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ADDICTIONS THEORY & COUNSELING VIEWING GUIDELINES MOVIE:

CLEAN AND SOBER

YOU

With which character in the movie do you most identify? Explain.

I would say that I most identified with the character of Martin. I have always been the friend of people dealing with addictive habits/behaviors, trying to be supportive but also knowing that I can only support them for so long before I become an enabler. I would say its a very conflicting and difficult place to be in, always trying to cover for this person or do them favors, but also then being a recipient of a majority of their frustration.

With which character do you least identify? Explain.

Honestly, I felt that I identified with almost all of the characters in some respect, but the character I identified with least was probably Iris. I found it hard to identify with her because she seemed to be much like a “perfect” person from the outside and at first looked like the most productive out of all of the people in the rehab. She kept it all together, attracted a lot of attention, and in her moment of confrontation she ultimately gave up. I feel that I am usually the

opposite: a pretty open book, sometimes not looking as put together as others, and I am more inclined to being vulnerable and showing my imperfections to others.

Which client would you have the most difficult time counseling? Explain.

I am not sure of his name, but I feel that I would have a difficult time counseling someone like the black man in Daryl's initial introduction to the rehab, who broke the tv in anger as he was detoxing. Clients who are larger in size and exhibit that kind of explosive behavior would make me feel less capable and put me on edge; I'm not sure how I would handle that. Those kinds of outbursts in general would be very difficult for me.

THE PROBLEM:

Describe a scene that depicts the theme of escaping from reality.

In the scene where Charlie leaves Lenny one last time and is taking drugs while she's driving communicates to me the theme of escaping reality. Because she couldn't say no to her boyfriend or decide what she wanted to do with Daryl, she was overwhelmed and overcome with the desire to numb her pain.

How did the addiction begin to "control" the user?

All of the addicted people depicted in this film manipulated the drugs to their advantage – to escape their pain. However, once they developed a dependence on the substance, they ran to it in order to distract them from their life issues: the drugs began to manipulate and control them. What is the impact on the addict of living in denial? On others?

Living in denial not only enables your own destructive behaviors, but it also destroys the relationships that you have with the people closest to you; you do not prioritize them, only your habits. Continual engagement in an addiction as a result of denial can also enable others around you who are struggling similarly to continue in their addiction.

How did hiding keep Daryl from engaging in authentic relationships?

Hiding was Daryl's expression of fear. Because he was afraid that his bad decisions would catch up to him, or that people would become aware of his weaknesses/failures. This fear fueled his addiction, and consequently distanced him from healthy relationships.

THE COUNSELOR:

Name three characteristics you observed in the film that are required of an addiction counselor in order to be effective with the cognitive distortions (irrational thought patterns) and rage of an addict.

Honesty, firmness, and compassion.

How does the counselor in the movie depict these characteristics?

In this film, the counselor (Craig), is very firm and straightforward with his clients. He tells them what he does not want to hear, he tells them what he really thinks about them, and confronts them with the raw truth of their actions. He cares about them, and this motivates his actions though they may seem harsh.

How are these important in the healing process for the addict?

As Craig says in the film: an addict hates the word no. They do not practice self control or self-regulation; they are stuck in a pattern of self-satisfaction. The only way to be brought out of this is to be confronted by the truth and held accountable for their actions, which can only be done by hearing some difficult words. Compassion, of course, is also key; an addict's deepest longing most likely stems from the innate desired to be cared for and loved. When the client feels this, their mindset can begin to soften and open up to trust the counselor.

Which of these is a weak area for you? Explain.

I wouldn't say that in general I lack the ability to be firm, however, I would feel very uncomfortable having to tell someone something that makes them uncomfortable if I know they will receive it poorly. I know that this is necessary in being a counselor and is something I must develop confidence in.