**Colleague Sierra post to week 4 discussion 1**

I have been counseling a new inmate over the last couple of weeks at the Tennessee State Prison, located in Nashville, TN. Today, this particular inmate has confided in me that one of the other inmates has indicated that he is considering suicide. The inmate that I have been counseling does not divulge the additional inmate's name, nor does he want to discuss the issue further.

**Define the problem**

I had an inmate that I will refer to as Dom. Dom and I were in a counseling session today when he informed me that another inmate has indicated that he is considering suicide. After Dom has given me this information, he wished not to discuss the situation any further. Dom showed signs of being uncomfortable while discussing the other inmate. Dom refused to identify the inmate and began to shut down when I questioned about the inmate. It is within my responsibility to gain as much information about the other inmate through Dom as I can to be able to provide an intervention service. I hope to be able to get Dom to understand the moral obligations and responsibilities to provide information. As a counselor and a human being, it is not ethical nor moral to ignore the situation at hand due to a lack of knowledge.

**Explore the alternatives**

An alternative plan that I can start with is to locate surveillance footage of Dom's activity and see who he has spoken with since our last session since he does not socialize with many different individuals being new in the Tennessee State Prison. After the review of the footage, I can review the files that I have on hand from sessions with the inmates' Dom has spoken with and look at the different psychological disorders of each individual. This alternative will allow me to narrow down the inmate selection to see who is battling depression and potential consideration of suicide.

**Consider the consequences**

Many different consequences can be considered when looking at this case file. If I can not convince Dom to release the information, it is going to take longer to gain access to the information. In turn, the inmate can act on his consideration before I can reach him. If I spoke with other inmates about the situation, it would be unethical, and word could spread throughout the prison that someone is suicidal. The inmate could deny any claims. Dom can also be labeled as a snitch if it gets back to the inmate he is talking about in our session. In turn, Dom can be "punished" by other inmates or may not be able to connect with other inmates due to being labeled as a snitch.

**Identify Ethical Considerations**

An ethical consideration that I would have to keep in mind is the confidentiality. It is essential to keep Dom's name out of any question of the other inmates that potentially are at risk for suicide. I must also not ask other inmates as it spreads information of one inmate to other inmates. According to section 4.01 maintaining confidentiality: psychologists have a primary obligation and take reasonable precautions to protect confidential information obtained through or stored in any medium, recognizing that the extent and limits of confidentiality may be regulated by law or established by institutional rules or professional or scientific relationship (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Another ethical consideration that has to be considered is culture. Inside of prison, the culture is different than in society. Culture is human-made, confirmed by others, conventionalized, and passes on to the younger generations and newcomers to learn so the culture will stay alive (Oliveira, 2007). Prison life is different, and the prisoners have other rules among their selves.

**Determine how you would reduce bias in your decision-making process**

To reduce bias in my decision-making process, I have to keep an open mind when approaching the situation. I have to consider the case that Dom will be placed in if he tells me the name of the individual. I also have to take into consideration the culture of the prison. A decision-making process has several advantages over the single use of the code of conduct to help resolve ethical dilemmas (Stockall& Dennis, 2015). A decision-making process will allow for many different views to be looked at and not just the moral dilemma that can be at hand.

**Explain your decision**

I decided to try to establish an agreement with Dom for the information that could potentially harm someone's life. My second decision is based on the fact that I need to find the inmate before they hurt themselves or another inmate. It is an obligation I took on as a counselor in prison. Prison culture is complex. My decision reflects that of the prison culture.

Sierra Robinson

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Oliveira, A. (2007). [Decision-Making theories and models: A discussion of rational and psychological decision-making theories and models: The search for a cultural-ethical decision-making model (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol12_no2_pages_12-17.pdf). Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies, 12(2). Retrieved from [http://ejbo.jyu.fi/ (Links to an external site.)](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/)

Stockall, N., & Dennis, L. R. (2015). Seven Basic Steps to Solving Ethical Dilemmas in Special Education: A Decision-Making Framework. Education and Treatment of Children, 38(3), 329–344. [https://doi-org.proxy-library.ashford.edu/10.1353/etc.2015.0015 (Links to an external site.)](https://doi-org.proxy-library.ashford.edu/10.1353/etc.2015.0015?_ga=2.198315949.326768281.1599076442-1635694893.1585251062)