

Case #1

Emmanuel is a 17-year-old Hispanic male. He has just been adjudicated to the Conn. DCF, and is currently committed to a facility due to repeated activity in theft and drug use – and most recently in auto thefts and dealing/selling drugs. Emmanuel presents himself as a resistant and defiant young man, who is unresponsive to attempts to engage him and who shows little remorse for his crime. He states that he does not have a substance abuse problem, however, he had marijuana in his system at the time of his arrest. Emmanuel has had a long history of systems involvement in his life. He has had repeated out-of-home placements due to his family's dysfunction: mother's substance abuse – and recent relapse from a brief period of recovery which culminated in a heroin overdose in which she almost died, as well as criminal activity by the father. During his earlier (juvenile system) out-of-home- placements, Emmanuel was sexually abused by an older youth in the program, as well as an adult living in the home. He has a history of running away and truancy. Due to his lack of involvement in school, Emmanuel has not completed even the equivalent of his freshman year of high school. He appears to have difficulty reading. These problems appear to seriously impair Emmanuel's ability to trust others and engage them in positive ways. He does not make eye contact, holds himself rigidly while being interviewed, and does not appear to have any interest or commitment to a treatment or rehabilitation process. Emmanuel presents as a serious risk to the community and faces a future of progressively more intensified antisocial behavior.

Case #2

Emmanuel is a 17-year-old male who refers to himself as Latino. He has been adjudicated to the Conn. DCF and is currently committed to a facility due to repeated activity in thefts and illicit drug use, escalating more recently to dealing drugs and auto thefts. Emmanuel presents as a powerful young man who is careful about whom he opens himself up to. Given his history of being betrayed by trusted adults, this appears to be an appropriate self-protective device. When asked to scale what he's like when he's really doing well and what he's like when he's doing badly, he responded that when he's doing well, he would be going back to school (GED class), playing his music (he is apparently very talented with the guitar), and "not getting into it" with his family. He says that there have been times in his life recently (during the last two years) when he felt like things were really going well - but when his dad violated his probation by getting caught with a gun in his possession - it all "went crazy". In reference to the other end of the scale, how things look when he's not doing well, he said, "You're looking at it..."

Emmanuel sees the world as a place that is not safe unless you defend yourself and that can really hurt people – he admits that now people see him as dangerous and this bothers him. He admits that he doesn't necessarily have to be a dangerous person to keep himself safe and that he's willing to explore ways of protecting himself without getting violent. He says he knows that he has been hurt in ways he describes as "really personal" and that he has to deal with it someday but doesn't want to talk about it now. He reports that he has used multiple drugs and alcohol in the past in large amounts, but that during the last year, he has quit doing everything but pot because he doesn't like feeling "out of control". He states that he uses pot to "relax" and "chill out" because he gets really stressed out. He says that he doesn't think that he has a problem.

He reports missing his girlfriend and his own family and being upset that they have not been able to get to family services yet – but also states that they have been able to talk on the phone and have done so regularly. His father says that he feels very afraid for Emmanuel and doesn't want him to go down the road he has. He expresses interest in getting involved with the family program as well as going to family treatment with his wife. Emmanuel says that he is

worried that his younger siblings – ages 9, 11, and 14 won't "do the right thing" if he's not there to guide them – and says that it is important to him that they do well.

He has had multiple visits from a priest who he has become friends with from his neighborhood, and says that this guy is very "cool" and has really "hung in there" with Emmanuel who said he initially wouldn't have anything to do with him, but gradually came around when he saw that this guy was sincere. The priest has offered to assist the mother and father in getting a ride to the family treatment program on a regular basis. Emmanuel said that he is upset about his mother's recent lapse, but that he does love his parents.

He dreams of being a guitar teacher and owning a music store like his older uncle, Jose. This is his mother's brother and is who Emmanuel describes when asked to talk about who his hero is. He states that Jose is his hero because he is a good person who takes care of his wife, kids, and mother.

In regard to his crimes, he says that he knows he shouldn't have been in the place he was when "the last big deal went down," and that he wishes he knew of a different way to make money. He does not at this point appear to express remorse for the harm he caused the other youth, and this needs to continue to be a target for strategic therapeutic work. He had recently broken association with a group of "friends" who wanted to involve him in a series of burglaries in a part of town known for providing housing to the elderly – Emmanuel said that he didn't think that was right...some promising evidence of moral development is present.

He really hates being locked up and said that he is very motivated to figure out something else to do, because "this isn't it..." in terms of what he wants for his future. He said that he gets headaches regularly, and has difficulty seeing which makes him particularly paranoid. He said that he has never visited an optometrist – and is open to the idea of getting his vision checked. Emmanuel appears to be a young man with many challenges. He appears to have the capacity to learn from his experiences, form relationships with caring older adults despite fears of doing so, ready to function safely in the community, Emmanuel possess a lot of attributes of someone who is capable of working towards a better life for himself.

Comparing the Two Perspectives: Determining the Differences

1. You will develop two answers for each Consideration; one based solely on the information in Case #1 and a second based only from the information listed in Case #2.
2. Your answers should not compare or contrast between the two case scenarios.
3. Don't critique or list what the interviewer / assessor should do, but only answer the question based solely from the information presented from each case.
4. Try to get as detailed as possible and be able to justify your answer based on the information presented in the case.

Consideration	Case #1 Answer	Case #2 Answer
Consideration 1. How would this view of Emmanuel influence a treatment / service plan?		
Consideration 2. How would this view of Emmanuel guide the attitudes of professionals working with him?		
Consideration 3. How would this view include his cultural identity?		
Consideration 4. How would this view determine the way the family is involved in treatment?		
Consideration 5. How would this view influence the development of post-release / aftercare plan?		

Source:
 Developed by Laura Burney Nissen, PhD
 Revised by Michael D. Clark, MSW, CSW
 Center for Strength-Based Strategies