The Mental Status Exam

The Mental Status exam is intended to take a current snapshot of the patient’s presentation. It should yield essential information about the patient’s diagnosis (preliminary) and treatment plan.

**Dimensions for Observation:**

**Orientation x4**: person, time, place, situation

**Grooming**: Appropriate for setting, weather, detail

**Self-care**: showered, shaved, disheveled, make-up quality (dramatic, bizarre, fashionable, etc).

**Greeting of clinician**; Sociability, rapport quality

**Affect:** lowered, anxious, flat, muted, blunted, expansive, vacillating, rapid cycling, euthymic, manic

**Demeanor**: friendly, guarded, distant

**Speech**: pressured, strained, minimal, effortful, circumstantial, tangential, word salad, fluency, content, rate

**Cognitive**: clear, logical, relevant, disorganized, paranoid, guarded, racing, slow, anxious, ruminative, obsessive, intelligence, hallucinations, delusions, suicidal/homicidal ideation

**Insight and Judgement**: Good, Poor

**Social**: good social support, interpersonal relationships; intimate relationships; attitude towards relationships

**Behavior/motor activity**: hypervigilant, tense, relaxed, dramatic rigid, anxious, eye contact, restless