

## Psychodynamic Therapist Rating Scale

For each item, keep in mind the following general scale:

<b>0</b>	<b><i>Unacceptable performance from any student.</i></b>
<b>1</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Minimum level expected of beginning novice students.</i></b>
<b>3</b>	<b><i>Minimum level expected of students in advanced psychodynamic labs.</i></b>
<b>4</b>	
<b>5</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b><i>An exceptional student. Comparable to a skillful graduate of our program.</i></b>

### 1. Understanding and tracking the process

0 The therapist's failure to understand or track the process derailed the process. The therapist may have focused too much on the concrete content. The therapist may have offered statements that reflected a gross misunderstanding of the unstated and implied meaning of the patient's experience.

1

2 The therapist had difficulty understanding or tracking the process, but the therapist evinced a limited understanding of the unstated and implied meaning of the patient's experience. *Minimum competency for novice therapist.*

3

4 The therapist was able to understand and track some aspects of the process. At some points in the session, the therapist's verbal and nonverbal communications conveyed that in addition to understanding the explicit content of the session, the therapist was also tuned in to some, but not all, of the unstated and implied meaning of the patient's experience

5

6 The therapist was able to understand and track important aspects of the process. Throughout the session, the therapist's verbal and nonverbal communications conveyed that in addition to understanding the explicit content of the session, the therapist was also tuned in to the unstated and implied meaning of the patient's experience.

### 2. Flexibility/Rigidity

0 The therapist was overly rigid or overly flexible throughout the session.  
*Overly rigid:* Throughout the session, the therapist rigidly persisted with his/her approach even when it was clearly not meeting the patient's needs.  
*Overly flexible:* Throughout the session, the therapist changed his/her approach haphazardly in a manner that was not responsive to the patient's needs.

1

2 The therapist was too rigid or too flexible at some points in the session. At times, the therapist rigidly persisted with his/her approach, OR changed his/her approach haphazardly. *Minimum*

*competency for novice therapist.*

3

4 For most of the session, the therapist was neither too rigid nor too flexible. Once or twice, the therapist may have been a little slow to modulate an approach that was not working, or the therapist may have been a little quick to give up on an approach that seemed promising, but in general, the therapist's approach was responsive to the patient's needs.

5

6 The therapist struck the right balance—he or she was neither too rigid nor too flexible. When appropriate, the therapist modulated his/her approach in response to the patient's needs. When appropriate, the therapist maintained a steady, consistent approach and did not allow him or herself to be sidetracked.

### **3. Empathy**

0 The therapist displayed a marked lack of empathy. The therapist may have displayed hostility toward the patient, or appeared to disregard and/or lack interest in the patient's experience.

1

2 The therapist displayed rudimentary empathic skills. The therapist showed some awareness of the patient's obvious, surface-level feelings, but the therapist seemed to have some difficulty understanding the patient's experience from the patient's point of view. *Minimum competency for novice therapist.*

3 The therapist displayed minimally adequate empathic skills. The therapist was able to reflect back the patient's experience—but no more.

4 For most of the session, the therapist displayed good empathic skills. The therapist was able to do more than just reflect back the patient's expression of his or her experience—the therapist conveyed some understanding of an unstated or unexpressed aspect of the patient's experience.

5

6 Throughout the session, the therapist displayed excellent empathic skills. Through both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication, the therapist conveyed a sensitive understanding of the patient's experience, including aspects of the patient's experience of which the patient may not have been fully aware.

### **4. Facilitating patient engagement**

***Note that these ratings are of the therapist's efforts to facilitate engagement. The extent to which the patient actually is engaged will also reflect patient variables over which the therapist has no control. With this item, we are only rating the therapist's contributions.***

0 Throughout the session, the therapist discouraged patient engagement in the work of therapy. Either the therapist was exceptionally passive, or the therapist dominated the session in a way

that left no space for the patient.

