



## GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF FUNCTIONING

The Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) assigns a clinical judgment in numerical fashion to the individual's overall functioning level. Impairments in psychological, social and occupational/school functioning are considered, but those related to physical or environmental limitations are not.

The scale ranges from 0 (inadequate information) to 100 (superior functioning). Starting at either the top or the bottom of the scale, go up/down the list until the most accurate description of functioning for the individual is reached. Assess **either** the symptom severity **or** the level of functioning, whichever is the worse of the two. Check the category above and below to ensure the most accurate one has been chosen. Within that category there will be a range of 10. Choose the number that is most descriptive of the overall functioning of the individual.

The modified Global Assessment of Functioning (mGAF) scale provides a more detailed criteria and scoring system than the original GAF. The mGAF can be used instead of the GAF if approved by the RCC. Some state outcome forms require the use of the mGAF. The mGAF rates the lowest possible score for each client.

The Florida Department of Children and Families made modifications to the mGAF in 2005, so that that the mGAF could be used to measure the level of functioning for persons in "med only" services. Specifically, the descriptive statements within the ten point intervals were rephrased to improve the face validity and readability of the items. DCF gives the following instructions for completion of the mGAF-R:

The recommended methodology for clinicians using the MGAF-R is as follows:

1. Complete your interview or medication review with the individual.
2. Start at the bottom (most impaired functioning) of the descriptive statements on the MGAF-R.
3. Read the descriptive statements from the bottom toward the top until you find a statement that accurately describes the person you are evaluating and use the number to the left of that statement to produce your MGAF-R rating. While you may find descriptors above the first item identified that also fit the person being rated, generally the statement that identifies the lowest functional rating is most critical to document the current level of functioning and concomitant intervention needs.

The mGAF-R form can be found at [www.accessbehavioralhealth.org/providers](http://www.accessbehavioralhealth.org/providers).

The Children's Global Assessment Scale was adapted for use with children. It is based on the GAF scale.

Scoring for the CGAS ranges from 1, in need of constant supervision, to 100, superior functioning. To assign a CGAS rating, rate the child's most impaired level of functioning. Within each category there

is a 10 point range. Choose the number that is the most descriptive of the overall functioning of the individual.

#### GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF FUNCTIONING SCALE (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.

GAF Range	Description of Level of Functioning
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 or her many positive qualities. No symptoms.
90-81	Absent 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)
80-71	If symptoms are present, they are transient and expectable reactions to psychosocial stressors (e.g., difficulty concentration after family argument); no more than slight impairment in social, occupational, or school functioning(e.g., temporarily falling behind in school work).
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 interpersonal relationships.
60-51	Moderate symptoms (e.g., flat and circumstantial speech, occasional panic attacks) OR moderate difficulty in social occupational, or social functioning (e.g., few friends, conflicts with 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, judgement, thinking, or mood (e.g., depressed man avoids friends, neglect 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 judgement (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., suicide attempts without clear expectation of death, frequently violent, manic excitement) OR occasionally fails to maintain minimal personal hygiene (e.g., smears faces) 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.
0	Inadequate Information.

## **CHILDREN'S GLOBAL ASSESSMENT SCALE**

Adaption of the Adult Global Assessment Scale

(Robert L. Spitzer, M.D., Miriam Gibbon, M.S.W., Jean Endicott, Ph.D.)

Rate the subject's most impaired level of general functioning for the specified time period by selecting the *lowest* level which describes his/her functioning on a hypothetical continuum of health-illness. Use Intermediary levels (e.g., 35, 58, 62)

Rate actual functioning regardless of treatment or prognosis. The examples of behavior provided are only illustrative and are not required for a particular rating.

