

Case Study Travis

ASAM Training Case Study

Travis is a thirty-year-old biracial man who is married and has two children. Travis lives in Brattleboro, Vermont and grew up in Springfield, Massachusetts. Travis is in good health, exercises regularly and has a good relationship with his family.

Travis came from a stable home life, did well in school and has a graduate degree in human services. Travis has a good paying job and is well regarded in his community. Travis recalls when he grew up that his parents were nurturing, however they continually reinforced to him that he was biracial and would have to work harder than others because of discrimination. The conversation about discrimination caused Travis to feel anxious but he never spoke to anyone about it. Because of his concerns about being discriminated against Travis worked harder at sports and school than his peers.

This drive to excel and the pressure Travis put on himself caused him to drink and smoke marijuana to cope with the anxiety. This pattern started when Travis entered college and began drinking with his fraternity brothers. Similar to other college students Travis began drinking on weekends usually having three or four beers. As time moved on Travis began to drink more on the weekends, graduating to a twelve pack each Friday and Saturday night. His parents and friends back home were unaware of his drinking because he did well in school and also played intramural sports.

No one in Travis' family has a history of excessive substance use and they would describe themselves as social drinkers. Travis's father is an accountant of European descent and Travis's mother is African American and from Alabama. Although his parents were always caring and loving they usually appeared guarded and often told Travis that what goes on in their home, stays in their home. This indoctrination kept Travis quiet about his drinking and smoking of marijuana even when he thought he might want to seek help with this issue. The family did not indoctrinate Travis with any particular spiritual or religious belief, today Travis is an agnostic.

The outside world would be unaware of Travis's problems with anxiety and substances. Travis's issues came to light when Travis was arrested for a DUI and had a BAC reading of .16. The officers also found a quarter of an ounce of marijuana in the car. Travis did not disclose the extent of his substance use to his family because he was ashamed. He did disclose to the intake coordinator that he was smoking at least some marijuana every day and would normally have a few drinks each day. He did admit to drinking at lunch time often, but he hid that fact by going out alone at lunch and usually having some in his car, so that he wasn't seen drinking in a restaurant at lunch time. Travis had recently had a physical and he does not have any acute or chronic health conditions.

Travis is very concerned about confidentiality and about losing his job. He also is very concerned about how his family will deal with the disappointment and the embarrassment of his being arrested.

