

Present State Examination

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1. INTRODUCTION

To begin with, I should like to get an idea of the sort of problems that have been troubling you during the past month. What have been the main difficulties?

Can you tell me more about that? What else has been troubling you? Can you explain what you mean by _____? Why did you come to the (hospital)?

May I ask you if you are seeing a doctor for your nerves? What kind of doctor is he?

Are you attending for treatment any person who is not medically qualified, e.g. lay therapist, herbalist, acupuncture, faith healer, Christian Science, church which forbids medical advice?

What were you complaining of at the time?

2. HEALTH, WORRYING, TENSION:

Is your physical health good?
(Does your body function normally?)

Do you feel you are physically ill in any way?
(What is that like? How serious is it?)

What does your doctor say is wrong?
(Have you had a physical illness recently; colds, influenza etc.?)

Have you worried a lot during the past month?
(What do you worry about?)
PROBE: (Money, housing, children, health, work, marriage, relatives, friends, neighbours, other.)

What is it like when you worry?
(What sort of state of mind do you get into?)
(Do unpleasant thoughts constantly go round and round in your mind?)
(Can you stop them by turning your attention to something else?)

Have you had any headaches, or other pains, during the past month?
(What kind?)

Have you been getting exhausted and worn out during the day or evening, even when you haven't been working very hard?

Have you felt difficulty in relaxing during the past month?
(Do your muscles feel tensed up?)

Have you felt so fidgety and restless that you couldn't sit still?
(Do you have to keep pacing up and down?)

Do you tend to worry over your physical health?

Do you often feel on edge or keyed up or mentally tense or strained?
(Do you generally suffer with your nerves?)
(Do you suffer from nervous exhaustion?)

Do you find that a lot of noise upsets you?
(Do noises sometimes seem to penetrate or go through your head?)

3. AUTONOMIC ANXIETY:

CHECKLIST of autonomic accompaniments:
Blushing. Butterflies. Choking. Difficulty getting breath. Dizziness. Dry mouth. Giddiness.
Palpitations. Sweating. Trembling.

Have there been times lately when you have been very anxious or frightened?
(What was that like?)
(Did your heart beat fast?) Ask for other autonomic symptoms.
(How often in the past month?)

Have you had the feeling that something terrible might happen?
(That some disaster might occur but you're not sure what? Like illness, or death or ruination?)
(Have you been anxious about getting up because you are anxious to face the day?)
(What did it feel like?)

Have you had times when you felt shaky, or your heart pounded, or you felt sweaty and you simply had to do something about it?
(What was it like?)
(What was happening at the time?)
(How often during the past month?)
(Do you tend to get anxious in certain situations, such as travelling or being alone or being in a lift or tube train?)
(What situations? How often during the past month)

CHECKLIST:
Crowds (shop, street, theatre, cinema, church) Going out alone, being at home alone. Enclosed spaces (Hairdresser, phone booth, tunnel), open spaces, bridges. Travelling (buses, cars, trains)

What about meeting people e.g. going into a crowded room and making conversation?

CHECKLIST:
Speaking to an audience. Eating, drinking, or writing in front of other people. Parties.

Do you have any special fears, like some people are scared of feathers or cars or spiders or birds?
(CHECKLIST: Heights, thunderstorms, darkness. Animals or insects of any kind. Dentists, injections, blood, injury)

Do you avoid any of these situations because you know you will get anxious?
(How much does it affect your life?)

4. THINKING, CONCENTRATION, ETC.

Can you think clearly or is there any interference with you thoughts?

Do your thoughts tend to be muddled up or slow?

(Can you make up your mind about simple things quite easily?) (Make decision about everyday matters?)

What has your concentration been like recently?

(Can you read an article in the paper or watch a TV programme right through?)

(Do your thoughts drift so you don't take things in?)

Do you tend to brood on things?

(So much that you even neglect your work?)

What about your interests have they changed at all?

(Have you any interest in work, or hobbies, or recreation?)

(Have you let your appearance go?)

Have you been interested in new things at all?

Have you suffered any lapses of memory? (PROBE ONLY)

Are you in full control of your thoughts?

Can people read your mind?

Is anything like hypnotism, or telepathy going on?

5. DEPRESSED MOOD:

Do you keep reasonably cheerful or have you been very depressed or low-spirited recently?

Have you cried at all?

(When did you last really enjoy doing anything?)

How do you see the future?

(Has life seemed quite hopeless?)

(Can you see any future?)

(Have you given up or does there still seem some reason for trying?)

Have you ever felt that life wasn't worth living?

(Did you ever feel like ending it all?)

(What did you think you might do?)

