Case Study in Therapeutic Recreation for Mental Health

The Great Gatsby – J. Gatsby

Introduction and Global Assessment/Social History:

I diagnosed J. Gatsby from the movie The Great Gatsby. Using the Global Assessment of Functioning Scale I gave J. Gatsby a score of 60. This number on the GAF scale explains the client as having moderate symptoms which include but are not limited to flat affects, circumstantial speech and occasional panic attacks. I diagnosed him as having moderate symptoms because J. Gatsby can indeed control himself most of the time, but when he does have an episode it is very severe and extreme. I see the flat affects in J. Gatsby because he has little to no emotion before Daisy (Tom Buchanan’s wife) comes back into the picture towards the end of the movie. I did not notice much circumstantial speech in J. Gatsby. In fact, he was indeed a smooth talker and his conversation flowed quite nicely. I would not necessarily say J. Gatsby had panic attacks, but he did indeed have episodes of attacks where his attitude would change instantly making it seem as if he has a small dose of Bipolar Disorder.

Diagnosis and Problem List:

Axis I – Principle Disorder

a. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
   a. Flashbacks and fears of being alone
b. Substance Related Disorder
   a. Enjoys drinking and relies on it because he is lonely
c. Mood Disorder (Bipolar)
   a. Mood changes within seconds

Axis II – Personality Disorder

a. Dependent Personality Disorder
   a. J. Gatsby relies solely on Nick to invite Daisy to tea. He also relies on friends around him to come to his parties so that he doesn’t have to ever be alone.

Axis III – Medical Diagnosis

a. J. Gatsby did not have any physical clinical diagnoses in the movie.

Axis IV – Psychosocial Stressors

a. Came from a poor family who lived in poverty for many years
b. Lives alone
c. Served in World War I and suffers from PTSD
Axis V – Global Assessment of Functioning

a. On the Global Assessment of Functioning Scale I gave J. Gatsby a score of sixty. Refer back to explanation in the introductory paragraph.

Problem List:

a. Physical: J. Gatsby does not seem to have any physical issues in the movie.
b. Cognitive: J. Gatsby suffers from PTSD.
c. Social: J. Gatsby needs people to be around or at least at his home all the time. He never wants to be alone. Although he has smooth conversation skills, it is inferred that he has a hard time making conversation with people sometimes.
d. Emotional: J. Gatsby has emotional issues but for the most part covers them well, at least towards the beginning of the movie. He has strong emotions of the fact that his family was poor and he grew up in a home that struggled with poverty. He also is heart-broken from the relationship that didn’t last between him and Daisy Buchanan.
e. Spiritual: J. Gatsby does not seem to have any spiritual issues in the movie.
f. Leisure: J. Gatsby has a great amount of negative leisure in the movie. Drinking often is one of them. That is actually the only leisure that I can witness from the movie that J. Gatsby participates in.

Treatment Recommendations:

Appropriate Level of Care: J. Gatsby’s diagnosis is not as serious as most could be. Since he scored only a 60 on the Global Assessment of Functioning Scale, he only has moderate symptoms. Outpatient therapy will work just fine for J. Gatsby.

Type of Facility:

a. Behavioral Health Center/Hospital for Outpatient Therapy

Type of Programming/Resources Needed:

a. Outpatient Rehab Therapy
b. En vivo Therapy
c. Imaginal Therapy
d. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
e. Psychotherapy
f. Alcohol Anonymous Meetings
Length of Stay:

a. Because J. Gatsby’s diagnosis is not too serious and he only has moderate symptoms, he will only need Outpatient Therapy to start off with. He will only need to visit the Behavioral Health Center. Residential stay is not necessary.

TR Services:

a. The patient will need to visit the Behavioral Health Center for three days a week for appropriate therapy.

Assessment

TR Assessments:

a. Functional Assessment of Characteristics for Therapeutic Recreation – Revised or FACTR-R: This assessment will be useful to the client because of various reasons. It is recommended for populations of all groups with developmental levels over ten years of age. Even though J. Gatsby does not seem to have many developmental issues, his lifestyle is in need of a conclusion that determines his needs related to his basic functional skills and behaviors in all areas (physical, cognitive, social and emotional). I highly believe it could determine the reason for his social issues and his fear of being lonely. Since this assessment only takes five minutes to administer and score, the client can complete it on their own with the therapist in the room for moral support and to answer any questions the client may have. I hope to extract an explanation of what TR interventions the client will need based on how low of a score the client receives.

b. Life Satisfaction Scale or LSS: This assessment will be useful to J. Gatsby because it is strongly recommended for clients with moderate to no cognitive impairment. Although Gatsby has cognitive dysfunctions, he is not impaired. This assessment measures the client’s perceived satisfaction in life and leisure and will be scored and summarized in no more than ten minutes. It takes twenty minutes to be administered and will be done by the client because it is meant to be self-administered. I hope to extract types of leisure from this assessment that the client is interested in and will steer him away from substance abuse (leisure functioning) as leisure and will also give him more opportunities to keep his mind off the negativity in his life.

c. Comprehensive Evaluation in RT – psych/behavioral-revised – or CERT psyc: This assessment will be useful to the client because is recommended for youth and ADULT clients with developmental age of AT LEAST ten years of age with a specialization in psychology and rehabilitation. It also can be used in short-term acute care which is what Gatsby seems to need at this point. It is meant to identify, define and evaluate behaviors relevant to a person’s ability to successfully integrate into society, which will help J. Gatsby learn to cope without the continuous company of acquaintances. It measures behavior in three different areas including general, individual and group (in which Gatsby will be observed). It has not
set admission time but only takes five minutes to score. Can be done by self-administering or therapist-administering.

