over 50 professional articles and book chapters. In addition, she has lectured throughout the world on diagnosis and treatment planning.

Dr. Seligman has been the editor of *The Journal of Mental Health Counseling* and has served as president of the Virginia Association of Mental Health Counselors. She was selected as a Distinguished Professor by George Mason University and as a Researcher of the Year by the American Mental Health Counselors Association.

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