MARIA - A CASE STUDY

To assist in applying the varying theoretical approaches to addiction counseling, the case of Maria, a hypothetical client, is outlined below. After each theoretical orientation is described in this section, Maria is revisited and discussed from the perspective of the specific theory or approach. Readers are encouraged to keep the circumstances of Maria's psychoactive substance use disorder in mind as they read each theory and begin to conceptualize how an individual client maybe treated in many different methods.

Maria has just been admitted into a residential treatment facility to receive addiction treatment for alcohol dependence. She is entering treatment at the urging of her family and friends. The following information outlines what was learned during the evaluation process:

- Maria is a 36-year-old Hispanic female who lives in the suburbs of a major metropolitan city.
- She has been married for 12 years to the same partner and has two children, aged 6 and 10; her husband is described as supportive and "carrying the family right now."
- She reports that her marriage is stable, but they fight a lot about her drinking; she does not feel she is adequately providing for her children and wishes she could be a better mother.
- She reports that she drinks between 12 to 24 beers every day for the past two years; she acknowledges that her drinking is out of control, but she does not believe in her ability to stop drinking; she has never received treatment for substance use disorders before.
- She does not report any medical conditions or illnesses, related to her drinking or otherwise.
- She is a college graduate and has always performed well in school and in her career; prior to being fired 18 months ago, Maria was a successful executive for a major car washing company; she reports that the stress and demands of the position were too great while simultaneously raising two children; she has been unemployed ever since.
- She is an only child whose father worked at a factory and whose mother was a school teacher during her childhood; her mother was dependent on alcohol for over 20 years before she died in a car accident three years ago; there is no reported history of mental illness in her family. Maria reports that her mother was very difficult to please and only showed praise when Maria performed well in school.
- Maria is a high achiever and holds herself to a high standard of performance; she becomes extremely upset when she does not perform as she would like.
- Since losing her job, she feels depressed and worthless and spends most of the day curled up on the couch drinking and watching TV.