

Ethical Treatment of Patients

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Unit 8 - Case Study of Juan

Juan was introduced to us as a case study in class for an assignment on ethics. Juan's case study was about his initial consultation with a psychologist who was not ethical. Other than the psychologist unethical manners, and his poor treatment of Juan and his parents, we also learn a little about Juan in this study and one can hypothesis on what theory (theories) would benefit Juan the most. The following is a hypothesis on how Juan's case should have been approached by a caring professional psychologist, instead of the unethical disinterested psychologist he came across in the case study.

Juan is a fifteen-year-old male who was born with cystic fibrosis or CF and other congenital disabilities. His parents were seeking therapy to help Juan cope with the mental anguish derived from having to suffer through the various medical difficulties that often arise in people with cystic fibrosis. Juan was also struggling with social problems. Which is also common among other adolescents suffering from CF as is depression, anxiety, feelings of worthlessness, body image problems, and a lowered quality of life in general. [1] Juan did not look like everyone else due to CF not allowing his body to absorb the nutrients it needed to develop properly. These deformations caused him to feel different from his peers, which lead to him to isolate and pull away from previous friendships. Probably feeling like a burden to the peers that were nice to him and willing to help. He might have had difficulty breathing and his breath audibly noticeable since CF affects the lungs and infections are quite frequent. When added to the average teenage worries, and we can begin to understand the obstacles Juan faced. With this understanding, we can develop a treatment plan to help him cope with these factors.

In the first consultation with Juan, his parents would be asked if after this first session if the psychiatrist could begin to work with Juan one on one. Explaining to them that some of

Juan's unrest is developing from his need to feel independent and not rely on his parents so much. That need for independence every adolescent at the age of 15 is going through the transition to adulthood. Juan's parents then accepted or denied allowing Juan to choose his treatment method or methods. Giving him a sense of control over his life and would help build Juan's confidence in making the right decisions for himself. Which plays right into the psychological theory that was thought to treat best Juan's social problems, Reality/Choice Therapy. The theory behind Reality/Choice Therapy is that our behavior is a collection of strategies one develops thru the knowledge gained from past experiences attempting to meet our five core needs; Survival, Power/Achievement, Freedom/Independence, and Love and Belonging. Based on this knowledge of past experiences we manifest our perceptions of the world around us which then directly affects our choices, which are our actions. From those actions come consequences which affect our feelings and physiology. [2]

So how is this going to help Juan some might be asking? Juan will frequently meet with his psychiatrist to discuss how he is feeling, being accepting of his opinions and feelings which helps build trust and rapport between us. Slowly in Juan's sessions, his psychiatrist will start implementing the W.D.E.P. method in which ask him what his

Wants are in life, his priorities, then ask him what he is

Doing to achieve these wants, we then

Evaluate how effective his choice to achieve his wants are working, and lastly, we make a

Plan to achieve our wants more effectively from here on out. [3]

Reality/Choice Therapy would help Juan get outside his comfort zone and to realize that some of the choices he is making in life are isolating and victimizing to himself. Through this

whole process as a therapist, it is essential to be very encouraging and supportive of Juan while allowing him to feel independent and in some control. Juan's therapist should try and keep his focus in the now and not project too far in the future or stay in the past. Reality/Choice therapy is just one possible theory in which Juan could learn how to observe his behavior and future choices. After about six months of applying this to his daily life I will slowly reduce sessions down to just checkups until he is confident in his abilities to make more positive choices and decisions.

References:

- [1] P. D. Phelan and G. Bowes, “Cystic fibrosis. 7. Management of cystic fibrosis in different countries. Cystic fibrosis in Melbourne.,”
 , vol. 46, no. 5, pp. 383-4; discussion 389-90, May 1991.
- [2] P. Robey, T. K. Burdinski, M. Britzman, J. Crowell, and G. S. Cisse, “Systemic Applications of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy: An Interview With Glasser Scholars,”
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- [3] P. Robey, T. K. Burdinski, M. Britzman, J. Crowell, and G. S. Cisse, “Systemic Applications of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy: An Interview With Glasser Scholars,” *Fam. J.*, vol. 19, no. 4, Oct. 2011.