*Specified time period: 1 month*

- 100-91 **Superior functioning** in all areas (at home, at school and with peers), involved in a range of activities and his many interests (e.g., has hobbies or participates in extracurricular activities or belongs to an organized group such as Scouts, etc.) Likeable, confident, “everyday” worries never get out of hand. Doing well in school. No symptoms.
- 90-81 **Good functioning** in all areas. Secure in family, school, and with peers. There may be transient difficulties and “everyday” worries that occasionally get out of hand (e.g., mild anxiety associated with an important exam, occasionally “blow-ups” with siblings, parents or peers)
- 80-71 No more than **slight impairment** in functioning at home, at school, or with peers. Some disturbance of behavior or emotional distress may be present in response to life stresses (e.g., parental separations, deaths, birth of a sib) but these are brief and interference with functioning is transient. Such children are only minimally disturbing to others and are not considered deviant by those who know them.
- 70-61 **Some difficulty** in a single area, but generally functioning pretty well, (e.g., sporadic or isolated antisocial acts, such as occasionally playing hooky or petty theft; consistent minor difficulties with school work, mood changes of brief duration, fears and anxieties which do not lead to gross avoidance behavior; self doubts). Has some meaningful interpersonal relationships. Most people who do not know the child well would not consider him/her deviant but those who know him/her well might express concern.
- 60-51 **Variable functioning** with sporadic difficulties or symptoms in several but not all social areas. Disturbance would be apparent to those who encounter the child in a dysfunctional setting or time but not to those who see the child in other settings.
- 50-41 **Moderate** degree of interference in functioning in most social areas or severe impairment of functioning in one area, such as might result from, for example, suicidal preoccupations and ruminating, school refusal and other forms of anxiety, obsessive rituals, major conversion symptoms, frequent anxiety attacks, frequent episodes of aggressive or other anti-social behavior with some preservation of meaningful social relationships.
- 40-31 **Major impairment** in functioning in several areas and unable to function in one of these areas, i.e., disturbed at home, at school, with peers, or in the society at large, e.g., persistent aggression without clear instigation; markedly withdrawn and isolated behavior due to either; mood or thought disturbance, suicidal attempts with clear lethal intent. Such children are likely to require special schooling and /or hospitalization or withdrawal from school (but this is not a sufficient criterion for inclusion in this category).
- 30-21 **Unable to function in almost all areas**, e.g. stays at home, in ward or in bed all day without taking part in social activities OR severe impairment in reality testing OR serious impairment in communication (e.g.; sometimes incoherent or inappropriate).
- 20-11 **Needs considerable supervision** to prevent hurting others or self, e.g., frequently violent repeated suicide attempts OR to maintain personal hygiene OR gross impairment in forms of communication, e.g., severe abnormalities in verbal and gestural communication, marked social aloofness, stupor, etc.
- 10-1 **Needs constant supervision** (24-hour care) due to severely aggressive or self-destructive behavior or gross impairment in reality testing communication, cognition, affect, or personal hygiene.

