



The Substance Related Disorder Assessment: A Road Map to Effective Treatment Planning

Matthew Sprong and Sharon Davis

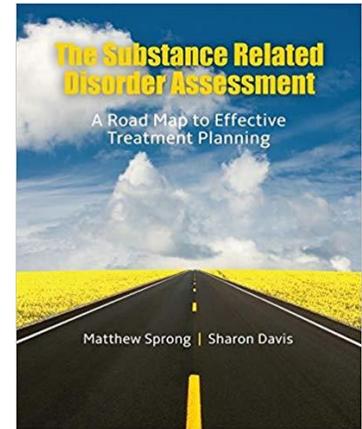
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At last, a concise text written explicitly for counselors in training, on the use of substance use screening and assessment instruments in clinical settings. *The Substance-Related Disorder Assessment: A Roadmap to Effective Treatment Planning*, edited by Matthew Sprong and Sharon Davis, is an important addition to the rehabilitation counseling literature. As the title suggests, the text provides a navigatable roadmap of the assessment process from theory to application, with some crucial stops along the way. This book is a primer for counselors that focuses on the steps that must be taken to determine when and how screening and assessment instruments should be used in the Substance-Related Disorder. The importance of this process is emphasized by the authors, who remind the reader that because treatment plans for clients are based significantly on the clinical diagnosis they receive, it is imperative that counselors accurately diagnose clients according to their individual needs. The purpose of this book is to provide counselors who utilize screening and assessment instruments for treatment planning, the information that they need to be well informed about the tools that they use to make treatment decisions.

The systematic use of assessments and the precise interpretation of this data are clearly delineated through each of the ten chapters. Counselor characteristics such as rapport, communication skills, empathy and cultural awareness are highlighted. This attention to the role that counselor characteristics play particularly in the assessment process is a

highlight of the text. Too frequently texts on screening and assessment place more focus on the features of the instrument that they do on the interactions that occur between the client and the counselor who is administering the test. It has been well established that counselors just like their clients, enter treatment carrying beliefs, attitudes, and problems shaped by their cultural roots as well as their present-day realities (SAMHSA, 2014; Reynolds & Ramsay, 2003). The author's emphasis on the importance of gaining regard, respect, and trust from clients is indeed crucial for successful counseling outcomes. The content focuses on the counselor's need to engage in and develop not only culturally specific skills, but a broader understanding and knowledge of wellness, mental illness, substance use, and treatments. Including this skill development as an equally essential part of the assessment equation, is an unexpected bonus.

Sprong and Davis, both experienced educators and practitioners, have assembled a group of experts to contribute to their text. In doing so, they have given the text a breadth of knowledge not typically found in books of this type. The editors have sequenced the chapters whether intentionally or unintentionally, in an order that follows the trajectory of the case management process including the importance of the initial interview, problem identification and diagnosis and assessment for treatment planning. The book flows well from chapter to chapter. Case studies and discussion questions are included which add to the usefulness of the text as a teaching tool. The language is easy to understand. Key terms are defined in each chapter but an indexed glossary is not included.

In addition to a review of assessments typically used with this population, they demonstrate how other resources work in tandem with assessments to provide a clear picture of the client's needs. For example, they give the reader information that supports diagnosis and treatment when making decisions,

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including a summary of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders fifth edition (DSM-5) and a review the American Society of Addiction Medicine Criteria as a guide for the justification of treatment recommendations. While their explanation of these two essential resources is brief, it is sufficient for the counselor in training to see how each resource ties into and supports the others.

The first two chapters provide the reader with an overview of theoretical models, a discussion on how society perceives substance use disorders, and the fundamentals of diagnosis. Within these first chapters lies the framework for the upcoming chapters which offer more detail on clinical skills for successful assessment and treatment planning. The importance of counselor decision making is highlighted throughout. Case studies at the end of chapters two and three allow students the opportunity for practice and critical thinking. Chapter three introduces the reader to descriptive statistics as it applies to the evaluation of validity and reliability of assessment instruments. This chapter prepares the reader to formulate their conclusions about the tests that they plan to use. Chapters four and five provide the reader with the necessary information needed to understand the most common screening and assessment tools focusing on the adult population. Other resources for more detailed information on screening and assessment are provided which encourages the student to rely not only on one source but several.

The remaining five chapters make this text distinct from others written on the same topic. Chapter six is a much needed and welcome chapter describing multicultural considerations in the choice, administration, and interpretation of screening and assessment tools. The author explains the dramatic effect that counselor bias plays in the screening and assessment process. Relevant research about individual response assessment and counseling interventions are briefly reviewed. There is a greater focus instead on accommodations for a disability and work with the veterans population in this chapter. The information in the preceding chapters is integrated into the final book chapters which focus on evidence-based practices (EBP's) for persons with substance use disorders, ethical issues and treatment planning.

The text is limited in some areas, perhaps because of the authors focus on brevity. A review of the use of mobile technology for real-time assessment of behaviors relevant to substance use disorders was not included. The current state of the science on the use of mobile and online technology in substance use treatment is gaining momentum within the behavioral health literature (Kendzor, Hebert & Businelle, 2018; Marsch, Carroll & Kiluk, 2014). This is a form of intervention that current and future practitioners will need to consider, particularly for those working with youth, disadvantaged and rural populations. Secondly, the multicultural chapter did not address the specific needs of sexual minorities. Research suggests that sexual minorities are more likely than their sexual majority counterparts to have substance use and mental health issues (Healthy People Gov, 2016). While these

gaps exist, the credibility of the book contents does not suffer because of them.

In conclusion, this text fills a gap in the existing choice of books for teaching skills in assessment for substance use disorders. It is written from a person-centred perspective with a unique focus on rehabilitation principles, the importance of counselor characteristics, and ethical and multicultural awareness. The book is instructor and student-friendly in its organization. The chapters include either case studies or discussion questions that allow the students to reflect, evaluate, and problem solve. The text is brief, so it is not appropriate for courses where more analysis of the assessment process is anticipated. For instructors who are including assessment as a feature of a broader curriculum, this ten-chapter text will be most useful. *The Substance-Related Disorder Assessment: A Roadmap to Effective Treatment Planning* is an important contribution to the rehabilitation and substance use disorders literature and an asset to instructors and students alike.

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