

Assessing Strengths and Challenges

Assessing the strengths and challenges in the following domains allows the caseworker to get a full picture of how the individual or family operates on a day-to-day basis. These domains are also referred to as areas of functioning.

Family

- Attitudes and values of the family
- Roles of family members
- Family rules
- Relationships in the family
- Ways the family copes with stress

Social

- How the client or family relate to those outside the family
- Strengths
- Challenges
- Behaviors
- Resources
- Liabilities

Emotional

- How the client or family manages feelings
- Helps to determine if an issue is environmental or psychological

Spiritual

- Spiritual significance given to the situation
- Spiritual support, strength, healing abilities

Intellectual

- Client's ability to understand and process information
- Affected by learning styles, organic factors, nutrition, and environment
- Intellectual strengths and challenges guide requests for additional testing
- Useful in determining realistic expectations for a client

Economic

- The client and family's economic situation
- Financial realities that may be impacting the problem: poverty, working multiple jobs, etc

Self-help

- How the client manages day-to-day life
- Managing demands of family, household, job, and community
- Problem solving skills
- Support network
- Decision making skill
- These skills can compensate for other weaknesses and can be taught
- Awareness if skills can facilitate the helping process

Physical

- The client's physical health
- Physical development
- Conditions
- Handicaps
- Substance use/abuse
- Determines whether additional providers may need to be involved in the assessment process



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