**Modified Global Assessment of Functioning (mGAF) Scale**  
Rate LOWEST possible score for each client

Scoring Intervals	Criteria	Scoring
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<p><b>0-10</b></p>	<p><b>In Persistent Danger of Severely Hurting Self or Others</b></p> <p>Serious suicidal act with clear expectation of death (e.g., stabbing, shooting, hanging, or serious overdose, with no one present)  Frequent severe violence or self-mutilation  Extreme manic excitement, or extreme agitation and impulsivity (e.g., wild screaming and ripping the stuffing out of a bed mattress)  Persistent inability to maintain minimal personal hygiene  Urgent/emergency admission to present psychiatric hospital  In acute, severe danger due to medical problems (e.g., severe anorexia or bulimia with heart/kidney problems, or spontaneous vomiting WHENEVER food is ingested, or severe depression with out-of-control diabetes)</p>	<p>A client having 1-2 of the 6 areas of disturbance in this category = rating of <b>8-10</b></p> <p>A client having 3-4 of the 6 areas of disturbance in this category = rating of <b>4-7</b></p> <p>A client having 5-6 of the 6 areas of disturbance in the category = rating of <b>1-3</b></p>
<p><b>11-20</b></p>	<p><b>In Some Danger of Hurting Self or Others</b></p> <p>Suicide attempts without clear expectation of death (e.g., mild overdose or scratching wrists with people around)  Some severe violence or self-mutilating behaviors  Severe manic excitement, or severe agitation and impulsivity  Occasionally fails to maintain minimal personal hygiene (e.g., diarrhea due to laxative, or smearing feces)  Urgent/emergency admission to the present psychiatric hospital  In physical danger due to medical problems (e.g., severe anorexia or bulimia and some spontaneous vomiting or extensive laxative/diuretic/diet pill use, but without serious heart or kidney problems or severe dehydration and disorientation)</p>	<p>A client with 1-2 of the 6 areas of disturbance in this category = rating <b>18-20</b></p> <p>A client with 3-4 of the 6 areas of disturbance in this category = rating <b>14-17</b></p> <p>A client with 5-6 of the 6 areas of disturbance in this category = rating <b>11-13</b></p>
<p><b>21-30</b></p>	<p><b>Inability to Function in Almost All Areas</b></p> <p><u>Unique Items:</u>  Suicidal preoccupation or frank suicidal ideation with preparation  <b>OR</b> behavior considerably influenced by delusions or hallucinations  <b>OR</b> serious impairment in communication (sometimes incoherent, acts grossly inappropriately, or profound stuporous depression)</p> <p><u>Combined Items:</u>  Serious Impairment with work, school, or housework (unable to keep job or stay in school, or failing school, or unable to care for family and house)  Frequent problems with the law (frequent shoplifting, arrests) or occasional combative behavior  Serious impairment in relationships with family (frequent fights with family and/or neglects family or has no home)  Serious impairment in judgment (including inability to make decisions, confusion, disorientation)  Serious impairment in thinking (including constant preoccupation with thoughts, distorted body image, paranoia)  Serious impairment in mood (including constant depressed mood plus helplessness and hopelessness, or agitation or manic mood)  Serious impairment due to anxiety (panic attacks, overwhelming anxiety)  Other symptoms: some hallucinations, delusions or severe obsessive rituals  Passive suicidal ideation</p>	<p>A client with 1 of the first 3 (unique) criteria = rating <b>21</b></p> <p>A client with 7 of the combined criteria = rating <b>28=30</b></p> <p>A client with 8-9 of the combined criteria = rating <b>24-27</b></p> <p>A client with 10 of the combined criteria = rating <b>20-23</b></p>
<p><b>Scoring Intervals</b></p>	<p><b>Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Scoring</b></p>

