

## **Generalist Application Paper**

Kilah Runnels

Department of Social Work, Southern Adventist University

SOCW-309-A: SW Practice with Individuals

October 12, 2021

### **Hypothetical Scenarios with my Target Population**

My target population that my partner and I chose was clients who have a terminally illness and are needing the support and help from a social worker. Specifically, our example was that of a seventy-year-old male who had stage four cancer. I was given advice to also focus on the socioeconomics of the client, because that will affect the resources that are available.

#### **Scenario one: Jonathon Humphry**

Jonathon is a fifty-five male who was diagnosed with lung cancer. He divorced his wife of twenty years after she could not endure his smoking habits. He has started smoking at the young age of 13 and became addicted. He has three children but is not in close contact with them. He also is now a grandfather and has not yet met his new grandson. He is seeking the help of a social worker to help him come to terms with how life is ending. He is struggling with accepting the fact that he developed the habit and does not have a close connection with his family. He also needs a housekeeper to help with daily chores since his mobility has decreased. He also would like to have a nurse come in and help administer his pain meds.

#### **Scenario Two: Camilla Rose**

Camilla is a 95-year-old woman who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. She is living with her daughter's family. Her daughter is realizing that she needs a little more support for her moms care since she has a full-time job and also has two kids and a husband. Camilla needs 24-hour care by a nurse. She needs a nurse that can do full care-daily baths, feeding, and changing sanitary diapers. She also needs new installations in the home to keep her safe--a walk in shower, carpet, and a bed with railing.

## **GIM Process**

The unique aspect of Generalist model is that it allows social workers to be well-rounded in their skillset, meaning that they can intervene in both of these scenarios (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020, p. 3). I would play multiple roles in these scenarios: a counselor, broker, case manager, and mediator (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020, p. 34).

### **Scenario One**

Jonathon is coming to an end of life at a young age. The first skill I would implement automatically is empathy. Although I do not know what it is like to have a terminal illness, I can identify with the feelings of loss, regret, and fear. I think the systems theory would be utilized in this scenario because the client specifically wants to mend relationships and come to terms with how his relationships ended. I would also use the Ecological Theory to see how systems and relationships interact. Specifically, identifying the energy the client gives or takes in relationships, how the client was able to adapt in his environment throughout his life, and how he is able to cope with struggles throughout life (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, p. 16). I would specifically use an Eco map with this client so that he has a visual representation of the relationships in his life. I also think that it would benefit the client to use a genogram as well so that the client and I can both unpack the generational changes in the client's life (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020, 200). I think it would be Micro, mezzo, and macro skills will be applied in this case because the client is dying from a disease, wants to mend his familial relationships, and also needs the help of organizations to help him function. (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020, 26)

## **Scenario 2**

The first objective I would consider is who the client is in this scenario. Although the client in need is Camilla, she is dependent on her daughter and her family. Due to this, I have multiple clients to consider when making decisions (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020). During the first stage, engagement, it is important that I reflect empathy and communication skills so that the family knows I am there to advocate and be of assistance. Engagement in this scenario would not be effective toward Camilla as much as it would be with her daughter since her daughter knows the specific needs for her mom. I would also assess, meaning that I would, as mentioned above, determine who needs my services and what systems can support those needs (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020, 49). Planning will be a crucial step in this scenario because this client will need resources, but I must first determine what is most important to the client. The sub steps in assessment are working with the client, which means not assuming of what they need. I would help the client, which is her daughter, decide what needs prioritizing. In this scenario, the problem is that she needs assistants, so the need is for at home services. I would also explore with the client what other systems can be implemented in her life to help with her mom's care. For instance, would she need a new primary doctor who will come into the home weekly? Does she need someone to help around the house with chores? Does she need any financial assistance for any of the needs? Lastly, I would need to determine what systems to use, such as macro-organizations that can assist the need (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020).

## **Personal Application**

Through this process of analyzing the GIM model, I realized how this knowledge can be applied in all cases. I tended to resort to methods that involved micro systems. I naturally enjoy studying how relationships influence people, and I think that can be useful in all situations. I also

noticed that I struggled with specificity. I realized how many perspectives and theories are within this model and struggled to find specific ones that would cater to my client.

### **Countertransference**

I think that the scenario I would have to practice self-awareness is the second scenario with Camilla. I chose this specific story because it reminded me of my grandma who also had Alzheimer's. I saw my parents in the daughter in the scenario. I saw the physical progression of Alzheimer's in my grandma, and I empathize with those who are taking care of someone with Alzheimer's. I think I naturally struggle with endings and tend to mourn the end of a relationship in different ways. I would struggle with knowing that my client Jonathon was dying, regardless of the amount of help I could give him. I would also feel immense pressure to ensure that his last wishes of community were granted. I think a way to mitigate these reactions is to one, plan the termination time. The text mentions this is useful for the client to plan for terminations, but I also think this would be important for me because it allows me to remember that these interactions are designed to be temporary. I also think that one way to mitigate countertransference is to also avoid generalizability, which is assuming that one solution is universal. For the Camilla scenario, I would be tempted to apply what I know from what my parents did to help my grandmother to this client (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2020, 329). Just the process of me imagining this scenario caused me to bring up emotions surrounding my grandmother's illness and death. I will have to take a stance of "not knowing" so that I leave room for my clients to make a decision that is best for them.

## References

Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hull, G. H. (2020). *Understanding generalist practice*. Cengage Learning.