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Global Assessment Of Functioning

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The **Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF)** is a numeric scale (0 through 100) used by mental health clinicians and physicians to subjectively rate the social, occupational, and psychological functioning of adults, e.g., how well or adaptively one is meeting various problems-in-living. The scale is presented and described in the [DSM-IV-TR](#) on page 34. The highest ratings are 91-100, "Superior functioning in a wide range of activities.. No symptoms" and the lowest ratings (besides a 0, for "Inadequate information") are 1-10, "Persistent danger of severely hurting self or others...OR persistent inability to maintain minimal personal hygiene OR serious suicidal act with clear expectation of death."

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.)

100-91 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.

90-81 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).



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If symptoms are present, there 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).

70-61 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.

60-51 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).

50-41 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).

40-31 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).

30-21 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).

20-11 Some danger of hurting self or others (e.g., suicidal attempts without clear expectation of death; frequent violent; manic excitement) OR occasionally fails to maintain minimal personal hygiene (e.g., smears feces) OR gross impairment in communication (e.g., largely incoherent or mute).

10-1 Persistent danger of severely hurting self or others (e.g., recurrent violence) OR persistent inability to maintain minimal personal hygiene OR serious suicidal act with clear expectation of death.



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Montalvo v. Barnhart, 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 44133 (W.D.N.Y. 2005).

Montalvo attempts to substitute "overall level of functioning and carrying out activities of daily living" with

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...attempts to separate overall level of functioning and carrying out activities of daily living from "social, occupational, or school functioning." It is possible to see the possibility of some degree of overlap because "social functioning" is arguably a subset of overall functioning and [Activities of daily living](#). However, some have argued that equivalence is not clearly stated in DSM-IV-TR.

GAF levels are commonly used by the [Veterans Benefits Administration](#) of the [United States Department of Veterans Affairs](#) in determining the appropriate level of disability compensation to be paid to veterans who suffer from service connected psychiatric disorders. The emphasis on using the GAF score has, however, decreased in recent years.^[1]

References

- ¹ [^_ptsd1.html](#)

External links

- [Modified Global Assessment of Functioning – Revised \(mGAF-R\)](#) - adapted in 2004 by the Florida DCF Functional Assessment Workgroup from the original M-GAF reported by S. Caldecott-Hazard & R.C.W. Hall, 1995
- [Understanding the Global Assessment of Functioning Scale](#)

See also

- [Diagnostic classification and rating scales used in psychiatry](#)
- [DSM-IV Codes](#)

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