

The Case of Robert

Robert is a 56-year-old Caucasian male admitted to the psychiatric hospital on a voluntary basis as he reported he is not “handling things well” and was feeling suicidal with plans of driving his truck into a tree or using a gun. Robert was intoxicated at the time of admission with a BAL of .436, which was 5 times the legal limit. He reported precipitating factors to the hospitalization include loss of residence, marital separation, financial stressors, and loss of occupation. Within 48 hours prior to admission, Robert reported that he moved out of his daughter’s home, and attempted to move in with a friend unsuccessfully. He reported he had been feeling depressed, was using cocaine and marijuana to excess, and had been sleeping a great deal. He reported that he has been drinking all day long from the time he wakes up until he goes to sleep.

Robert reported a long history of outpatient psychiatric treatment in three states and has never been hospitalized for depression but has multiple detox admissions by his report. He reported multiple attempts at sobriety and AA attendance but none have been successful. His diagnosis by self-report is depression but reported a history of depression and alcoholism. He reported he sees a doctor on an outpatient basis for medication to treat depression and anxiety. He reported a history of treatment with medications such as Prozac and Paxil. Robert denied any history of suicide attempts but admits to a history of suicidal ideation. He reported he has been drinking and using drugs then driving recklessly of late with thoughts of how to kill himself. He denies having auditory or visual hallucinations or intent to act on suicidal thinking at present. Robert reported current and history of illicit drug use with cocaine and marijuana. He smokes 2 joints a day and he spends \$100 a day on cocaine. He reported this has historically been intermittent but has been “a regular occurrence” for the past year.

He admitted to recurrent alcohol consumption at admission. He reported that he has been drinking a case of beer and a bottle or two of liquor a day. He reported that this has increased over the past year to “get a good buzz.” He reported has no problems when he stops using the marijuana or cocaine but gets “the shakes, sweats, and vomits” when he stops drinking. He reported he has had two seizures in the past when he quit drinking three years ago. He denied other issues of addiction such as gambling or food. He denied issues of pain or need for pain management. Robert reported medical history positive for cirrhosis of the liver and allergies to sulfa drugs.

Robert was born in 1944 to intact parents who divorces days after his birth. Robert’s birth father was not involved in his life and is now deceased from liver failure secondary to alcoholism. Robert reported his mother remarried within a few years of Robert’s birth and stayed married to his stepfather for 20 years before they divorced. Robert’ mother and stepfather are alive but have no contact with each other. Robert reported his mother, maternal aunt, and maternal grandmother are undiagnosed but “loony.” Robert reported “they are definitely depressed or something” and reports no recent contact with them. Robert has two half-brothers from his mother and stepfather’s union and two half-brothers from his birth father’s second marriage. Robert denied any contact with his father’s sons. He reported that of his mother’s sons his youngest brother died of cancer, and his other brother, George, is “not very social.” He reported George has had problems with drugs, mostly marijuana. Robert reported his childhood was unproblematic and denied any abuse issues during his lifetime. Robert has been married two times and separated from his second wife a year ago. Robert has three daughters, two from his first marriage and one from what he terms “a minor indiscretion.” All are grown.

Robert reported he completed his education through his bachelor's degree and went on to medical school. He reported he graduated as a chiropractor in 1990. Robert denied problems in school. Robert's vocational history is varied beginning with military service as an engineer for nine years. He has worked as an assembler, a manager, and as a seaman and director of operations. Robert reported there are other jobs as well but did not supply details. Robert's spirituality or religious system is as a "spiritualist." Robert believes in a higher power and forces that guide us in all we do. He believes in reincarnation and describes his focus as an "Eastern influence." Robert's legal history is positive for multiple DUIs, loss of medical license, and his house burning down last year.

Robert moved one year ago when his money had burned down mysteriously. He reported his second wife left him around this time as he "could not feed them" because he has lost his medical license for his drinking and malpractice. Robert moved into his daughter's home with his son-in-law and grandson. Within three months, Robert's first wife moved into the home as well. Robert reported that this first wife reminds him "every day how worthless" he is. Robert reported that this tension has become unbearable and he decided to move out two weeks ago. He reported that he had planned to move into the "shed" at a female friend's home. Robert reported that the friend's boyfriend found out and therefore he is homeless. Robert currently has no source of income. He reported he has spent all of his savings, and he cannot find employment in his current state. He reported he worked at Kmart for a while but left after Christmas. He reported he may have \$100 in the bank but he is unsure. Robert reported that he has been denied social security or veteran's benefits due to his student loan status and his history of drinking. Robert denied involvement with vocational rehabilitation services. Robert reported he has made some drinking friends or acquaintances but denied many friendships. He reported he enjoys few things of late but does enjoy sleep as an activity. Current legal issues include the unresolved financial aid default and last DUI. Culturally, Robert has gone from small town to large city. He has gone from an area where he had many sources of extended support to an area with few supports. Also he has gone from being a doctor to being unemployable in his trade.