

An Example Brought Up in Class

John is a mandated client to your outpatient program. Urinalysis is a required part of his treatment. The program rule is “three strikes, you’re out.” He has had two dirty urines since entering the program. You need to discuss the possibility of being terminated from treatment with him.

Scenario One

Counselor: “John, I’m worried about you. Your urine drug screen came back positive for cocaine.”

John: “No way.”

Counselor: “Way! If you get a third, you get kicked out and that will probably mean a violation of probation for you and a return to jail.”

John: “I don’t care what the screen says, I didn’t use.” John crosses his arms, leans back and says “You do what you have to do.”

Counselor: “Well if you get another positive, I’ll have to report it. You need to quit using or you’re going back to jail.”

John: [Silence!]

Or, Scenario Two

Counselor: “John, I just got the results of last week’s urine drug screen. You were positive for cocaine.”

John: “ I don’t see how that can be, I haven’t used.”

Counselor: [Nods, but not pick up the bait.] “Do you remember the rules of the program that we went over when you entered treatment?”

John: “Yeah, but I haven’t used.”

Counselor: “Even though you say you haven’t used, this is the second time you have had a positive result. What will happen to you if you get a third positive?”

John: “I guess I’ll get kicked out.”

Counselor: “Yes, I’m concerned that you could get kicked out. What would be the consequences to you, if you got kicked out?”

John: “I guess I could get violated and sent back to jail.”

Counselor: “What concerns do you have about a violation and return to jail”

John: “I really don’t want to go back to jail. I’m enjoying being back with my family and I finally got a job. Jail sucks.”