

Exploratory Situation 1 (No Where to Go)

To cope with her emotional pain, Gloria would often intentionally cut herself—inflicting physical pain. She had been that way since she was twelve. Now years later, she continued to cut herself when things didn't go her way. Her parents were at their wits end as to what they could do to help her. They had sent her to a counseling service provided as part of the father's employment benefits. This didn't work. They had tried to help her with spiritual guidance but this wasn't successful either. Their family doctor prescribed a medication that seemed promising, but medication had unacceptable side effects. There were other options such as psychiatric counseling, but these weren't covered in the parents' benefits. Now the high school guidance counselor was involved. Gloria was creating a distraction at school and could face suspension.

Issues Related to Responsibility for Mental Health Care

What issues are raised about responsibility for mental health care in this situation?

Various Beliefs about Responsibility for Mental Health Care

What are the various beliefs about responsibility for mental health care that might be relevant to this situation?

How has your understanding of depression/mental health care treatment been impacted by this situation?

What I Believe

Could you describe your own beliefs about responsibility for mental health care as it relates to this situation?

Exploratory Situation 2 (Fun Now – Tragedy Later)

The game of football is facing a threat unlike any sport has ever seen (with the possible exception of boxing). Concussion injuries and the resulting impact of brain trauma have led to highly visible deaths of outstanding players. Advancement in helmet design have led to some degree of success. Rule changes have also been enacted and these have had some impact. But yet concussion injuries continue. Serious questions still remain.

- Can sports concussion injuries ever be reduced to levels that would make them comparable to other work place injuries?
- At what point (if ever) should football (and boxing) be banned as unsafe occupations?
- What moral principles are relevant to a sport that places its participants at such a high level of personal risk?

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Exploratory Situation 3 (Who Pays?)

November 6 was a day that would never be forgotten in the small town of Hudsonville. Three young children were gunned down on a school playground by a classmate. The classmate had experienced serious issues in school, and the school system had warned her parents of its concerns. The school system recommended treatment but treatment services were hard to find in the area around Hudsonville. The state had severely cut support for mental health center. Following the shooting, a community action group was formed to create a regional mental health treatment center. The bond issue to fund the center was defeated. The campaign against the center made effective use of the campaign slogan: "Lightning never strikes twice." While the slogan was very catchy, the underlying reason for the failure of the bond issue was the widespread belief that mental illness was created by family situations and families should bear the responsibility for the treatment costs.

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Exploratory Situation 4 (Who Cares?)

Everyone knew he was there, but no one ever talked to him. He had no name that anyone knew. He travelled with all of his possessions in two large suitcases attached to a dolly. If you looked closely, you would see him in the corners of the atrium of the building that housed the College of Engineering. He would stare into space, never making eye contact. He never bothered anyone. He just sat there.

Where he went at night was a mystery. But he would reappear every day in the morning. And then one cold day he was gone. The previous night, the temperature was below zero. He never came back. His disappearance was noted by people as they travelled through the atrium. But no one ever tried to find out what had happened to him. It wasn't that they didn't care, but they just didn't know what to do.

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Exploratory Situation 5 (Creative Edge)

Robert had always been the creative force behind Xtern Plastics. His ideas were prevalent in nearly every process and product. Robert was also a very passionate man. When he had a new idea, he would nearly work himself sick to see the idea to fruition. Lately Robert's manic behavior seemed to take a turn for the worse. He was constantly on edge. He was prone to ranting at others in the organization over the slightest of things. Eventually the president of Xtern Plastics talked to Robert about his behavior. Robert was ordered to seek counseling, or he would be fired. Robert refused and was terminated. Robert's response was a lawsuit against the company. As the lawsuit progressed through the courts, Xtern sales skyrocketed from the introduction of a revolutionary new technology – the product of Robert's last days at Xtern.

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Exploratory Situation 6 (Preventive Concern)

Gloria Foster had just made the toughest, most painful decision of her life. She had decided to close Foster Fabrics, a business that been her family's for three generations. She was dreading the meeting with her employees. She wanted to make the closure as painless as possible to them. In planning for the closure, she consulted with a consultant who had helped a number of other companies who were forced to close operations. She was aware of the economic hardship she would be creating, but she hadn't thought of the health effects. Depression was common. Depression led to divorces, suicides, drug abuse, and other adverse effects. Gloria was at a loss for what to do.

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