

## EXERCISE 3

### Case Problem 1

You are a social worker at a youth drop-in center. Your client, Ben, is a 16-year-old who has come to you stating that he no longer wants to live at home. He can no longer tolerate his parents' rules and regulations, which include the following: he must keep his hair very short, he must attend church services 2 nights during the week as well as for 3 hours on Sunday, and he cannot date or attend dances or go to movies. Ben agrees to meet with you and his parents. The parents seem concerned about their son. They say they want him to come home. They state that their religious beliefs are the foundation of the rules they expect their son to follow, and it would be a violation of their religious beliefs to be less strict with their son. They say that they love their son and because they love him, they want to give him the benefit of a moral upbringing.

#### Questions

1. How does the value of self-determination come into this case?
2. Would your values and beliefs affect your handling of this case? If so, how?
3. If Ben had come to you stating that his parents would not let him stay out after midnight and would not lend him the family car whenever he wanted it, how would you have reacted to his statement that he did not want to live at home?

### Case Problem 2

You work at a neighborhood health center as a social worker. You are starting a group for women who wish to return to the job market. You discuss the group with Mrs. Ramirez, a shy, passive woman who has three children in school. You know that Mrs. Ramirez went to secretarial school and held a good job before her marriage. Mrs. Ramirez says that she can't join the group because her husband would not allow it; he does not want her to get a job. She adds that her husband has been unemployed for 3 months. She wonders how the family will keep up with mortgage payments. As she leaves your office, Mrs. Ramirez asks you what she should do. Should she sneak out to join the group so that she can get a job? Should she go along with her husband's wishes because he feels so terrible about not being able to get a job that any efforts she makes to get a job will just "destroy" him?

#### Questions

1. How might cultural differences affect your understanding of the Ramirez family and your approach to the case?
2. How do your feelings about the roles of men and women affect your reaction to this case situation?
3. What advice, if any, would you give to Mrs. Ramirez?

### Case Problem 3

You work as a social worker in a mental health center and see some clients who are required to get counseling as a condition of parole. You have been working with Henry for some time and feel that he is making real progress. He developed a serious drug problem while in the armed services and has served time in prison for a drug-related robbery. He is now off all hard drugs and alcohol and states that except for "recreational use of marijuana, I'm clean." Henry has started a good job and is taking courses at vocational school to improve his work skills. He confides in you that he has sold some marijuana to his friends to finance his return to school.

#### Questions

1. What are your feelings about this case?
2. Would you tell Henry's parole officer about his marijuana use and sale? Why or why not?
3. How would you respond if he were selling "hard" drugs or selling marijuana to minors?
4. What is the role of "informed consent" in situations such as Henry's?

### Case Problem 4

You work in a public welfare agency as a social worker in the child protective services division. You worked with Mrs. Gugliotta when her son was in serious conflict with his stepfather. The family worked hard to resolve their problems. Subsequently, Mrs. Gugliotta's husband died, and she applied for financial assistance and food stamps. You run into her one day in her neighborhood and are struck by how hard she is working to keep her family going. She tells you that her two oldest sons have moved in with an aunt in another town to attend an excellent vocational school there. Later on you happen to find out from a co-worker that Mrs. G. is still collecting food stamps for her two sons who no longer live at home.

#### Questions

1. What feelings do you have about this case?
2. What, if anything, would you do about Mrs. Gugliotta's failure to report that her two sons had moved out of her home?
3. Discuss how you would have responded if Mrs. G. had been a less cooperative client when she worked with you. Would your actions be different if you no longer worked in the public welfare agency?