

Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) Scale*

Consider psychological, social, and occupational functioning on a hypothetical continuum of mental health-illness. Do not include impairment in functioning due to physical (or environmental) limitations.

Code (Note: Use intermediate codes when appropriate, e.g., 45, 68, 72.)

- 100 | **Superior functioning in a wide range of activities, life's problems never seem to get out of hand, is sought out by others because of his/her many positive qualities. No symptoms.**
91
- 90 | **Absent of minimal symptoms** (e.g., mild anxiety before an exam), **good functioning in all areas, interested and involved in a wide range of activities, socially effective, generally satisfied with life, no more than everyday problems or concerns** (e.g., an occasional argument with family members).
81
- 80 | **If symptoms are present, they are transient and expectable reactions to psycho-social stressors** (e.g., difficulty concentrating after family argument); **no more than slight impairment in social, occupational, or school functioning** (e.g., temporarily falling behind in schoolwork).
71
- 70 | **Some mild symptoms** (e.g., depressed mood and mild insomnia) **OR some difficulty in social, occupational, or school functioning** (e.g., occasional truancy, or theft within the household), **but generally functioning pretty well, has some meaningful relationships.**
61
- 60 | **Moderate symptoms** (e.g., flat affect and circumstantial speech, occasional panic attacks) **OR moderate difficulty in social, occupational, or school functioning** (e.g., few friends, conflicts with peers or co-workers).
51
- 50 | **Serious symptoms** (e.g., suicidal ideation, severe obsessional rituals, frequent shoplifting) **OR any serious impairment in social, occupational, or school functioning** (e.g., no friends, unable to keep a job).
41
- 40 | **Some impairment in reality testing or communication** (e.g., speech is at times illogical, obscure, or irrelevant) **OR major impairment in several areas, such as work or school, family relations, judgment, thinking, or mood** (e.g., depressed man avoids friends, neglects family, and is unable to work; child frequently beats up younger children, is defiant at home, and is failing at school).
31
- 30 | **Behavior is considerably influenced by delusions or hallucinations OR serious impairment in communication or judgment** (e.g., sometimes incoherent, acts grossly inappropriately, suicidal preoccupation) **OR inability to function in almost all areas** (e.g., stays in bed all day; no job, home or friends).
21

* All of this information was pulled from the DSM IV-TR.

- 20 | **Some danger of hurting self or others** (e.g., suicidal attempts without clear
| expectation of death; frequent violent; manic excitement) **OR occasionally fails**
11 | **to maintain minimal personal hygiene** (e.g., smears feces) **OR gross**
| **impairment in communication** (e.g., largely incoherent or mute).
- 10 | **Persistent danger of severely hurting self or others** (e.g., recurrent violence)
| **OR persistent inability to maintain minimal personal hygiene OR serious**
1 | **suicidal act with clear expectation of death.**

The rating of overall psychological functioning on a scale of 0 – 100 was operationalized by Luborsky in the Health-Sickness Rating Scale (Luborsky, L: “Clinician’s Judgments of Mental Health.” *Archives of General Psychiatry* 7:407 – 417, 1962). Spitzer and colleagues developed a revision of the Health-Sickness Rating Scale called the Global Assessment Scale (GAS) (Endicott J, Spitzer RL, Fleiss JL, Cohen J: “The Global Assessment Scale: A Procedure for Measuring Overall Severity of Psychiatric Disturbance.” *Archives of General Psychiatry* 33:766-771, 1976). A modified version of the GAS was included in DSM-III as the Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) Scale.