Question 1.
What are the key factors for success in counselling?

Ans: Counseling can be a difficult process and there many factors that can contribute towards the success of the engagement or otherwise lead to zero or negative gains.

Client Factors
The client is not a passive object who sits there and is treated in the manner of a traditional doctor-patient situation. A critical question is about what is going on in their heads and they hence need to be an active part of the process. If they have positive expectation and faith in the counseling process and counselor, then their chances of success will increase. Likewise if they have willingly sought out the counselor and are truly seeking resolution then this will help too. On the other hand, being depressed or otherwise negative may act to hinder the treatment, for example where they do not engage well or work to change their thoughts and actions. In such cases, the skill of the counselor becomes more critical.

Counselor Factors
The counselor has a significant effect on the outcomes of the sessions. They first should encourage and support the client in taking a positive viewpoint about the treatment and the outcomes. A counselor who is warm and has an empathetic and positive regard for their clients, with a non-judgemental and accepting approach will be more likely to create the right conditions for success. And of course the counselor should be expert in the methods that they practice, with a continuing concern for improving their ability in a discipline that is both science and art.

Contextual Factors
The environment in which the counseling takes place can have a significant effect. If it takes place where the client feels uncomfortable, for example where a school counselor speaks with a child in a feared classroom, then this may negatively affect the session. Ideally the counseling takes place in a quiet, warm and comfortable place away from any distraction (including distant sounds) where the counselor and client can talk in comfort and safety.

Process Factors
There are many factors within the counseling process that may contribute towards success including:
- Understanding of client and counselor roles
- Bonding between client and counselor
- Open listening
- Unconditional acceptance
- Exploration of problems
- Insights and awareness of issues
- Periods of reflection and inner thought
- Opportunity for catharsis and emotional release
- Learning new models and ways of thinking
- Desensitization of sensitive issues
- Trial and adoption of new ways of thinking and acting
- Feedback on success of trials
- Ongoing practice and improvement

Question 2.
Discuss the methods used for assessment in family therapy.

Ans: Family therapy has come to occupy a central position in the world of mental health, on the premise that healthy families rear and sustain healthy individuals. The family unit’s stability is key – particularly to children and adolescents – to healthy and happy lives outside the home, in relationships external to the family, and to success in adulthood.

Structural Therapy
Structural family therapy assesses power dynamics within the family unit, and analyzes each family member’s assigned “role” within the family unit. Family hierarchies are examined and analyzed, and the amount of power that each individual family member has is examined and, if necessary, redistributed. Structural therapy seeks to empower each family member and to individualize the needs of each one, in addition to establishing respect between all family members.

Milan Therapy
This therapeutic technique focuses on the analysis of belief systems harbored by individual family members or by the collective as a whole, and challenges family rituals and practices particularly as they relate to conflict. By forcing attention to these belief systems –