**Flight: Captain Whip Whitaker**

**Introduction**

Captain Whip Whitaker, an African American man who resides in Atlanta, Georgia. He is a retired Navy pilot whom recently worked as a pilot an airline based out of Atlanta, Georgia. Whitaker has struggled with alcohol dependence for a great part of his life, yet he still maintained the appearance of an intelligent pilot. As a result of his addiction, Whitaker and his wife divorced and his fifteen year old son wants not contact with him. He lives alone, with few friends. His closest friend is his drug dealer. Whitaker’s social interactions consist of behaviors that revolve around alcohol, sex, and other drugs. Cocaine was also used as a drug of choice to “sober” himself up when he had too much to drink and little sleep. This is what happened the night before the airline plane he was flying crashed.

The day the plane crashed, Whitaker was under the influence and had been drinking on the flight. The plane crash was caused as a result of equipment malfunction, but because of Whitaker’s substance use, he was put under investigation for the plane crash. In the investigation, Whitaker who claims no one else could have landed the plane as he did confirms he is an alcoholic.

**Diagnosis and Problems List**

**Axis I:**

In the movie *Flight*, Captain Whip Whitaker, whom is played by Denzel Washington, suffers from a substance-related disorder, Alcohol Dependency. According to the DSM-IV, Captain Whitaker is Alcohol Dependent since he meets three or more of the qualifications of the disorder. He meets a total of five criteria for this disorder.

The five are:

- Tolerance, shown by continued use, the same amount of the substance has markedly less effect.
- Withdrawal shown by the substance (or one closely related) is used to avoid or relieve withdrawal symptoms.
- The patient repeatedly tries without success to control or reduce substance use.
- The patient spends much time using the substance, recovering from its effects, or trying to obtain it.
- The patient continues to use substance, despite knowing that it has probably caused ongoing physical or psychological problems.
Axis II:

Captain Whitaker does not meet the criteria for any Personality Disorders or Intellectual disabilities.

Axis III:

Patient’s medical concerns are hangovers and withdrawal symptoms that he experiences because of his alcohol dependency. His medical issues are secondary to what injuries he received from the plane crash. During the crash, the patient experienced lacerations to the eye, strained tendon in knee and left ankle, torn ligaments in left wrist, and deep bruising of the thighs. Since these are issues that have happened in his past he still has pain in his knee, ankle and wrist from the after math of the crash.

Axis IV:

Captain Whitaker has many psychosocial and environmental problems. He has issues with his primary support system. He is divorced and because of his drinking, his son and ex-wife do not want to have any communication with him. His father whom he was close to is dead and his girlfriend/sexual partner passed away in the plane crash. As his addiction continued, the people who care about him began to give up and were run off by Whitaker because of his denial about how bad his alcohol addiction really was. The patient also struggles with problems related to his social environment which correlates to him being divorced and his son and ex-wife not having anything to do with him. As a result he lives on his own and has to keep out of the light because of the ongoing investigation about the plane crash.

The patient struggles with occupational psychosocial problems such as his job, his job and plane license/wings are in danger of being taken away because of the plane crash and his frequent intoxication. This also plays hand in hand with problems related to the legal system such as the trial and investigation that is on him at the moment and he eventually is arrested for the deaths on the aircraft.

Axis V:

Captain Whitaker is a 40 on the GAF scale. A score of 40 indicates some impairment in reality testing or communication or Major impairment in several areas such as work, or school, family relations, judgment, thinking or mood.

The patient shows serious symptoms of alcohol dependence by always being intoxicated. This dependence has affected his social life and family relations because he is divorced and his family does not want to be around him. He has lost most of his support system unless they are the people in his life that enable his addiction. For example his drug dealer and girlfriend who would at the time do the drugs with him until she died. Whitaker’s occupation is on the line because of the plane crash and his alcohol dependence. His thinking and mood change when he is under the influence, at times he would get angry and defensive easily. Even though the patient’s judgment was not affected on the day of the plane crash, his alcohol consumption
became greater and his judgment became impaired. He was not able to understand that he had to stay away from the alcohol and that he was hurting others while he was intoxicated.

Problems list

Social:
The client’s problems in social are that his drinking and drug use revolve around it. He is at odds with his ex-wife and son because of his addiction. His closest friend is his drug dealer. The client has shown very little positive social interactions.

Physical:
The client has some side effects/pain from the plane crash he experienced in the past.

Cognitive:
The client has full cognitive capability when he is not under extreme intoxication.

Emotional:
The client has many factors that contribute to his emotional state. He is divorced; his son does not want to see him; he was involved in a plane crash; his girlfriend passed away in the plane crash; he was put under investigation for the plane crash; and his addiction seems to push everyone he cares for away from him.

Spiritual:
The client sees flying an airplane as a spiritual aspect is his life. He feels that he belongs in the air just as his father did but he is not able to fly anymore because of the investigation and the plane crash. He does not have any religion he follows.

Leisure:
The client enjoys flying airplanes but he is not allowed to anymore because his wings were taken away. His leisure consists of inappropriate behavior such as drinking, smoking, doing drugs, and sex.

Treatment Recommendation

The client is recommended for acute inpatient care in jail setting with possible detox for alcohol when first admitted. Since the client is found guilty for the plane crash he is sentenced to jail. The client can receive these services from a jail facility, an inpatient facility, or rehabilitation for alcohol and drugs.