<p><b>31-40</b></p>	<p><b>Major Impairment in Several Areas of Functioning</b>          Serious impairment with work, school or housework (e.g., unable to keep job or stay in school, or failing school, or unable to care for family and house)          Frequent problems with the law (e.g., frequent shoplifting, arrests) or occasional combative behavior          Serious impairment in relationships with friends (e.g. very few or no, friends, or avoids what friends he/she has)          Serious impairment in relationships with family (e.g., frequent fights with family and/or neglects family or has no home)          Serious impairment in judgment (including inability to make decisions, confusion, disorientation)          Serious impairment in thinking (including constant preoccupation with thoughts, distorted body image, paranoia)          Serious impairment in mood (including constant depressed mood plus helplessness and hopelessness, or agitation or manic mood)          Serious impairment due to anxiety (e.g., panic attacks, overwhelming anxiety)          Other symptoms: some hallucinations, delusions or severe obsessive rituals          Passive suicidal ideation</p>	<p>A client with 4 areas of disturbance = rating <b>38-40</b></p> <p>A client with 5 areas of disturbance = rating <b>34-37</b></p> <p>A client with 6 areas of disturbance = rating <b>31-33</b></p>
<p><b>41-50</b></p>	<p><b>Some Serious Symptoms or Impairment in Functioning</b>          Serious impairment with work, school or housework (e.g. unable to keep job or stay in school, or failing school, or unable to care for family and house)          Frequent problems with the law (e.g. frequent shoplifting, arrests) or occasional combative behavior          Serious impairment in relationships with friends (e.g. very few, or no, friends, or avoids what friends he/she has)          Serious impairment in relationships with family (e.g., frequent fights with family and/or neglects family or has no home)          Serious impairment in judgement (including inability to make decisions, confusion, disorientation)          Serious impairment in thinking (including constant preoccupation with thoughts, distorted body image, paranoia)          Serious impairment in mood (including constant depressed mood plus helplessness and hopelessness, or agitation or manic mood)          Serious impairment due to anxiety (e.g., panic attacks, overwhelming anxiety)          Other symptoms: some hallucinations, delusions or severe obsessional rituals          Passive suicidal ideation</p>	<p>A client with 1 areas of disturbance = rating <b>48-50</b></p> <p>A client with 2 areas of disturbance = rating <b>44-47</b></p> <p>A client with 3 area of disturbance = rating <b>41-43</b></p>
<p><b>51-60</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate Symptoms</b>          Moderate symptoms (e.g. frequent, moderate depressed mood and insomnia and/or moderate ruminating and obsessing; or occasional anxiety attacks; or flat affect and circumstantial speech; or eating problems and below minimum safe weight without depression)          Moderate difficulty in social, work, or school functioning (e.g. few friends or conflicts with co-workers)</p>	<p>A client with EITHER moderate symptoms OR moderate difficulty in social, work, or school functioning = rating <b>58-60</b></p> <p>A client with moderate difficulty in more than 1 area of social, work, or school functioning = rating <b>54-57</b></p> <p>A client with BOTH moderate symptoms AND moderate difficulty in social, work or school functioning = rating <b>51-60</b></p>
<p><b>Scoring Intervals</b></p>	<p><b>Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Scoring</b></p>

<p><b>61-70</b></p>	<p><b>Some Persistent Mild Symptoms</b></p> <p>Mild symptoms are present that are NOT just expectable reactions to psychosocial stressors (e.g. mild or lessened depression and/or mild insomnia)  Some persistent difficulty in social, occupational, or school functioning (e.g. occasional truancy, theft within the family, or repeated falling behind in school or work)  But has some meaningful interpersonal relationships</p>	<p>A client with <b>EITHER</b> mild persistent symptoms ; <b>OR</b> some difficulty in social, work, and school functioning = rating <b>68-70</b></p> <p>A client with mild persistent difficulty in more than 1 area of social, work, or school functioning = rating <b>64-67</b></p> <p>A client with <b>BOTH</b> mild persistent symptoms ; <b>AND</b> mild difficulty in social, work, or school functioning = rating <b>61-63</b></p>
<p><b>71-80</b></p>	<p><b>Some Transient Mild Symptoms</b></p> <p>Mild symptoms are present, but they are transient and expected reactions to psychosocial stressors (e.g. difficulty concentrating after family argument)  Slight impairment in social, work, or school functioning (e.g. temporarily falling behind in school or work)</p>	<p>A client with <b>EITHER</b> mild symptoms ; <b>OR</b> slight impairment in social, work and school functioning = rating <b>78-80</b></p> <p>A client with mild impairment in more than 1 area of social, work, or school functioning = rating <b>74-77</b></p> <p>A client with <b>BOTH</b> mild symptoms ; <b>AND</b> mild impairment in social, work, or school functioning = rating <b>71-73</b></p>
<p><b>81-90</b></p>	<p><b>Absent or Minimal Symptoms</b></p> <p>Minimal or absent symptoms (e.g. mild anxiety before examination)  Good functioning in all areas and satisfied with life  Interested and involved in a wide range of activities  Socially effective  No more than everyday problems or concerns (e.g. an occasional argument with family members)</p>	<p>A client with no symptoms and everyday problems = rating <b>88-90</b></p> <p>A client with minimal symptoms or everyday problems = rating <b>84-87</b></p> <p>A client with minimal symptoms and everyday problems = rating <b>81-83</b></p>

