Five-Minute Case Summary

Directions: For the client you present on, write a 1-page summary that answers each of question below. Provide a copy for each class-mate. Identify appropriate DVD segment(s): Have an idea of the time length necessary for you to receive help on your case.

1. Introduction: Do not use client’s name. Do provide the Gender, age range (e.g., in 20s;

30s – 40s), the session number (e.g., 1, 2, 3, etc.), and when the next appointment is (e.g., next week).

2. Presenting Problem: What did the client say that their main problem was? (If you are working on a different problem now, what is it?).

3. Current Environment: Summarize the client’s current circumstances: Where do they live? Who do they live with? Who, if anyone, are they close to? Where do they spend their time (job, family)?

4. Supports/Obstacles: What does the client have going for them that could help them resolve their problem? What seems to be working against them? (These can be both internal and/or external.)

5. Clinical Impressions: What is your assessment of the problem (diagnosis)? You may use whatever theoretical system you want. It does not have to be the DSM, but it should relate to your counseling approach (#7) & goals (#6).

6. Counseling Goals: Explicit statement of the counseling goal(s) agreed upon by client and yourself.

7. Counseling Approach: Statement of the approach(s) being used to accomplish goals.

8. Process Impressions: If you turned the sound down on the DVD, summarize how you see the client behaving.

9. Case Discussion Questions: Questions you would like to have discussed.

10. DVD Segment(s) to be viewed:

Five-Minute Case Summary (example)

1. Introduction: The client is a White, Female in her 30s. We’ve had 3 sessions; the 4th is scheduled for next week.

2. Presenting Problem: “Communication problems.” Her parents nag her – either about getting a job or “finding a *man*.” She wants to go back to school but has no income. Her Dad does not get a degree because at the MCC she made only a 1.8 GPA.

3. Current Environment: She moved in with her parents 8 months ago after losing her job as a checker at Sears. She has a couple friends she has known since high school, but they are busy with families now. Mostly, she spends time at home.

4. Supports/Obstacles: Her parents can support her, but conversations frequently end up with them yelling at each other. She usually copes by shutting herself in her room. She is artistic and likes to keep a journal. She has her own car.

5. Clinical Impressions: Using Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the client struggles with Basic Physical Needs (Food, Shelter) and Love/Belongingness Needs. She depends on her parents for her both sets of Needs, but seems highly dissatisfied.

6. Counseling Goals: Reduce arguments with parents. Identify strengths for becoming more independent. (I think she should work on meeting people but don’t know how to bring it up.)

7. Counseling Approach: I am using CBT & SFT. Because she likes journaling, I am having her journal about each argument she successfully avoids versus those she gets trapped in. I’m helping her identify what coping strategies have worked for her.

8. Process Impressions: She starts sessions with her arms folded, looks at the floor, and is quiet. But after I ask her about her journal, she talks a blue-streak and I have trouble getting words in.

9. Case Discussion Questions: (1) How do I interject my thoughts without shutting her back down (she’s so quiet initially). (2) How do I get her to understand her need to meet people?

10. DVD Segment(s) to be viewed: In the section I will play, she is talking about not having anything to do and feeling bored. It is also shows my attempt to get into the conversation.