
Additional Assessment Information from a Strengths Perspective

<i>Typical Content Areas</i>	<i>Traditional Information</i>	<i>Additional Information</i>
Presenting Problem	Detailed description of problem(s). List of symptoms Mental status Coping strategies	Emphasis on client's language Exceptions to the problem Exploration of resources Emphasis on client's solution Miracle question
Problem History	Onset and duration Course of development Interactional sequences Previous treatment history	Exceptions: When was the problem not happening, or happening differently? Include "future history" – vision of when problem is solved.
Personal History	Developmental milestones Medical history Physical, emotional, sexual abuse Diet, exercise	Physical, psychological, social, spiritual, environmental assets. "How did you do that?" "How have you managed to overcome your adversities?" "What have you learned that you would want other to know?"
Substance Abuse History	Patterns of use: onset, frequency, quantity Drug/habits of choice: alcohol, drugs, caffeine, nicotine, gambling Consequences: physical, social, psychological	"How does using help?" Periods of using less (difference) Periods of abstinence (exceptions) Person and family rituals – what has endured despite use/abuse?
Family History	Age and health of parents, siblings Description of relationships Cultural and ethnic influences History of illness, mental illness	Family rituals (mealtimes/holidays) Role models – nuclear and extended Strategies for enduring Important family stories
Employment and Education	Educational history Employment history Achievements, patterns and problems	List of skills and interests Homemaking, parenting skills Community involvement Spiritual and church involvement
Summary and Treatment Recommendations	Summary and prioritization of concerns Diagnosis: DSM-IV, PIE Recommended treatment strategies	Expanded narrative-reduce focus on diagnosis and problems Summary of resources, options, possibilities, exceptions and solutions. Recommendations to other professionals for how to utilize strengths in work with client