1

2 The therapist tried to encourage and facilitate patient engagement in the work of therapy. At times, the therapist was too passive or the therapist was doing all the work. *Minimum competency for novice therapist.*

3

4 For most of the session, the therapist encouraged and facilitated patient engagement in the work of therapy. Once or twice, the therapist may have been somewhat passive or may have been doing a little too much of the work.

5

6 Throughout the session, the therapist encouraged and facilitated maximal patient engagement in the work of therapy. The therapist struck the right balance—the therapist was not too passive, nor was the therapist doing all the work.

#### **5. Deepening/regulating emotions**

0 Throughout the session, the therapist responded inappropriately to the patient's expression of emotions. The therapist responded to the patient in ways that either inhibited the patient's level of experiencing, or that increased the patient's emotional dysregulation.

1

2 The therapist tried to respond appropriately to the patient's expression of emotions. At times, the therapist may have missed opportunities to deepen the patient's level of experiencing, and/or the therapy may have failed to help the patient regulate overwhelming feelings. *Minimum competency for novice therapist.*

3

4 For most of the session, the therapist responded appropriately to the patient's expression of emotions. Once or twice, the therapist may have failed to take full advantage of an opportunity to deepen the patient's level of experiencing, or the therapist may have been too quick or too slow to help a patient regulate potentially overwhelming feelings.

5

6 Throughout the session, the therapist responded appropriately to the patient's expression of emotions. When appropriate, the therapist clarified the patient's feelings in order to deepen the patient's level of experiencing. When appropriate, the therapist helped the patient regulate feelings that threatened to overwhelm the patient.

## 6. Patterns in relationships

N/A Due to the content of the session, the therapist had no opportunity to identify and explore patterns in the patient's interpersonal relationships.

0 The therapist did not explore patterns in the patient's interpersonal relationships in an appropriate manner. The therapist may have failed to identify and explore obvious patterns in the patient's interpersonal relationships, including, when appropriate, past and/or present relationships (extratransferential), OR the therapist may have focused excessively on interpersonal patterns in a manner that was harmful to the process and/or the patient-therapist relationship.

1

2 The therapist made a rudimentary effort to explore patterns in the patient's interpersonal relationships. The therapist's exploration may have been clumsy, partly off-base, or overly intellectualized. *Minimum competency for novice therapist.*

3

4 The therapist identified and attempted to explore relevant patterns in the patient's interpersonal relationships, including, when appropriate, past and/or present relationships (extratransferential).

5

6 The therapist was particularly skilled at identifying and exploring patterns in the patient's interpersonal relationships, including, when appropriate, past and/or present relationships (extratransferential).

## 7. Transference

N/A Due to the content of the session, the therapist had no opportunity to identify and explore the transference. Please note that this code does not mean that transference themes were not relevant to the process; rather, N/A means that there was no opportunity to discuss these themes in the session.

1

0 The therapist failed to explore the transference in an appropriate manner. The therapist may have failed to identify and explore relevant dynamics and patterns in the patient-therapist relationship, OR the therapist may have focused excessively on the patient-therapist relationship in a manner that was not responsive to the patient's needs.

2 The therapist tried to explore the transference. The therapist may have failed to identify the most relevant dynamics and patterns, or the therapist's exploration may have been clumsy or overly intellectualized. *Minimum competency for novice therapist.*

3

- 4 The therapist recognized and attempted to explore the transference. The therapist may have missed some minor opportunities to explore the most relevant dynamics and patterns, or the therapist may have focused a little too long on an aspect of the patient-therapist relationship that was not responsive to the patient's needs, but in general, the therapist's focus on the transference was appropriate.
- 5
- 6 When appropriate, the therapist skillfully recognized and attempted to explore the transference—i.e., the therapist recognized and explored dynamics and patterns in the patient-therapist relationship, and/or drew links between other relationships in the patient's life and the patient-therapist relationship. When appropriate, the therapist metacommunicated about his or her experience of the patient-therapist interaction.

**Overall Rating:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | Unacceptable                            |
| 1 |   |
| 2 | Minimum competency for novice therapist |
| 3 |   |
| 4 | Good                                    |
| 5 |   |
| 6 | Exceptional                             |