The first family assessment instrument to be recognized by the DSM is the Global Assessment of Relational Functioning. As a result of the taskforce work headed by Lyman Wynne, MD, the GARF is included in the DSM-IV Appendix for further study. Work on the GARF is reported in the following book:


The GARF Assessment Sourcebook is a comprehensive guide to the GARF scale for family assessment. It provides a thorough description of each element of the GARF, a comprehensive review of the GARF in relation to other marriage and family assessment tools, summaries of GARF research, and a comprehensive appendix of reproducible GARF-related forms.

The Sourcebook challenges marriage and family therapists to use, evaluate, and refine the GARF so that it may be included in the main portion of the next revision of the DSM. As accountability for our work becomes more pervasive, the GARF will become an important new tool in family mental health treatment.

The GARF was developed as a clinical rating scale to be completed by therapists/researchers. However, Dr. Yingling developed the enclosed self-report for clients to complete. Each family member completing the brief self-report and the therapist graphing everyone’s results can provide a useful tool for sharing various perspectives on the family’s functioning. The self-report instrument can also serve as a very useful training tool for therapists to get acquainted with the GARF concepts.
GARF Self-Assessment for Families
form developed by Lynelle C. Yingling, PhD

Directions: Think of each of the items below in terms of your family and how well it functions now. In the blank to the left of each item, assign a rating of 1-10, with 10 being the best and 1 being the worst. If you think some important characteristic of family functioning is left out, add that item on the “Other” line under the category it best fits and then rate it. After rating each item, circle the 3 items from the entire list you believe would need to change in order to make this family work well.

A. Problem solving/interactional skills for making this family work well
1 _____ Negotiating family goals, rules, & routines
2 _____ Adapting to stress
3 _____ Communicating
4 _____ Resolving conflict
5 _____ Other:______________________________________________________________________________

B. The way this family is organized and structured
1 _____ Maintaining boundaries so that each individual has some personal "space"
2 _____ Keeping "space" for parents separate from kids
3 _____ Parents working together to lead this family effectively
4 _____ Distributing the power, control, & responsibility appropriately
5 _____ Other:______________________________________________________________________________

C. How members of this family feel about being a part of this family
1 _____ Feeling free to experience a wide range of feelings
2 _____ Showing a high quality of caring, empathy, involvement & attachment/commitment to each other
3 _____ Sharing of values
4 _____ Showing affection, respect, & regard
5 _____ Experiencing a high quality of appropriate sexual functioning
6 _____ Other:______________________________________________________________________________

Family Member: ___wife/mother     ___husband/father       ___daughter       ___son       ___other:____________

Scoring Instructions: Add the points under each of the “A”, “B”, and “C” categories and record in the Total Points blank below. Divide the Total Points by the number of items in that category to calculate the Average Raw Score for that category. Multiply each Average Raw Score by 10 to calculate the GARF score for each of the 3 areas. These scores can then be plotted on the GARF Profile Chart.

A. Problem solving/interactional skills:
   _____ Total Points [sum of ratings under this category]
   _____ Average Raw Score [sum of ratings divided by the number of items scored in the category]
   _____ GARF Score [Average Raw Score multiplied by 10]

B. Organizational structure:
   _____ Total Points [sum of ratings under this category]
   _____ Average Raw Score [sum of ratings divided by the number of items scored in the category]
   _____ GARF Score [Average Raw Score multiplied by 10]

C. Emotional Climate:
   _____ Total Points [sum of ratings under this category]
   _____ Average Raw Score [sum of ratings divided by the number of items scored in the category]
   _____ GARF Score [Average Raw Score multiplied by 10]

date of completion:_________________________  court cause no:_________________________
DIRECTIONS: Locate the functioning level [1-99] in each of the 3 functioning factors [interactional, organizational, and emotional climate]; assign a precise assessment score for each factor and record in the session summary table below. Also plot the 3 factors on the profile chart using the abbreviation of I, O, or E for each session on the profile chart; the three factor initials will be lined up on the profile chart above the session number in the summary table below. Compile an overall functioning score for each session by averaging the scores in the 3 areas and recording the score in the summary table below. The three factors are defined as follows:

**INTERACTIONAL [I]** = skills in negotiating goals, rules, & routines; adaptability to stress; communication skills; ability to resolve conflict.

**ORGANIZATIONAL [O]** = maintenance of interpersonal roles & subsystem boundaries; hierarchial functioning, coalitions, & distribution of power, control, & responsibility.

**EMOTIONAL CLIMATE [E]** = tone & range of feelings; quality of caring, empathy, involvement, & attachment/commitment; sharing of values; mutual affective responsiveness, respect & regard; quality of sexual functioning.

---

**PROFILE CHART:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Impossible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Somewhat unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Predominantly unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Rarely satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Chaotic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chaotic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Inadequate information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**ASSIGNMENT OF SCORES SUMMARY TABLE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATER:</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Outside Assessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTERACTIONAL:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATIONAL:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMOTIONAL CLIMATE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOBAL:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DATE: ________________

CLIENTS PRESENT: ______________________________________________________

case file number/name:_____________________________________________ Outside Assessor:______________________________________________