



UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY – 2016/2018
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAM 2018/20

MPCP01 – ADULT MENTAL HEALTH & NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

Duration: Three (3) hours

Total Number of Questions: Six (6)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS:

Answer a total of FOUR (4) questions.

ANSWER EACH QUESTION IN A SEPARATE BOOKLET.

Each question is 100 marks

QUESTION 1

Lahiru (42 years) has been attending out-patient psychiatric clinics at government hospitals, on-and-off, for approximately 15 years. He has difficulty in sustaining a job although he has a degree in science. Lahiru reports a strained relationship with his brothers as he believes they disapprove of him and his lack of success. He often hears his brothers' voices saying derogatory things about him and he sometimes responds in anger, to what he hears. Lahiru's main reason for not adhering to a treatment plan is his belief that there is nothing wrong with him.

- 1.1 Discuss the term 'insight' as used in psychological illnesses. (15 marks)
- 1.2 List 01 mental illness in which insight is particularly difficult to achieve. Discuss why this is so, in the context of this mental illness. (15 marks)
- 1.3 Discuss a psychological intervention which could support Lahiru to develop insight about his condition. (20 marks)
- 1.4 Describe the key components of the Health Belief Model. (20 marks)
- 1.5 Discuss 02 strengths and 01 limitation of the Health Belief Model in the context of medication compliance in Lahiru's mental health condition. (30 marks)

QUESTION 2

Shivarani (34 years) works in a factory in the free trade zone. She has two children (10 and 13 years) who live with her parents in Killinochichi. She lives with several other women (many of whom are Sinhalese speaking) in a paid accommodation near her workplace. She is happy about securing work and her income supports her children and her parents. Shivarani's employer refers her to the health service as she reports feeling exhausted and distracted at work. The doctor finds no physical ill-health. However, Shivarani reports very disturbed sleep, with frequent nightmares which are mostly related to the last time she saw her husband before being taken-in for questioning by the army. She never saw him again. In her nightmares she often re-lives this event or is searching for him in "strange and faraway places surrounded by Sinhalese speaking people". She wakes up in a sweat and finds it difficult to fall asleep again. She reports feeling sad and hopeless that this problem continues as it is now 07 years since her husband disappeared. Her disturbed sleep has gotten worse since she moved to Colombo.

- 2.1 What could be the most probable diagnosis for Shivarani? Justify your answer. (25 marks)
- 2.2 List 05 possible symptoms experienced by persons who have the above diagnosis. (15 marks)
- 2.3 Discuss 02 possible reasons for the exacerbation of Shivarani's sleep problems. (20 marks)
- 2.4 Describe two psychological strategies you could use to assist Shivarani to cope with her presenting condition. (40 marks)

QUESTION 3

- 3.1 Discuss 04 key items of background information you would require about a client before planning a neuropsychological assessment. Include the reasons such background information is required. (25 marks)
- 3.2 Identify five criteria by which you would determine the appropriateness of a neuropsychological test which you could use with this client who presents at a government hospital in Sri Lanka. (25 marks)
- 3.3. Discuss two types of aphasia with reference to their origins and key symptoms. (20 marks)
- 3.4 Mr. Silva has had a stroke involving the left parietal cortex. List 03 possible cognitive deficits he would experience. (15 marks)
- 3.5 List 03 tasks you could ask him to perform to assess parietal lobe functioning. (15 marks)

QUESTION 4

Kanchana (22 years) is admitted to hospital after consuming 20 panadol. She claims that her mother does not care about her and always favours her brother (17 years). Kanchana's parents got divorced when she was 12 years and her father had very little involvement in their lives since. During this time, Kanchana's uncle had sexually abused her and she blames her mother for allowing something like this to happen.

Kanchana claims she is not really interested in boys. However, she has had 03 romantic relationships. She says that she only really liked the last boyfriend with whom she had a sexual relationship. She had then begun to fear that the boyfriend would lose interests in her and leave her. She found it unbearable if he did not respond immediately to her calls and text messages and would call him several times in the day. Recently, the relationship ended. Kanchana was extremely distressed resulting in her taking the panadol. Her moods appear to shift from anger and rage towards her boyfriend and her mother, to shame and self-doubt about her being a flawed and unlovable person.

- 4.1 What is the most probable diagnosis of Kanchana's presentation? Include evidence from the above scenario to support your answer. (15 marks)
- 4.2 Describe a cognitive behavioural formulation for Kanchana's presentation. (25 marks)
- 4.3 Identify 02 therapy goals you might choose for Kanchana. Give reasons for your choice. (20 marks)
- 4.4 Describe 02 intervention techniques you could use to achieve the above-indicated therapy goals. (40 marks)

QUESTION 5

Varun (32 years) and Surini (27 years) have been married for 03 years. About 08 months after their wedding Surini observed that whenever they argued he would withdraw and avoid speaking to her. This prevented them from resolving any disagreements. Varun says that Surini always finds fault with him and never notices the things he does for her. Surini comes from a family of 04 siblings who remain closely connected and show affection openly. Varun is an only child whose parents had a very complex relationship. They frequently fought and often included Varun in those fights either by holding him responsible for problems or by asking him to intervene. Varun appears to have learnt to survive by speaking little and trying to make himself 'invisible'. He is deeply saddened now because he believes that his wife does the same thing. Varun and Surini decide to seek therapy together.

- 5.1 Describe a psychodynamic formulation of Varun's and Surini's problem. (15 marks)

- 5.2 Identify 01 individual therapy goal *each* for Varun and Surini, in relation to improving their relationship. Include examples of the questions you would use to help them identify each of these goals. (30 marks)
- 5.3 Describe in detail 01 technique you would use in your therapeutic work with Surini and Varun. Explain this technique in the context of the theoretical approach it is based on. (40 marks)
- 5.4 Reflecting on your role as the therapist, explain 02 aspects of this case that might personally challenge (15 marks)

QUESTION 6

Rahim (36 years) has been working overseas for the past 07 years during which time he was able to build his savings. He returned to Sri Lanka 03 months ago as his visa was not renewed. Rahim feels that this was an act of racism. He says he used to work long hard hours and even postponed attending to some of his own personal needs, but that the company did not care about him in return. He now says he does not feel motivated to look for work and is finding it difficult to adjust to life in his home town Matale. Rahim has difficulty in falling asleep and often struggles to wake up in the morning. His parents are happy about his return. They feel it is a good time to seek a suitable partner for him, but he does not feel enthusiastic about it though he had wanted a family of his own earlier-on. He feels he has wasted his life and that he is a failure.

- 6.1 Identify 03 factors from the above scenario which indicate that Rahim's situation is more serious than simply being discouraged due to his overseas work experience. (15 marks)
- 6.2 Explain Rahim's presenting problems using a CBT formulation. (25 marks)
- 6.3 Describe an intervention you could use to help Rahim gain a healthier perspective of his present situation. (30 marks)
- 6.4 After several therapy sessions, Rahim has improved significantly and recently attended a job interview. However, during the interview he felt his heart racing, had begun to sweat and could hardly breathe. He now worries about facing future interviews. Describe how you will assist Rahim to overcome this new concern. (30 marks)