(Did you actually try?)

If anxiety also present then: Which seems worse, the depression or the anxiety?

6. SELF AND OTHERS:

Have you wanted to stay away from other people?

(Why?)

(Have you been suspicious of their intentions? Of actual harm?)

What is your opinion of your self compared to other people?

(Do you feel better, or not as good, or about the same as most?)

(Do you even feel inferior or even worthless?)

How confident do you feel in yourself?

(For example in talking to others or managing your relations with other people?)

Are you self-conscious in public?

(Do you get the feeling that other people are taking notice of you in the street or a bus or a restaurant?)

(Do they even seem to laugh at you or talk about you critically?)

(Do you consider people really are looking at you, or is it perhaps the way you feel about it?)

Do you have the feeling that you are being blamed for something, or even accused?

What about?

Do you tend to blame yourself at all?
(If people are critical do you think you deserve it?)

Do you blame anyone else for your troubles?

7. APPETITE, SLEEP, RETARDATION, LIBIDO:

(What has your appetite been like recently?)
(Have you lost any weight during the past three months?)
(Have you had any trouble getting off to sleep during the past month?)
(How long do you lie awake?)
(What happens if you take sleeping tablets?)
(How often does it happen?)

Do you seem to be slowed down in your movements or to have too little energy recently? How much has it affected you?
(Do things seem to be moving too fast for you?)

Do you wake early in the morning?

Has there been any change in your interest in sex?

Does the depression or tension get worst just before the start of the monthly period?

8. IRRITABILITY:

Have you been very much more irritable than usual recently?
(How do you show it?)
(Do you keep it to yourself, or shout, or even hit people?)

9. EXPANSIVE MOOD AND IDEATION:

Have you sometimes felt particularly cheerful and on top of the world, without any reason?
(Too cheerful to be healthy?)
(How long does it last?)

Have you felt particularly full of energy lately, or full of exciting ideas?
(Do things seem to go too slowly for you?)
(Do you need less sleep than usual?)
(Do you find yourself extremely active but not getting tired?)
(Have you developed any new interests lately?)

Have you seemed super efficient at work, or as though you had special powers or talents quite out of the ordinary?

Have you felt especially healthy?

Have you been buying any interesting things lately?

10. OBSESSIONS:

Do you find that you have to keep on checking things that you know you have already done?
(Like gas taps, doors, switches, etc.)
(Do you have to touch or count things many times or repeat the same action over and over again?)

(What happens when you try to stop?)

Do you spend a lot of time on personal cleanliness, like washing, over and over even though you know you are a clean? What about tidiness?

(Do you get worried by contamination with germs?)

(Do you have any other rituals?)

(What happens when you try to stop?)

Do you find it difficult to make decisions about trivial things?

(Do you constantly question the meaning of the universe?)

(Do you get awful thoughts in your mind even when you try to keep them out?)

(What happens when you try to stop?)

11. DEREALISATION & DEPERSONALISATION:

Have you had the feeling recently that things around you were unreal?

(As though everything was an imitation of reality like a stage set, with people acting instead of being themselves?)

(What is it like? How do you explain it?)

Have you yourself felt unreal, that you were not a person not in the living world?

(Or that you were outside yourself, looking at yourself from outside?)

(Or that you look unreal in the mirror?)

(Or that some part of your body did not belong to you?)

(How do you explain it?)

12. OTHER PERCEPTUAL DISORDERS (NOT HALLUCINATIONS):

Do you ever get the feeling that something is odd is going on which you can't explain?

(Or that familiar surroundings seem strange? How do you explain it?)

Does your imagination sometimes play tricks on you?

Is there anything unusual about the way things look or sound, or smell or taste?

(Does your body function normally?)

(Is your own appearance normal?)

In what way? Do sounds seem unnaturally clear or loud, or things look vividly coloured or detailed?

(How do you explain this?)

Do things seem dark or grey or colourless?

(How do you explain it?)

Does the appearance of things or people change in a puzzling way e.g. distorted shapes, sizes or colour?

(How do you explain it?)

Do you think your appearance is normal?

(Conviction that nose is too large, teeth misshapen, body crooked, etc.)

Does your experience of time seem to have changed?

Does it go too fast or too slowly? Or do you seem to live through experiences exactly as if you had had them before?

Do you feel you have lost your emotions in some way?

(That you are empty of all feeling incapable of reacting emotionally?)

(Is this a definite change or have you always been like that?)

(How do you explain it?)

13. THOUGHT READING, INSERTION, ECHO, BROADCAST:

Can you think quite clearly or is there any interference in your thoughts?
(Are you in full control of your thoughts?)
(Can people read your mind?)

