

James Moore Case Study

James Moore, a 45 year-old African American male, seeks the help of a social worker at a local mental health agency. James relates that his same sex partner of 15 years left him for a woman one and one-half weeks ago. James is despondent over the breakup of this relationship. His partner even took the pets. James has no other friends or family he feels he can rely on. He reports having bad experiences with other relationships and overall does not trust other people.

Last week James drank 1/2 bottle of vodka and put a gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger. The gun failed to fire and James passed out. He feels an angel intervened to spare his life.

James reports being disabled since the age of 24 due to schizophrenia and alcoholism. He says he used to take medication for his schizophrenia but stopped in 1981 after a religious experience in which he saw God come to him in a blaze of light. Often, James thinks he hears God or angels speaking to him and directing his life. James reads his Bible frequently, but does not attend a church because most religions "don't follow the Bible." He states, "They don't even keep the proper Sabbath." For income, James receives \$479 a month from disability payments. His partner had a regular job and paid the rent, bought the food and provided "extras." James says his last job was 1 1/2 years ago as a double in a well-known movie. He claims he dragged a popular, blonde actress through the streets of a Western town.

James states his rent is only \$170 a month, so he can pay it, although the place is a dump. He plans to apply for food stamps and look into other sources of food in the community, such as the food bank. Of particular concern is the fact that James has lost 50 pounds in the last 5 months. He has been running a low fever and has frequent night sweats. James now has a cough productive of blood-tinged sputum. James states he doesn't want to kill himself because the Bible speaks against suicide. So he has avoided seeking medical care recently in the hopes that he will just die. Plus he has no health insurance.

James comes to see the social worker because he is so despondent over his situation that he is afraid he won't die fast enough and will get drunk and try to blow his brains out again. He wants to die, but he just doesn't want to be condemned to Hell for killing himself.

On assessment, James does not display obvious symptoms of schizophrenia. He is intelligent and well spoken. He exhibits good judgment and reasoning. He is, however, a bit eccentric.