

# Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) Scale

Consider the client's psychological, social, and occupational functioning on a hypothetical continuum (1-100) of mental health-illness. Do not include impairment in functioning due to physical (or environmental) limitations. Assessment is of client's functioning during the previous 12 months.

| CODE   | (Note: Use intermediate codes when appropriate, e.g. 45, 68, 72.)   |
|--------|---|
| 91-100 | <b>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 or her many positive qualities. No symptoms</b>  |
| 81-90  | <b>Absent or minimal symptoms</b> (e.g., mild anxiety before an exam), <b>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</b> (e.g., an occasional argument with family members).   |
| 71-80  | <b>If symptoms are present, they are transient and expectable reactions to psychosocial stressors</b> (e.g., difficulty concentrating after family arguments); <b>no more than slight impairment in social, occupational, or school functioning.</b> (e.g., temporarily falling behind in schoolwork).  |
| 61-70  | <b>Some mild symptoms</b> (e.g., depressed mood and mild insomnia) <b>OR some difficulty in social, occupational, or school functioning</b> (e.g. occasional truancy, or theft within the household), <b>but generally functioning pretty well, has some meaningful interpersonal relationships.</b>  |
| 51-60  | <b>Moderate symptoms</b> (e.g., flat affect and circumstantial speech, occasional panic attacks) <b>OR moderate difficulty in social, occupational or school functioning</b> (e.g., few friends, conflicts with peers or co-workers).   |
| 41-50  | <b>Serious symptoms</b> (e.g., suicidal ideation, severe obsessional rituals, frequent shoplifting) <b>OR any serious impairment in social, occupational, or school functioning</b> (e.g., no friends, unable to keep a job).   |
| 31-40  | <b>Some impairment in reality testing or communication</b> (e.g., speech is at times illogical, obscure, or irrelevant) <b>OR major impairment in several areas, such as work or school, family relations, judgement, thinking or mood</b> (e.g., depressed person avoids friends, neglects family, and is unable to work; child frequently beats up younger children, is defiant at home, and is failing at school). |
| 21-30  | <b>Behavior is considerably influenced by delusions or hallucinations OR serious impairment in communication or judgement</b> (e.g. sometimes incoherent, acts grossly inappropriately, suicidal preoccupation) <b>OR inability to function in almost all areas</b> (e.g., stays in bed all day; no job, home or friends).  |
| 11-20  | <b>Some danger of hurting self or others</b> (e.g., suicide attempts without clear expectation of death; frequently violent; manic excitement) <b>OR occasionally fails to maintain minimal personal hygiene</b> (e.g. smears feces) <b>OR gross impairment in communication</b> (e.g., largely incoherent or mute).  |
| 1-10   | <b>Persistent danger of severely hurting self or others</b> (e.g., recurrent violence) <b>OR persistent inability to maintain minimal personal hygiene OR serious suicidal act with clear expectation of death.</b>   |
| 0      | Inadequate information.   |

Adapted from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Text Revision* (2000) American Psychiatric Association, Washington DC.