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Senior Seminar  
Spring 08  
Garthwait Chapter 12  
Diversity in Client Behavior

1. A couple with six children hopes to have additional children. They live in a small and crowded house and have great difficulty paying their bills and handling expenses related to food, rent, and health care.

I think that they believe they can handle additional children and maybe their parents had a whole bunch of children and so they might have the experience of taking on a challenge of this nature.

2. A man, who needs his job and wants to keep it, did not report to work today. Instead, he drove 200 miles to be with a relative who had phoned him last night and requested his assistance.

His family morals and the way he was brought up might be that family comes before anything else. For instance, if his relative happened to be sick, he probably thinks that he can get another job but if he loses a relative then he could never get that back.

3. A client did not appear for a scheduled appointment and did not submit an application form, even though these two actions are prerequisites for receiving government benefits that the client wants and desperately needs.

The client may not be able to read and the employer did not emphasize how these procedures needed to be accomplished upon arrival.

4. A male client touches the neck and shoulder of a female social worker and tells her that she is sexually attractive.

Maybe he does not realize that he might be offending her or coming within her preferred boundaries. He could possibly be a touchy feely person and not realize the actions behind his behavior.

5. Without first checking with her counselor, a client brings two of her relatives to a scheduled individual counseling session.

She might be working with a male client and doesn't feel comfortable being alone.

6. When a social worker arrives at her client's home for a scheduled and critically important half-hour interview, the client greets the social worker and then invites her to sit at a table, meet two relatives and a friend, and have coffee and cake.

The client might want the social worker to feel comfortable and has the belief that one

should treat others as they would want to be treated themselves.

7. The father and mother of a 16-year old girl who become very angry when their daughter asks if she can go on a date with a 17-year old boy who is a high school classmate. The parents then restrict the daughter from all social activities for three months.

The family might have strict rules due to their beliefs and feel as if their child should date within her own age group.

8. The adults in a family that immigrated to this county three years ago avoid learning the English language, even though this decision erects a serious barrier to their economic advancement.

This family is in tact on keeping their culture background alive.

9. During the first meeting with a social worker, a client asks the worker many personal questions about the worker's parents, children, marriage, religion, and family history.

The client was trying to see if they want to fully open up to you.

10. A client who lives in near poverty and expresses a strong desire to obtain a decent job, refuses to take a well-paying job in another city 100 miles away.

The client might have family around and even though they are in poverty all they have are each other. The client might feel the distance will be a problem.

11. A woman whose husband restricts her movement, and verbally and physically abuses her, returns to live with her husband after seeking shelter for herself and her children in a domestic violence shelter.

Due to her religion she might believe that a wife should stay with her husband to obey her vows for better or worse. She might also feel a sense of loneliness and even though the circumstances are bad she feels that he still loves her.

12. A husband and wife have been caring for the husband's elderly father for six years. The father is very ill and dependent, and requires around the clock care and supervision. A doctor and medical social worker suggest that the couple seek the help of a home attendant or consider placing the father in a nursing home. The couple becomes very angry and flatly refuses to even discuss such options.

The family's culture may consider the elderly as being of higher power and needing full respect. They might feel it is unthinkable to imagine someone else taking care of their father.

13. Parents who recently immigrated to this country refused to authorize recommended corrective surgery for their daughter, a decision that will result in permanent disability.

They might be afraid of changing what God made. They may feel that God created their child and put them here this way so it is not their responsibility to change that.

14. A woman whose 12-year-old daughter was sexually molested and impregnated by the child's uncle refuses to report this matter to authorities and wants to avoid making an issue out of the situation.

She might not want everyone to know her family business and fears people talking about her family.

15. An immigrant family who was robbed of several valuable possessions refuses to report the crime or speak with police.

They might feel that the police would not be on their side. They could also perhaps be illegal immigrants and don't want to get caught.

16. A community organizer hopes to bring people of a particular neighborhood together for a meeting to discuss actions that would improve health and safety in the area. Several members of one ethnic group say they are interested in such a meeting. However, they tell the community organizer that they will attend only if he makes sure that members of another ethnic group do not attend the meeting.

The members of the ethnic group might have cultural differences and don't feel comfortable in the presence of other people that are not like them.

17. An enrolled member of an American Indian tribe is in need of social services, but is reluctant to accept them from an agency that provides these services to individuals and families from many different backgrounds.

The member might believe that the agency is not going to be culturally competent.

18. A family that is eligible for needed social services that is available on proof of citizenship chooses not to avail themselves of these services.

The family might not be here legally and fear what can happen to them if they get these services because of it.

19. An elderly woman who could benefit from mental health services declines them.

She is probably stuck in her ways and believes that one should not change what God made. She feels she can make it on her own without help.