

## **Open Your Class With This Tomorrow-** The Great Pretender: The Undercover Mission That Changed Our Understanding of Madness

### **Determining Who is Ill**

**Directions:** Read each of the following case studies and evaluate each to determine if the individual could be diagnosed with mental illness. Use the following criteria to evaluate each case study. If there is not enough information to evaluate one or more criteria, indicate non-applicable (n/a).

**Deviance:** Extreme, different, or unusual behavior

**Distress:** Upsetting or unsettling to the individual

**Dysfunction:** the disorder interrupts daily life events (e.g., work, school, relationships)

**Dangerous:** Potential to harm others or themselves.

Once you have evaluated each category, use this information to determine if the person is experiencing a mental illness. If the answer is yes, try to identify the particular disorder.

### **Case Studies**

1. Thomas counts everything in sets of four. He does this while brushing his teeth, doing homework, eating cereal, or watching television. Thomas counts both out loud and internally, depending on the situation. He wants to stop, but the behaviors are so ingrained that he does not know how to stop. He is currently failing out of school because he devotes so much of his time to counting.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**

2. George works on the thirty-third floor of a high-rise building for an accounting firm. He does not like going up into high places and often holds his breath on the elevator ride to his office. His cubicle is located in the center of the office, which benefits him because he does not have to look out the windows at work. His work is accurate, and once he is at his desk, he feels comfortable.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**

3. Aki loves anime cartoons, figures, and cards and is actively engaged in the online anime community. She often spends hours each day engaged in some type of anime activity. Most of her friends are involved in anime, and she often talks of this topic at lunch and during her free periods at school.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**

4. Shana sometimes hears voices in her head that narrate her life. She cannot determine when they will be present or when they will stop. She cannot distinguish these voices from her internal thought processes or sometimes even external conversations. Sometimes the voices are aggressive and threatening, which Shana finds frightening.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**

5. Mary Lou has eight dogs, three cats, six gerbils, and a snake. She loves her animals and spends a good deal of her time caring for them and a good deal of her money for their care and maintenance. Her animals bring her great joy, and she loves caring for and spending time with them.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**

6. Ellen who lives in Chicago knows that the weather can be variable and dresses 'interestingly' for this purpose. She often wears a rain hat, snow boots, multiple pairs of pants, a shirt, vest, a few sweaters, jacket, scarf, and mittens. She reasons that she is "dressing in layers." Because of the large amount of clothing she wears during a single day, she is often mismatched, and some people believe that she is homeless. People see Ellen as strange, but she feels comfortable and enjoys her eclectic look.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**

7. Henry often goes to the doctor complaining of aches and pains. Even when reassured that nothing is wrong, he seeks out a second or third opinion. He stays home from work often and avoids people because he thinks he may infect them with his illness.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**

8. Lindsey often moves from one intense relationship to another. She is incredibly close to an individual until a "blow up," at which point many relationships end. She also manipulates others and makes threats to keep people loyal.

**Deviance:**

**Distress:**

**Dysfunction:**