Is anything like hypnotism, or telepathy going on?

Are thoughts put into your head you know are not your own?
(How do you know they are not your own?)
(Where do they come from?)

Do you ever seem to hear your own thoughts spoken aloud in your head, so that someone standing near might be able to hear them?
(Are your thoughts broadcast, so that other people know what you are thinking?)
(How do you explain it?)

Do you ever seem to hear your own thoughts echoed or repeated?
(What it is like? How do you explain it?)
(Where does it come from?)

Do you ever experience your thoughts stopping quite suddenly so that there are none left in your mind, even when your thoughts were flowing freely before?
(What is that like?)
(How often does it occur? What is it due to?)

Do your thoughts even seem to be taken out of your head, as though some external person or force were removing them?
(Can you give me an example? How do you explain it?)

Can anyone read your thoughts?
(How do you know? How do you explain it?)

14. HALLUCINATIONS

I should like to ask you a routine question which we ask of everybody: do you ever seem to hear noises or voices when there is no one about, and nothing else to explain it?
(DO you ever seem to hear your name being called?)

Is that true of visions or other unusual experiences, which some people have?
(touch, taste, smell, temperature, pain etc.)

14. a) AUDITORY HALLUCINATIONS

Do you hear noises like tapping or music? (What is it like?)

Does it sound like muttering or whispering?

Can you make out the words?

What does the voice say?
(Write down examples of typical verbal hallucinations?)
(If accusatory: Do you think that is justified? Do you deserve it?)

Do you hear your name being called?

Do you hear several voices talking about you?

Do they refer to you as he/ she?

(What do they say?)
(Do they seem to comment on what you are thinking, reading, or doing?)

Do they speak directly to you?
(Are they threatening or unpleasant?)
(Do they call you names?)

Do they give orders? (Do you obey?)

Can you carry on a two way conversation with -----?
(You can reply, and then ---- replies to you and you reply again just as in an ordinary conversation?)
(Do you see anything or smell anything at the same time as you hear voices?)
(Who is it you are talking to?)
(What is the explanation?)
(Do you know anyone else who has this kind of experience?)
Are these voices in your mind or can you hear them through your ears?

14. b) VISUAL HALLUCINATIONS

Have you had visions, or seen things other people couldn't see?

With your eyes or in your mind?

What did you see?

Were you half asleep at the time?

Has it occurred when you were full awake?

Did you realise you were 'seeing things'?

Did the vision seem to arise out of a pattern on the wallpaper or a shadow?

How do you explain it?

14. c) OTHER HALLUCINATIONS

Is there anything unusual about the way things feel, or taste or smell?

Does your body function normally?

Do you sometime notice strange smells that other people don't notice?
(What sort of thing?)
(How do you explain it?)

Do you seem to think that you yourself give off a smell which is noticed?
(What is the explanation?)

Do you ever feel that someone is touching you, but when you look there's nobody there?
(Have you noticed that food and drink seems to have an unusual taste recently?)

15. DELUSIONS:

Even you seem to be most convinced, do you really feel in the back of your mind that it might not well be true, that it might be imagination?

15. a) DELUSIONS OF CONTROL

Do you feel under the control of some force or power other than yourself?

(As though you were a robot or zombie without a will of your own?)
(As though you were possessed by someone or something else?)
(What is that like?)
(Does this force make you movements for you without your willing it? or use your voice or your handwriting? Does it replace your personality? What is the explanation?)

15. b) MISINTERPRETATION, MISIDENTIFICATION, DELUSIONS OF REFERENCE

Are there people around you who are not what they seem to be?

Do you ever feel that the place you are in is not what it seems to be?

15. c) OTHER DELUSIONS (GRANDIOSE, GUILT, HYPOCHONDRIACAL, NIHILISTIC, RELIGIOUS, SEXUAL), DELUSIONAL MOOD

Do you feel as if you have committed a crime or a sin?
Have you harmed your family or anyone else?

Do you deserve to be punished?

Are you suffering from any serious disease or is any part of your body unhealthy?

Do you ever feel that you do not exist?
Is something terrible about to happen?

Are you special in any way?
Do you have any special talents or powers?
Are you a famous person or are you related to a famous person?

Are you especially holy? Are you especially close to God? Does God communicate with you in any special way?

Are you particularly jealous of anyone?
Are you worried that your partner is unfaithful?
Have you experienced any unusual sexual feelings recently?

Have you had the feeling that something is going on that you can't explain? What is it like?
Do you feel puzzled by strange happenings that are difficult to account for? Do familiar surroundings seem strange? Does the world around seem to have changed in some way that you can't quite explain?