

Appendix B

Learning Activity Answers

LEARNING ACTIVITY: IDENTIFYING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS (FROM CHAPTER 4)

Joyce's Story

This information was given to me by Joyce on how the systemic barriers affected her.

Physical Barriers: Joyce encountered inaccessible buildings and unavailable or unreliable public transportation services that affected her ability to leave her abusers and receive needed supports and services. Joyce reported that there were times when she was unable to drive, so getting to court and other places she needed to go was a problem. Reaching a bus stop on snowy days in a wheelchair and limited paratransit hours were barriers.

Economic Barriers: Economic barriers affected Joyce's decision to leave her abuser and her options. We know that people with disabilities, particularly women, are more likely to be unemployed, have lower levels of education, get paid lower wages, and experience poverty than people without disabilities.

Communication Barriers: While Joyce had no difficulty speaking, at times writing was difficult. Joyce had a hard time writing out the complaint to get an Order for Protection. An accommodation was not offered.

Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence Service Barriers: Joyce experienced problems accessing support and services through her local domestic violence shelter due to inaccessibility and/or an inability to meet her personal care needs.

Overprotection (Disability Services Barrier): Joyce acquired her disability as an adult. She did not experience the overprotection many people with disabilities experience as they are growing up.

Failure to recognize abusive situations (Disability Services Barrier): Joyce did not receive any services from disability service provider agencies.

Disbelief when reports are made (Disability Services Barrier): Joyce's abuser was viewed by others as a kind and caring man, which resulted in some people discounting her reports of violence and abuse.

Attributing the claim of abuse to the disability (Disability Services Barrier): This systemic barrier didn't apply.

Criminal Justice System Barriers: Joyce experienced barriers when trying to access the services and protection of the criminal justice system. Joyce reported that the day she arrived at the courthouse for her OFF, the clerk asked her to write out her statement. Due to the MS, Joyce's handwriting can be very bad and difficult to complete, especially under stress. Joyce reported that she felt very intimidated with her struggle to write out her complaint.

Adult Protection Services Barriers : Joyce was not considered a *vulnerable adult* under state law and was not involved with APS.

Dehumanization Myth (Attitudinal Barrier): Because Joyce has a disability that affects her physical abilities, she felt that her abuser and others saw her as "less than a complete" human being.

Myth of Insensitivity to Pain (Attitudinal Barrier): This systemic barrier doesn't apply.

Lesser Quality of Life Myth (Attitudinal Barrier): Joyce's abuser and others believed and treated her as if she had a "lesser quality of life" because of her disability.

Helpless Myth (Attitudinal Barrier): People with disabilities are often treated as helpless. Joyce's abuser thought that she was "helpless" and could not live without him.

Asexual, Sexually Unattractive or Sexually Promiscuous Myths (Attitudinal Barrier): Joyce's abuser told her that she was unattractive. Joyce came to believe her abuser's claims, which contributed to her putting up with the abuse because she believed no one else would be attracted to her.

Lack of Credibility Myth (Attitudinal Barrier): Joyce's credibility was questioned. This is especially a problem when the abuser is someone well-known, respected, or in a position of authority in the community.

LEARNING ACTIVITY: IDENTIFYING PERSONAL BARRIERS (FROM CHAPTER 5)

Joyce's Story

This information was given to me by Joyce on how the personal barriers affected her.

Learned helplessness: After many years of abuse, Joyce learned that no matter what she did she couldn't please her abuser and couldn't prevent his verbal and physical attacks.

Low self-esteem: After years of abuse, Joyce came to believe all of the negative and destructive things her abuser told her, resulting in low self-esteem.

Self-blame: Joyce felt that she was a burden to her husband and assumed some (if not all) of the responsibility for the abuse.

Denial: Joyce was in denial about the abuse, especially early in the relationship. She initially thought that his jealousy and controlling behaviors were acts of love.

Sense of responsibility to others: Joyce chose to stay in the relationship for the sake of her children. The stigma of divorce kept Joyce from leaving sooner. When her children faced the brunt of the abuse, Joyce decided she and her children had to get out.

Fear of retaliation: Joyce knew that leaving her abuser would be very dangerous for her and her children. One night very close to the end of the relationship, Joyce's abuser arrived home after an evening of drinking; her daughters were not home. She was verbally and emotionally assaulted before being pushed to the floor. Her abuser stood over her telling her how clumsy and stupid she was. Joyce knew if she moved she was in even deeper trouble, physically. He went into the bathroom. Joyce managed to get up and out of the house. As she went for her van, her abuser reached it before her and Joyce headed off down the street in the other direction. Fortunately she only had gone a few steps before he returned to the house. Joyce got into her accessible van and drove away. Her abuser came out of the house and began to chase her around town in his truck, which led to him being arrested for drunk driving, but not before a scary chase ensued.

