

### Elements of the Mental Status Exam

**Appearance** How does the client look? Well dressed with attention to detail? Well groomed? Age appropriate?

**Behavior** What is the client's activity level? Are there tics or stereotyped movements? How alert is the client? What are the client's facial expressions? Do they match the content discussed?

**Attitude** Is the client cooperative? Resistant? Fearful?

**Mood/Affect** What is the client's prevailing mood? Is there observable mood lability? Does the client show a range of affect? Is it appropriate to the content discussed?

**Speech** Is the client understandable? Are there any speech abnormalities (e.g., stuttering)? Is the client's speech pressured?

**Thought Process** Is the client's thought process circumstantial? Tangential? Is there evidence of flight of ideas? Is there poverty of thought? Perseverations?

**Thought Content** Does the client exhibit delusions? Phobias? Obsessions? Is the client preoccupied? Does the client have suicidal thought? Thoughts of harming others?

**Perceptions** Is the client experiencing hallucinations or illusions?

**Cognition** Is the client alert and oriented? Can the client demonstrate attention and concentration? Is the client's memory (short- and long-term) intact?

**Insight** Does the client demonstrate understanding of his or her own symptoms or situation?

**Judgment** Does the client demonstrate the ability to make sound, responsible decisions?

### GABA (General Appearance, Behavior, Attitude)

**General Appearance** age/gender, appearance vs. stated age, body habitus, clothing, hygiene, grooming, physical abnormalities, tattoos, piercings

**Behavior** posture, eye contact, mannerisms, tics, activity level, psychomotor retardation/activation, akathisia, automatisms, catatonia, choreoathetoid, compulsions, dystonias, tremors

**Attitude** cooperative/uncooperative, seductive, flattering, charming, eager to please, entitled, controlling, hostile, guarded, critical, antagonistic, childish

### Mood and Affect

**Mood** Patient reported emotional tone in quotations

**Affect** Physical expression of immediate feeling state.

Type: euthymic, hyperthymic, elevated, euphoric, dysphoric, irritable, anxious

Quality/range: Intense > full > constricted > blunted > flat

Motility: Labile > supple/stable > sluggish

Appropriateness to content: appropriate or not

### Speech

#### Speech

Rate: pressured > rapid > regular > slowed

Rhythm: prosody, cadence, latency, spontaneity

Articulation: dysarthria, stuttering

Accent/dialect: tone, volume/modulation



By [FernandaJess](#)

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