14.1: 14.01-0 Spotlight Application

This case study is based on a sample client described in the “Assessment & Treatment of Substance Use Disorders” chapter of the Foundations of Addiction Studies book.

Jessica is a 26-year-old woman who recently received her second driving-under-the-influence (DUI) ticket and has been charged with a misdemeanor crime. She received her first DUI at age 21 and lost her license for one year. During that time, she completed a basic risk education DUI course and paid several thousand dollars in fines and attorney’s fees.

Jessica continues to drink with her friends on weekends, usually having five or six drinks per night. In addition to alcohol, Jessica was recently prescribed Xanax to treat her anxiety disorder. Jessica often takes more than prescribed in the evening and sometimes mixes these pills with her alcohol consumption.

Jessica works from home full-time as a graphic designer. She says that she has little time to socialize during the week, so she looks forward to the weekend when she can see her friends and relax. Now that she has a second DUI, Jessica has lost her license again, although she is not overly concerned because she can continue working from home. She can walk or order a ride wherever she needs to go for groceries and other errands.

The court has ordered Jessica to have an evaluation done and to complete any treatment recommendations.

Reflective Questions:

1. What were your initial feelings when you read this case study?
2. Can you identify any personal biases or assumptions you experienced while reading this scenario?
3. How many DSM-5 criteria is Jessica displaying for a substance use disorder diagnosis?
4. List at least three issues to include in a treatment plan for Jessica.
5. How do Jessica’s legal issues potentially impact her treatment plan?
6. How will you apply your new knowledge about substance use disorders to your nursing practice?