


Pastoral Skills Training – Family Life

Lesson 9: Pastoral Diagnosis

Student Guide

Lesson Objectives	
Identify the principles of religious assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Identify the goals of assessment in counseling.○ Identify the types of potential questions used in a religious assessment.	
Session 1: Presentation Webinar	
Part 1	Assessment in Pastoral Care
Part 2	Religious Assessment and Diagnosis
Part 3	Theological Assessment
Student Readings	
Assessment in Pastoral Care	09-assessment- pastoral-care.pdf
Religious Assessment and Diagnosis	09-religious-assessment-diagnosis.pdf
Theological Assessment	09-theological-assessment.pdf
Case Study	09-case-study.pdf
Student Handout	
Guide to a Pastoral Assessment	09-guide-to-pastoral-assessment.pdf
Session 2: Discussion Webinar	
A discussion of assigned case study	

Pastoral Diagnosis
Lesson 9



Pastoral Skills Training –
Family Life
USACHCS

Pastoral Diagnosis



Objectives

- Identify the principles of religious assessment.
- Identify the goals of assessment in counseling.
- Identify the types of potential questions used in a religious assessment.

_____ 2 _____

Pastoral Diagnosis



PART 1:
**ASSESSMENT IN PASTORAL
CARE**

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Principles of Assessment

- Use of religious ideas to diagnose psychological/spiritual problems
- Use of religious history to understand personal history
- Use of religious developmental steps to document developmental assay of adults and children



_____ 4 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

B-A-S-I-C Approach to Mental Status Interviewing

- Behavior and general appearance
- Affect and emotional state
- Sensorium and functioning of the central nervous system
- Intellectual function, insight, and fund of general information
- Cognitive processes

_____ 5 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

B – Behavior and General Appearance

- Does this person seem coherent?
- Are this person's actions appropriate for the circumstances he or she is in?
- Does this person appear to be appropriately dressed, or is his or her hygiene OK?
- Best: Appears to be balanced, acting appropriately

_____ 6 _____



Pastoral Diagnosis



A – Affect and Emotional State

- Look for flat emotions—doesn't respond at all to sad or happy things.
- Look for hysteria—too excited/happy for what's going on.
- Look for the depressed affect.
- Best: Emotions appear to fit the circumstance.

7



Pastoral Diagnosis



S – Sensorium and Functioning of the Central Nervous System

- Look for fidgeting, restlessness.
- Look for unexplained clumsiness, inability to perform small motor skills (write, etc.).
- In some cases: numbness, hyperventilating
- Best: Fully functional

8





Pastoral Diagnosis



I – Intellectual Function, Insight, and Fund of General Information

- Look for memory loss, or seeing things that aren't there or didn't actually happen
- Best: Clear contact with reality



9

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

C – Cognitive Processes

- Look for poor logic, or inability to follow a conversation.



_____ 10 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Responding to BASIC Domains

- Minor failures in any BASIC domain tells you there is significant emotional/personal issues to further explore.
- Major shortfalls could indicate medical issues.
 - Ensure this person sees a doctor, BUT STAY INVOLVED.
 - Often there are emotional/spiritual links to physical problems.
 - Resolving the personal issue may eliminate or help to heal the physical problem.



_____ 11 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 



Discussion Questions

- How do you assess clients in your care, both formally and informally?
- Describe a time when you sensed a parishioner showing distress in one or more of the BASIC domains.

_____ 12 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

PART 2:
APPLYING THEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Using a Theological Template

Pastoral assessment can and should be done from a theological template. The methods described in this lesson involve the use of a series of questions. A theological template is:

- A useful tool for organizing your interview information into a manageable whole.
- Not a rigid formula, but rather a way of organizing the pastor's reflection about what has happened/is happening to the parishioner.



_____ 14 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Areas to Be Explored in a Theological Assessment

- Summary of religious background
- Impressions of present attitudes and needs
- Summary and recommendations



_____ 15 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Pastoral Diagnosis Questions

- Projection and identification
- Relating, suffering, and hurting patterns
- Guilt/hurting patterns
- Hopefulness and support



_____ 16 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Pastoral Assessment Questions

- I – In the beginning
- II – The way things have been
- III – The way things are now
- IV – The way things can change
- V – Perception of God

_____ 17 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Pastoral Assessment Questions: I – In the Beginning

- What are your feelings about having been born?
- What sorts of blessings did those who brought you up confer upon you?
- What sorts of curses did they pronounce upon you?
- What do you think you were meant to be and to become from the beginning?

_____ 18 _____



Pastoral Diagnosis



Pastoral Assessment Questions: II – The Way Things Have Been

- ▀ Whom, of all the people you know, would you most want to be like?
- ▀ Whom do you have to turn to when the going gets rough?
- ▀ Whom would you hurry to tell if something really good happened to you?
- ▀ What are the things that people have done to you that you have the hardest time forgiving and forgetting?
- ▀ What recent things have happened to you that you would say are "the straw on the camel's back"?



Pastoral Diagnosis



Pastoral Assessment Questions: III – The Way Things Are Now

- ▀ What is the greatest injustice that you feel has happened to you?
- ▀ What keeps you from doing the things you most want to do?
- ▀ If all the hindrances were removed and you could do just as you most wanted to do or have the thing you most wanted, what would it be?
- ▀ What is the biggest mystery to you? What do you have the most trouble figuring out?
- ▀ What appeals to your curiosity the most?
- ▀ What is your greatest temptation?
- ▀ Of what are you most afraid?
- ▀ If you were to blame someone for your present trouble in life, whom would you blame?
- ▀ If you pray, do you think God would understand what your deepest angers are?
- ▀ Does God want you to do what you yourself would be happiest doing?





Pastoral Diagnosis



Pastoral Assessment Questions: IV – The Way Things Can Change



- ▀ Do you think there is any way that things can change?
- ▀ Do you have any hope that things can change?
- ▀ Do things change by luck, magic, or chance?
- ▀ If you were a magician and could change your whole situation, what would you change?
- ▀ Have sudden and strange experiences come into your life that changed everything?
- ▀ How did you feel? What did you see, hear, smell, taste? Did you want to tell about it? Whom did you tell about it? What was his or her reaction?

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Pastoral Assessment Questions: V – Perceptions of God

- ▼ Do you believe in a personal God? What is God like to you?
- ▼ Does the church turn you on, turn you off, or leave you cold?
- ▼ Settled beliefs. What are some of the things that you believe and that you don't think will ever change in your thinking?



_____ 22 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Paul Pruyser's Eight Questions for Theological Assessment

1. Why is this person coming to me for help?
2. How does this person understand God?
3. What is the sense of sin and what role does sin play in this situation?
4. What is this person's relative capacity for faith?
5. How does this person view salvation?
6. How adequate are this person's faith-support resources?
7. What sense of hope exists here?
8. Does freedom exist between this person and me?

_____ 23 _____

 **Pastoral Diagnosis** 

Concluding Thoughts on Theological Assessment

- ▼ Assessment in care, like diagnosis in medicine, is an art as well as a science.
- ▼ A theological assessment is not "etched in stone." The assessing must be attentive, cautious, and continually up for review.
- ▼ Finally, we ask, "Am I open to allowing this parishioner to minister to me?" (In the course of our ministering, we actually receive as well as give.)

_____ 24 _____



Pastoral Diagnosis



Discussion Questions

1. What is a theological template that you have used to understand a particular client you have helped recently?
2. Which theological assessment questions do you find yourself using regularly in your pastoral care and counseling?



Pastoral Diagnosis



QUESTIONS?
