

## **Psychotherapy Case Study Assessment**

**Purpose:** To be able to successfully diagnose psychological disorders and recommend an appropriate treatment/therapy.

- The format for your groups' report should follow the guidelines below. Label each part of your report (**Section 1**, **Section 2**, etc.).
- 1 typed report per group and must include a cover page that will be centered with the following: title (Psychotherapy Case Study Assessment), picture (pertains to your assignment), at the bottom of page starting with your first and last name (one line), Psychology 11 (second line), the date (third line), and your teachers name (fourth line)> (word document of final report will be sent to boliveira@cisnd.ca).

**Section 1:** Identify the illness from which the individual described in your case study is suffering. Include evidence (symptoms, specific behaviours) from the case study to support your justification of diagnosis.

**Note:** For Sections 1-4 do not feel the need to write something if there is nothing from the case study to corroborate the classification. Simply write *none* if there is no corroborating evidence. If however there is a diagnosis of a medical condition, for example, include the evidence from the case study to corroborate your diagnosis.

**Section 2:** Are there long-standing personality issues or developmental problems that could be contributing to the problem rather than a diagnosis of mental illness? **Identify and explain.**

**Section 3:** Are there other medical conditions that may be affecting the individual's behaviour? **Identify and explain.**

**Section 4:** Are there Social or Environmental stressors that the individual has recently experienced? **Identify and Explain.**

**Section 5: Treatment/Therapy Recommendation:** Explain the treatment method (drug/psychotherapy) for each case study along with the **justification**. Your treatment method must be **thoroughly described**. You must explain why the drug and/or therapy would be effective.

### **Scoring:**

- Each case study is worth a total of 10 points.
- 5 points will be awarded for correctly identifying the disorder and explaining the symptoms. Be as specific with the diagnosis as possible.
- 5 points will be awarded for the recommendation of an effective treatment. The treatment plan must be thoroughly explained and justified.
- Groups are expected to use multiple sources to identify and offer effective treatment plans.

**Total Score 50 Points**

## Case Study #1

Michael Scranton has just graduated from college. He had been a good student and enjoyed reading and getting lost in science fiction comic books. He also enjoyed board and Internet games that dealt with fictional comic book characters and had a large network of online friends who shared this interest. Michael was known as “Mike” by his friends and was a genius at writing computer programs. Mike occasionally experimented with ‘hacking’ but feared the repercussions of his actions if he were to be caught.

Mike had a girlfriend for a time in college and felt comfortable with those he knew well. He could be very funny and while shy he was always very considerate of others feelings. He was straight-laced and had drunk alcohol on occasion in college but had never tried drugs of any sort.

Once Mike graduated from college, he thought that given his grades and highly esteemed university credit to his resume he would quickly find a position in a company writing computer code. The economy was slow and the job was not forthcoming. Mike’s mother was pressuring her son to “make something of his life” and wanted him to find a place of his own to live. Mike had thought that he would stay with his parents until he got married and had not anticipated his mother’s response.

As weeks turned into months and there was still no job, Mike’s mother threatened to force him to work for the family cleaning business. Mike was not interested and began to spend more and more time in his room under the guise of looking online for a job. Instead, he played more and more Internet games and became engrossed in the world that was created by the fictional characters.

Since high school he had been particularly interested in a character named “Garth”. During the growing period of time Mike had gone without finding a job he began thinking about Garth’s next move even when not playing the game. One day while grocery shopping for his mother Garth began to tell him what to buy and not to buy and to discard the list that his mother had given to him. When he returned home his mother was irate and ordered him back to the store. Once again, Garth took over and his wishes seemed to supersede those of Mike’s mother.

The following week during an interview Mike stared blankly ahead as the interview progressed, he was playing his favorite Internet game in his mind, while Garth instructed him on destroying his enemies. The interview ended badly once again and without a job. Mike became lost in the world of Internet games both while he was playing and not playing. Garth, and eventually other characters, watched and directed Mike’s every move. He withdrew from other friends and became extremely isolated, choosing to live only in the world created by the Internet game.

## Case Study #2

Pam has always lived a relatively comfortable life. She had been raised in a small community on the East coast and was raised by nannies and housekeepers as much as her own parents raised her. Her father was a successful real estate broker and often worked with celebrities and demanding clients, he was often out of town and Pam would not see him two weeks at a time. Her mother was a kind woman but caught up in the world of “lunches” and shopping. She always wanted to see people and be seen. She was always leaving her only daughter to the care of the household staff. Luckily, she was well taken care of and shown much love by those who worked for her parents. Although she suffered from terrible allergies she enjoyed being outside and playing many sports. She became an expert horseback rider and competed in many competitions

As Pam grew older she became resentful of her mother’s disinterest towards her. While her mother had never been unkind to her, she simply had never made her a priority. Early in her teenage years she began smoking, drinking and getting into trouble. Pam’s mother decided that boarding school was the answer. At school Pam withdrew and no longer participated in activities such as tennis and horseback riding that she had once loved. She rarely left her room, but when she did she would often stay out all night and often engage in risky behavior with the boys from a neighboring school. Often times she would then retreat to her room for days on end, sleeping and brooding over her lack of care. This type of behavior went on for months at the end of the semester Pam on an impulse flew to Los Angeles where she shopped non stop for four days straight running up a credit card bill of over \$20,000. While Pam’s family had money she did not and when she returned to school and the headmaster realized what had occurred, she immediately called Pam’s mother.

