

Scenario

The Adult Probation Department has referred to your office a client, Sue, for an intake assessment.

Presenting Problem

Sue is a 28-year-old Haitian woman who has been addicted to crack cocaine. She has recently pled guilty to charges of possession, sale of an illicit substance, and of engaging in prostitution.

Social History

Sue is a single mother of four children (ages 2, 4, 5, and 8) and a high school dropout. She has been a victim of domestic violence by the father of her children who later left her and the four children. His whereabouts now are unknown. She believes he has returned to Haiti. She now maintains an ongoing lesbian relationship with her best friend, another prostitute.

She emigrated with her children from Haiti to the U.S. after the major 2010 earthquake in her country. They all moved in with her aunt and uncle in Miami, Florida. After four months, her aunt and uncle asked her to find her own living arrangements due to her financial problems and she moved into a hotel in downtown Miami with her children. At the hotel, Sue's drug dealing neighbor enticed her into selling drugs for extra income. She then began using the drugs she sold, which led her to be in debt to her dealer. Due to her financial problems and drug abuse, she began prostituting to pay the dealer and to support her addiction.

Sue speaks fairly fluent English, but is fluent in Haitian French. She grew up in the city of Port au Prince, Haiti and is the youngest of eight children. One older sister and one older brother died of pneumonia when they were less than five years of age. Her father was an alcoholic and involved in petty crimes, and her mother suffered from an undiagnosed bipolar disorder. Sue was raised Catholic by her maternal grandmother with whom she lived for an extended period of time. She was the only child who studied English and did well in school. Although she initially dropped out of school after grade 10 to help with her family, she returned and obtained a General Educational Development (GED). She was the only one in her family to finish school.

She worked as a teacher's aide in Haiti in her early 20s and has an interest in working with children as a future vocation.

After Sue pled guilty to charges of possession, sale of an illicit substance, and of engaging in prostitution, she was held in county jail for a few days. While in jail and awaiting her preliminary hearing, she attempted suicide one night by stuffing her throat and nose with clothing. Her attempt was noticed by a cellmate who called correctional officers to assist. Sue was then transferred to a local inpatient unit for crisis evaluation and services, including medication. She was referred to a homeless shelter upon her release from jail today. She has no income and her children have been placed in foster care. Sue and her children are also now facing deportation concerns.