Fear of the unknown: Joyce was concerned about how she would be able to provide for herself and her children. While she had a lot of family support, Joyce was afraid that she would have to make even greater demands on her family because she was unable to take care of herself.

Fear of losing custody of children: Joyce's abuser used threats of getting custody of their children as a way to keep her from leaving.

Lack of knowledge and skills: Joyce acquired her disability as an adult. She had the knowledge and skills to protect herself and to get help, but the other barriers greatly influenced her decision to leave her abuser.

Poverty: Joyce was concerned about being able to financially support herself and her children. Women and children are typically less well off financially after a divorce than are men.

LEARNING ACTIVITY: USING THE SYSTEMS (FROM CHAPTER 6)

Joyce's Story

Crime victim advocate: Joyce benefited from getting a crime victim advocate to help her learn about her rights as a crime victim and to assist her as the case against her abuser was prosecuted in the criminal justice system.

Domestic violence shelter: Joyce received supports from a local domestic violence center to rebuild her life. However, finding accessible services was a barrier.

Sexual assault service provider: Doesn't apply.

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Crime victim compensation program reparation agency: Joyce was eligible for compensation for crime-related expenses, possibly for mental health counseling, medical costs, loss of support, and loss of wages.

Adult Protection Services: Doesn't apply.

Long Term Care Ombudsman: Doesn't apply.

Protection & Advocacy agency: Doesn't apply.

Criminal Justice services: Joyce eventually called the police when her safety and the safety of her children were at risk. Joyce eventually called the police to report the domestic violence. Her abuser was charged with a crime by the prosecutor's office and the case was prosecuted. Joyce obtained an OFP through the courts and knew that she could call the police to report any violation of the OFP.

Civil Justice services: Joyce could have sued her abuser for financial compensation for the abuse.

Henry's Story

Crime victim advocate: Henry would benefit from getting a crime victim advocate to help him learn about his rights as a crime victim and to assist him as the case against his abuser proceeds through the criminal justice system.

Domestic violence shelter: Not the best option because most domestic violence shelters are not well equipped to serve men.

Sexual assault service provider: Doesn't seem to apply.

Crime victim compensation program: Need to know more to determine if Henry is eligible.

Adult Protection Services: If Henry is considered a *vulnerable adult* under state law, APS could get involved to ensure Henry's safety and recommend/provide needed supports and services.

Long Term Care Ombudsman: Does not apply.

Protection & Advocacy agency: Does not apply.

Criminal Justice services: Henry could call the police if his safety were at risk. Henry could call the police to report the domestic violence and possible financial exploitation. The police would work with APS to investigate the abuse. His abuser could be charged with a crime(s) by the prosecutor's office and the case prosecuted. Henry could obtain an OFP through the courts. Henry should call the police to report a violation of the OFP. Henry could testify if the case goes to trial.

Civil Justice services: Henry could sue his abuser for financial compensation for the abuse.

June's Story

Crime victim advocate: June and her parents would benefit from getting a crime victim advocate to help them learn about June's rights as a crime victim and to assist them as the case against June's abuser proceeded through the criminal justice system.

Domestic violence shelter: Does not apply.

Sexual assault service provider: June would benefit from services to help her heal from the trauma of the sexual assault.

Crime victim compensation program: June is most likely eligible for compensation for crime-related expenses to pay for her mental health counseling and any crime-related medical costs.

Adult Protection Services: June is most certainly considered a *vulnerable adult* under state law. Depending upon the role of APS in an institutional setting in June's state, APS might get involved to ensure June's safety and recommend or provide needed supports and services.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman: The LTCO should be called to conduct an investigation into the abuse and the failure of the administration to protect June and other residents at the institution.

Protection & Advocacy agency: The P & A should be called to investigate and attempt to get fixed the poor quality of care at the institution.

Criminal Justice services: The police should have been called to report the sexual assault. The police would work with APS to investigate the sexual assault. Her abuser should be (and was) criminally charged by the prosecutor's office and the case prosecuted. June could obtain a harassment restraining order through the courts. The police should be called to report a violation of the protective order. It is possible that June could testify if the case went to trial. June's parents and sister could also testify at a trial.

Civil Justice services: June's parents could help June sue her abuser and the institution for financial compensation for the abuse on her behalf.