Functional Summary:

Strengths:

a. Smooth, clean conversation  
b. Successful business  
c. Financially Stable  
d. Able to hide diagnoses well

Weaknesses:

a. Afraid of being alone  
b. Still has cognitive distortions  
c. Uses substance abuse to cope  
d. Lashes out with a temper

Therapeutic Goals/Outcomes:

Realistic Achievements:

a. I believe the client can realistically achieve to refrain from drinking every single weekend. J. Gatsby could start by only drinking every other weekend and use that plan continuously. This achievement would be realistic if J. Gatsby would attend the AA meetings every week as recommended.  
b. I believe the client can realistically achieve to refrain from the extreme temper tantrums by fully participating in the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy once every week as recommended by the therapist. His tantrums could become less dangerous and less extreme as the weeks go on. By a month’s time, he should see some progress.  
c. I believe the client can realistically achieve to reduce the amount of flashbacks he has from the war and also his family history. The Psychotherapy provided to him should help with this. The team will start by talking about his issues with him and continue to proceed from there. I believe once he accepts that the poverty and trauma is in the past, he will be able to move on with his life without the negativity of flashbacks and worries of loneliness.

Measureable Objectives:

a. The client will be able to refrain from drinking every weekend and limit it to only every other weekend to begin with.

b. The client will refrain from severe temper tantrums after a month of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.
The client will learn how to cope without needing the company and attention of acquaintances to deal with his fear of being alone.

**Interventions**

**TR Interventions:**

a. **Behavioral Domain Treatment Plans for Extreme Agitation** – J. Gatsby does not have episodes of agitation often, but when he does they are severe. The therapist will speak calmly to the client and remain calm throughout the entire conversation. The therapist will set a firm limit to the client beforehand, to let him know who is in charge. The therapist will allow the client to miss group interventions when becoming extremely agitated and give the client time to cool off. The nursing staff will be advised based on client’s condition.

b. **Behavioral Domain Treatment Plans for Paranoia or Distrust** – The client will participate in a parallel group activity that requires trust-building techniques. The instructor of the activity will use frequent, one on one contact and really listen to the client. The therapist and instructor of activity will make no demands, only statements to the client. Various activities will be offered to the client so he will have freedom of choice and allow him some independence. The client will be guaranteed personal space and the therapist will encourage attendance even when he does not wish to participate. This will help J. Gatsby with his fear of being alone.

c. **Affective Domain Treatment Plans for Flat Affect** – J. Gatsby has moderate symptoms in which include Flat Affect. He has little to no emotion for anything until the middle/end of the movie when seeing Daisy again. The client will eventually rate his depression on a scale of 0-10 with improvement noted when it is done. The client will use humor in conversation and be encouraged to talk about himself, his likes, and good times he has had. This will help J. Gatsby with his little to no emotions about anything because he believes he has nothing to be happy about or look forward to.

d. **Leisure Domain Treatment Plans for Multiple Stressors** – J. Gatsby has many stressors in his life even now that he is a successful businessman. He still replays negative actions of the past that should play no part on his current lifestyle. The client will list significant stressors that are thought of on a daily basis. The client will identify what affect these stressors have on his physical, mental and emotional responses. J. Gatsby will use methods of coping to deal with significant stress and report using stress reduction techniques with positive outcomes. The therapist will teach relaxation or meditation techniques.

e. **Leisure Domain Treatment Plans for Few Social Supports** – It is proven at the end of the movie that the only person who ever truly cared about J. Gatsby was Nick. No one was there when he passed. This says that Gatsby never had many social support systems and he was very aware of this which caused a major part of his diagnoses. The client will initiate interaction with peers 3 times during each group session. The client will talk to the therapist about situations where social support would make his life better. The client will identify 5 ways to increase social support after discharge. Towards the end of the intervention, the
client will discuss ways in which he feels more comfortable in social situations. If this is hard for the client, these interventions will be applied once more. Cognitive therapy techniques will be used to help the client identify distortions about his positive relationships and interactions. The client will list safe places to meet new people who have things in common with him and could lead the way to life-long friendships.


Benefit Based Interventions:

a. Anger management – I feel that this client could use a Benefit Based Intervention such as anger management sessions only to provide a jump start to the process of his cure. If he could allow himself to rid his attitude of all temper tantrums and maybe help if he does indeed have a slight diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder.

Research on Evidence Based Practice:

Evaluation

Evaluating Effectiveness:

a. To evaluate the effectiveness of all TR programs applied to the patient, I would observe the patient before, during and after the treatments and make interpretations that way. I will refer back to the patient’s goals and objectives while observing to be sure he is heading in the right direction. If I see that it is going downhill or not successful towards a specific goal, the goal/objective will be changed immediately to something more realistic.

Reviewing the Client’s Goals:

a. I plan to review the client’s goals each time I make an observation on the client which will be 7 times a week, not necessarily each day, but whenever I feel the client needs more work. Since he will be receiving therapy four times a week it is necessary I observe then but also in between therapy times to be sure he is not going back to old habits after making progress during therapy sessions.

Recommendations/Discharge/Transition:
a. In order for the client to be successful in his intervention after going through treatment, the therapist should keep in touch with the client and drop in uninvited to observe the client in his natural environment.