### Case Study #3

Jan was beautiful and popular. As a child she did some modeling and as she grew into her teenage years her looks only improved. In addition, she had a great personality and was kind to everyone even if she was not particularly close to them. She had a very close bond with her family and had two older brothers who doted on her and looked after her at school. Jan loved performing and was actively involved in school plays and productions in high school. She was also on the school dance team and loved serving as the announcer for the school volleyball games.

Jan suffered from migraine headaches and as a result she missed much school. Her family did not have the money to pay for a personal tutor, so instead she enlisted the help of friends who always were willing to help out and make sure that she stayed caught up in school.

In her second year of college Jan's father suddenly died of a heart attack, the family was devastated and Jan did not take the news well. She was not able to attend the funeral because she felt dizzy and experienced a terrible migraine which left her bedridden for two days. During this time her mother and brothers while mourning they made every effort to insure that Jan was comfortable. Two weeks after her father's funeral her oldest brother deployed to fight in the Middle East, while everyone knew that this was coming it was difficult as they had just lost their father. Jan now felt stomach pains and went to the doctor to find out what was happening. He assured her it would pass and she would be fine.

Directly after college Jan married and settled down in a small town not far from where she grew up. She was new to the neighborhood and no longer the center of attention. While her husband loved her and treated her well he did not dote on her as her family had done. She got a job as an executive assistant tried to make the best of it, although she missed her family terribly. Her migraines returned and each time she would miss work and her mother would come to care for her. She started having dizzy spells at work and was convinced that she had vertigo. Her doctor assured her that she was fine and she was cleared to go back to work. Jan insisted that she could not go back to work as she could hardly stand and her stomach felt uneasy. Her mother stayed until she felt better, but the cycle would occur every 4 to 5 weeks eventually causing Jan to lose her job. She tried a new doctor but he too assured her that she was fine. She decided that until the symptoms went away she should go and stay at her mothers where as she put, she would receive proper care.

## Case Study #4

Dwight was considered a “bully” from the time he was in preschool. He pushed other students and teased them mercilessly. Other students in Dwight’s class sided with him or hung around with him because they did not want to face the same torment. He seemed to derive pleasure out of these activities and when his teachers made him apologize for his actions he did so only half heartedly.

Dwight’s home life was somewhat chaotic, his father had left when he was a baby and Dwight had little contact with him. His mother worked two jobs to insure that the family could keep their home. She frequently had boyfriends who would occasionally stay with them for weeks on end. Generally Dwight and his brother were left to fend for themselves for most of the day.

Dwight was extremely intelligent and performed well on exams and standardized assessments despite rarely completing his homework. He often lied and convinced his teachers to give him extended time on a homework assignment despite having no good reason for not having it completed. Occasionally he would cheat on assignments from other students and often turn in someone else’s homework claiming it as his own. He did not seem to care that the other person did not get the credit for their work. During group projects he manipulated the others into doing his work but during a presentation he would come through with flourish therefore he never suffered the consequences.

His relations with women were much the same, he would often be dating three women at a time and thought nothing of lying to them or convincing them it was something they did to drive him into the arms of another woman.

Dwight became a trial lawyer taking on cases for large corporations and serving as both prosecutor and defense when needed. He did not care if he had to lie to win his case nor did he care if his client was guilty or innocent. Dwight’s main objective was to win high profile cases to further his own career.

Dwight was brought to the police station after a hit and run accident in which he hit an eight-year-old boy who had run into the street to retrieve his Frisbee. Dwight did not stop or express any concern for the boy when he was arrested.

## **Case Study #5**

Jim was working as an air traffic controller on 9-11, 2001 when the flight that he was responsible for guiding safely to the ground was taken over by terrorists. Jim could hear everything that occurred in the cockpit and did everything in his power to insure the safety of the passengers to no avail.

Seven years later Jim has relived the 20 minutes in which he had contact with the plane over in his head thousands of times. He still works as an air traffic controller and thinks about the event multiple times per day. He realizes the events were out of his control but cannot help but feel somewhat responsible for the deaths of the people of the plane. Jim took some time off after incident and has been seeing a counselor ever since to work through his grief and feelings of guilt.

These pressures have cause tension with his family and he has become more introverted and caught up in his own thoughts. He has become very concerned with his children's well being. His wife has become impatient with him and although he has been to the doctor multiple times there is no physical ailment. She wants everything to return to normal and return to their previously life in socializing with friends and enjoying each others company. He has become very withdrawn. He often dreams about the incident and each day when he goes to work dreads that something similar will occur.

On the job his performance has been outstanding. He went through a retraining program to give him the confidence he needed to go back to work and he is extremely diligent trying to account for any possible interference and always opting for the safest option even if it will be an unconvinced for passengers.