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**INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING**

Psychological tests are widely used to help individuals better understand themselves, to aid the therapy process, and to assist with decisions about school and job placement. Testing can help you find out more about your personality (including the ways you typically behave, cope with situations, and feel about different things), your skills or ability to do different tasks, or your potential and achievement in both school and work settings. Testing is sometimes requested by a therapist when he or she feels that more in-depth information is needed to facilitate therapy.

**ABILITY AND ACHIEVEMENT** tests can help identify mental strengths and limitations, which is useful in identifying areas of job or school success or needs for remedial services. Tasks include both academic and non-academic questions as well as problem-solving of various kinds. Your skill on these tasks is then compared to others who have taken these tests or to your own previous performance. Most people find that some tasks are easier than others. To accurately assess what you can and cannot do, testing continues until you make mistakes. Even the brightest person, then, will find that they cannot answer all questions.

**PERSONALITY** tests take various forms and are selected based on the questions we are attempting to answer. Some tests ask you to indicate how words or statements about thoughts feelings or actions apply to you. Other tests include drawing, looking at pictures, or telling stories. Your pattern of responses is important, and no single response is taken out of context. Only well established and widely accepted tests are used.

You should come to the test session well rested and having eaten a regularly meal. If testing overlaps with a meal or snack time, feel free to bring a snack to the test session. If is not possible to study for these tests. In fact, many of the tests do not have simple “right” and “wrong” answers. Most individuals find the testing enjoyable. If you feel anxious, ill, or have any unusual discomfort on the day of testing, however, you should let me know.

After you have completed the testing, I will review the test results and within a week or two, I will share this information with you. A separate meeting should be set up to discuss the findings and recommendations. It is customary for the psychologist rather than the referring therapist to review the test results with you because the psychologist can best answer any specific questions you may have. If you would like the results of your testing to be shared with another person (for example, your therapist, a school, or a court), you will be asked to sign an Authorization to Release Information. When a school is to receive test results, a separate report can be prepared omitting personal information not needed to bake school-based decisions.

The fee for testing varies depending upon the extent of the testing. This fee includes the time to discuss background information, administer the tests, score and analyze the results, review other documents (such as background information forms, behavior checklists, or prior records) and write the test report or reports. Payment in full is requested before the test feedback session.

**INSURANCE COVERAGE** for testing is variable from carrier to carrier, and you should check with your insurance carrier in advance of testing to determine your coverage. In general, testing that is academic in focus is not covered while testing that is for the purpose of psychiatric of an emotional or behavioral condition may be covered. The conditions for testing coverage may be different from the conditions for mental health coverage under your insurance plan. If insurance coverage is important in your financial planning, please contact your insurance carrier to determine any limitations and discuss them with me.

This guide to psychological testing is intended to answer some of the most common questions that are asked. Feel free to raise with me any other questions you may have about testing.