

Situation for trainee/student

You are working in a GP practice. Today Mrs Scott, 55 years old, is coming to see you. She has rarely been in your practice as she is very healthy.

Please take the history and try to develop a plan.

You'll have 8 minutes time for the consultation! Good luck!

Rolescript for actor**Actual history**

You are Mrs Scott, 55 years old. You have lost 7 kg within the last 3 weeks and your neighbour is worried about you. She has been pushing you to see your doctor. That is the reason why you are coming to see your doctor today. As you are a healthy person you very rarely see your doctor, you don't have a close contact. If the doctor asks you for the reason of the consultation you'll say: 'My neighbour has told me to see you. She thinks I look awful. I have lost some weight.'

- You have lost 7 kg in 3 weeks. You have lost your appetite. You have the feeling you can't swallow properly, but this is only because you just don't feel like eating at all. You have to push yourself to eating something, but after some spoons of soup or some rice and cooked vegetable you are satisfied. You have no aversion against meat or other food.
- Apart from this you cannot sleep well. You'll wake up at 4 o'clock in the morning, and you muse (?). You'll sometimes fall asleep again.
- You also often have a 'hot ring' around your chest and head. But this only occurs at night, not during the day when you are up.
- In the morning, when you'll wake up you have the feeling that you can't get out of bed. You have no energy.
- You feel very 'empty' inside. You have lost your spirits.
- You have no temperature, you have no night-sweating, you have no lymphatic swellings, no cough or anything else.
- Your vegetative functions are fine (urination, stool, breathing etc.)

- You are suffering from a reactive depression as your husband died 3 weeks ago. If the doctor asks about your psychosocial background and finds out about your husband's death, you'll start to cry.

Former History

- You have no chronic diseases
- Sometimes you have a headache, then you'll take an aspirin.
- From time to time you have backpain, but when you'll get a massage and go swimming it is getting better again.

Life style

- You don't smoke, rarely drink a glass of wine, no drugs, no regular medication
- You normally cook every day, you'll eat lots of vegetable, you take care of your cholesterol. Now you don't cook, you have no appetite and no energy.

Psychological situation and appearance

- You have been through a hard time, this can be seen in your body language, but you won't actively talk about that.
- You are quite withdrawn, passive, but you are looking for being contacted, your gaze is wordlessly looking for help. Your gaze is drifting between the doctor and the window.
- You can wear something black (scarf etc.).

Psychosocial background (only to be presented, if asked)

- Your husband died 3 weeks ago. He was only 64. He was always very healthy, but he had smoked a lot. He woke up one morning with chest pain and the ambulance took him to the hospital. When you arrived 30 min later your husband was already dead. The doctors told you he had a heart attack and died from a myocardial infarction. You were very shocked because it all came so suddenly. You'll cry when you talk about this.
- Your husband had retired from work only two month before he died. He had sold his company and the two of you wanted to do all the things you haven't done in

life. You wanted to go to a long trip to Italy. You wanted to see Paris. And now he is dead.

- You had a very good and close relationship with your husband. You were happy to have each other. You were not looking for other people as you had yourselves. Your husband always came home for lunch and you had quite some work with your house and the garden. So the days were always busy.
- Your husband was very caring and he did everything for you. You never had to worry about finances/ insurances etc. as you husband did this for you.
- In former times, you had been working as a secretary until you got married, this was when you were 22. Your husband then said, he didn't want you to work as he was earning enough money. He had a company and sold cars.
- You stayed at home and looked after the household. You never wanted children as you were so happy with your husband.
- You had been married for 36 years, you have no children. You had a sister-in law who died 6 year ago from breastcancer. You have a niece, but you don't have contact to her. She lives far away in Munich.
- You have contact to two neighbours- but the relationship is not very close. You would not talk to them about personal things.
- You don't have any close friends. There is nobody you can talk to. You are socially isolated. You only realize this now, as before your husband was the person in your life.
- You are open to suggestions (e.g. evening courses, charite-work...) that might come from the student, but you are sceptical if you can manage to get into contact with someone especially while you are in grief.
- You are sceptical about psychotherapy but you wouldn't deny to try it.

Objectives:

In the consultation the student

- should gather information about the physical and psychosocial background of patient
- should react empathically, when patient talks about the sudden death of her husband

- gives patient time to cry and is able to go on with the conversation afterwards
- is able to have a guess what the diagnosis is about and to differentiate between other diagnoses related to weight-loss.
- tries to develop a plan for the procedure

In the feedback

- student is able to reflect on own feelings that occur when grief/depression is presented (transference) in the self-reflection
- realizes the traumatic aspect of a relative's sudden death for this patient
- realizes the importance of social contacts for a patient's life.