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	<b>MILD</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>SEVERE</b>
<b>WORK/ SCHOOL</b>	<p>Managed in regular classroom                      Poor grades but not failing                      Occasionally truancy                      No harm to others or property                      Difficulties with supervisor &amp; peers                      High absenteeism                      Decrease in job performance                      Difficulties at school with grades or behaviors                      One suspensions for behavior</p>	<p>May lose Regular Ed placement                      "C" Average (capable of better)                      Truancy twice per month                      Known to authority figures for problem behaviors                      High risk of being fired.                      Has quit work                      Failing several classes.                      More than one suspension</p>	<p>Requires special education E/H                      SED classes or Alt Ed placement due to behavior/mod                      No stable employment for 30 days.                      Unable to work 40 hours/week.                      Failing most classes                      Truancy more than twice/month                      More than one suspension</p>
<b>FAMILY/ HOME</b>	<p>Complies w/directions only with reminders                      Intentionally annoys family members                      Has run away (not overnight)                      Marital stress.                      Parent-child problems                      Family intact but with stress</p>	<p>Family separation                      High risk for divorce.                      In-home services.                      Persistent failure to follow directions                      Verbally abusive to family members                      Has run away overnight once                      Needs in-home services</p>	<p>Beyond caregiver's influence                      Physically abusive to family members                      Has run away overnight twice                      Needs residential services                      Cannot be maintained in the home                      Domestic Violence                      Divorce/Child custody issues                      Has been removed from home for mood/behavior</p>
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<p>Difficulties initiating or sustaining friendships                      Behaviors annoy peers                      Upset when frustrated                      Quick Tempered                      Difficulty making friends (has less than 1 or 2)</p>	<p>Behaviors occasionally endanger peers                      Spiteful when frustrated                      Angry outbursts                      Has trouble keeping friends (may have 1)                      Inappropriate sexual behaviors (thought/ not assaultive)                      Numerous fights with peers                      Social Anxiety                      Unable to get along well with others</p>	<p>No friends/Loner.                      Severe aggression                      Harm to peers is likely                      Assaultive when frustrated                      Has fights with others                      Sexually assaultive                      Aggressive towards others</p>
<b>JUDGEMENT</b>	<p>Has lapses of judgement                      "Forgets" to think about consequences                      No harm to property/others                      Makes immature choices</p>	<p>Judgement immature for age (often)                      Doesn't understand cause and effect                      Choices causes impairment in school/ family/ or social areas                      Accidental harm to property or others</p>	<p>Choices create dangerous situations                      Too irrational to consider cause and effect                      Intentional harm to property or others                      Carries a weapon                      Places client or others in dangerous situations</p>
<b>THINKING</b>	<p>Difficulties with attention or concentration                      Has some insight                      Eccentric or odd speech                      Occasionally suspicious or obsessive                      Magical thinking (child over 8)</p>	<p>Delusional or strained reality testing                      Has little insight                      Irrelevant communication                      Frequently suspicious or obsessive                      Confused/loose thought processes                      Reality testing is strained</p>	<p>Dementia                      Actively psychotic                      Loss of reality                      Has no insight                      Communication is incoherent                      Obsessions interfere with functioning                      Delusional or has hallucinations</p>
<b>MOOD</b>	<p>Occasionally anxious, fearful or sad                      Low self esteem                      Self-critical                      Restricted affect (slight display of emotion)                      Flat or inappropriate affect                      Incongruent mood</p>	<p>Tearful or mildly manic.                      Suicidal thoughts.                      Mood causes problems in work/family/social areas</p>	<p>Suicidal plan or gestures.                      Mood interferes with daily functioning.                      Viewed by others as odd or strange                      Fears/worries result in school or work avoidance                      Academic output decline due to depression                      Suicidal gesture/attempt with intent to die</p>