In this client’s circumstance he will be in jail for five or more years. His care will be for as long as he is in jail, but his detox will only take a short amount of time. In a jail setting this client can expect treatment services every day to every other day. The client should expect detox if needed along with physician visits, therapy sessions and consisting of a Psychiatrist, TR, and physicians. In a TR setting the client should expect leisure education, integration to community, group therapy, group activities, and one-on-one sessions.
TR Treatment Plan

Assessment

To assess the client the Leisure Interest Measure will be used. The Leisure Interest Measure is an easy assessment that the client can take so the therapist can understand what the client likes and does not like. For this client, a main issue is to find healthy leisure activities that do not involve drugs and alcohol. The Leisure Interest Measure will help teach the client in a Leisure Education. Since the client is in a jail setting it is important to find the client things that he can do and enjoy in jail and when he gets back in to the community. The client will be able to take this assessment on his own within a matter of 10 to 20 minutes by answering 29 questions. After the assessment is finished, the therapist can walk the client through adding up his score and then they can discuss the results after. The client’s leisure functioning is high. He is capable for doing many activities he just does not have the knowledge of leisure.

Functional Summary

The client’s strengths have a great amount to do with his intellect and skill level that he has to fly a plane. He is a very talented individual who could land a plane during a crash the safest way possible. His skill saved many lives. The client is a bright and intelligent person that enjoys having stimulating activity. The client also shows the capacity to want to be in his family’s life but he lacks the self-control to stop drinking. The client is a very personable and nice person whom gets along with many people. Along with his strengths, the client has weaknesses. The client is capable of hiding and lying about his alcohol addiction and has been doing it for many years. The client struggles with keeping himself on track when decides on his own to quit drinking. The client struggles with family and social relations that are healthy.

Therapeutic Goals/Objectives

The client can benefit from treatment in many ways. He can learn new and healthy coping skills that help him to stay away from drugs and alcohol. The client can learn new leisure activities that they can do for enjoyment. The goal for the client is to change his thought process about a sober life. Finding things he can do and enjoy without a therapist there to help is vital. Helping the client understand there is more in life than drinking, there are other activities that can bring pleasure and are healthier.

Goals 1: Participate in a leisure education program.

Objectives:

- During the leisure education program the client will find three leisure activities they would like to participate in and do the activities.
The client will participate in two new group leisure activities in a span of two months.

Goal 2: Learn new coping skills
Objectives:
- The client will participate in a group therapy session on finding new and better coping skills twice a week.
- The client will journal their feelings and what they learned from each session after each session.
- The client will learn new relaxation techniques and pick two they will use in the future when they need to relax.

Interventions

- Yoga and Meditation
  Yoga and meditation can be used to increase relaxation and can be used as a coping skill when the client is in need to relax. This intervention will work on both goal one and two by finding ways to cope and finding new things the individual likes to do.

  There is evidence based practice in yoga and meditation while working with individuals with PTSD. It seems that this will fit the client as well and will help him work toward his goals. The article found is called *The Use of Yoga, Meditation, Mantram and Mindfulness to Enhance Coping in Veterans with PTSD* explains the advantages to using yoga and meditation. “There are several unique advantages to using yoga, meditation, mantram and mindfulness in recreation therapy (RT) practice. One advantage is that these interventions are generally inexpensive, which makes them an economical option for a variety of programs. The degree of difficulty for these activities is low, and practitioners can use resources such as the Internet and DVD’s to learn basic techniques. (Fiore & Tosti, 2003-2013 )”

- Team sports or exercise therapy
  Team sports can be used to help this client because physical exercise and social interaction are said to help an individual whom is struggling with mental illness or alcohol addiction. This intervention will help with goal one.

  The evidence based practice in exercise therapy states that “Several studies have reported a positive association between participation in exercise and enhanced mental health in people who misuse alcohol, with some studies reporting significant changes after relatively short exercise programs. (Daley, 2014)”
• Group Coping Skills sessions

Coping skills sessions can help individuals find other healthy ways to cope with stressful situations other than using drugs and alcohol. This can help the client to be prepared when they leave the facility so they do not fall back into addiction. This also gives time for the clients to get social interaction and learn from each other. The therapist will have activities and discussions for each meeting that they can discuss.

Evaluation

To evaluate the effectiveness of programming, interventions and client programs, I would look at the client’s goals and the notes that I and other therapists have made over the time that the client was working on the goals. I would give each client that is a part of the interventions a survey to fill out about the each intervention they were a part of. I would look to see if there was any improvement or work being done toward the goals. I would ask the client as well to see if they feel they have learned anything and if they have improved. I could also do this by giving them a survey and asking them to fill it out so we can better his service. I would also discuss the progress with other professionals I work with to see if they have any suggestions or comments.

I would plan to review goals after each week to make sure the goals are still on the right track for the client. If there is a goal the client has not been able to achieve at all then it would be time to evaluate it and make a new goal or change a part of the goal. If the goal or objective seems to be too hard for the client or they are not ready for the goal or objective it would be acceptable to discontinue it. If the therapist feels that it will suit the client to change the goal or objective because the goal is too easy for them or too difficult then is acceptable. If the client has met the goal then it would also be appropriate to make a new goal.

Recommendations/Discharge/Transition

In the case of discharge or transition the therapist should continue to work on community integration so the client is ready to leave. This is also important since the client is in jail. The community integration can be more difficult than since he was a part in a crime. Helping the client to find healthy activities to do in the community and after he leaves is a main goal to therapy. This includes therapy groups, team sports, community based outings, and a job. The therapist can help the client take steps in finding a job for when they leave the jail. This can be a part of the goals when the time for discharge or release is near. The client should continue to use the coping skills they learned in the therapy sessions to help them when a difficult situation arises.
References
