

CASE STUDY – OUT OF COURTS DISPOSAL (O OCD)

The service user (SU) was referred from Bedfordshire Police after they had been found in possession of a cannabis 'joint' from a stop and search. The service user was given a Community Resolution and was required to complete the Cannabis Awareness course.

The SU engaged from the beginning and the facilitator arranged a time for the initial assessment, this is a risk assessment that the facilitator completes with the service user (SU) over the phone. However, the SU failed to answer the phone call for the initial assessment, so the facilitator followed up with a text asking to re-arrange. The SU responded and was apologetic, the initial assessment was re-booked for the following morning. This was completed with the SU being compliant and willing to share information about themselves.

The SU told the facilitator that the police had initially approached them after reports of drug dealing in the area, the SU denied any involvement in intent to supply but was found in possession of Cannabis, which they stated was for personal use. The SU told the facilitator that they had never been in trouble with the police before and found the experience shocking. The facilitator empathised with the SU about the incident with the police and how they were feeling regarding being given a consequence from the police for the first time.

The SU said that they were smoking cannabis to "regulate thoughts". They explained that they have some previous trauma but did not want to go into it. The SU and facilitator spoke about services which could help, such as MIND and the GP. The SU explained that they had engaged in counselling sessions before and will look further into more support.

When asked about their thinking and behaviour, the SU described themselves as a very disciplined person who likes to be busy and focused. The SU said that they were happy to engage with the cannabis awareness course, and wanted to get it done quickly to ensure compliance was met. The facilitator made the referral for the course and sent the login information to the SU, they received the course completion report a week later.

After completing the cannabis awareness course, the facilitator called the SU who explained that they were shocked to have learnt a lot from the course.

In the initial assessment, it was highlighted that the SU was using cannabis as a coping mechanism to "regulate thoughts". Upon reflection on a section of the course, the SU wrote the following:

"I have learnt that there is alternative methods to relax/unwind. I have learnt who I can turn to if I am struggling with excessive use and I have learnt more about the effects of cannabis."

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This suggests a change in behaviour as the SU has learnt other ways to unwind that do not involve the use of cannabis. The SU also said the following about tolerance to substances:

"I have learnt what a tolerance really is, something I thought I previously understood well. I have learnt how the tolerance build up is unavoidable with prolonged use. I have learnt how to spot dependence/tolerance build-up."

Overall, when the SU was asked what they had learnt from the course, they stated the following:

"I have learnt the legal implications of having/using cannabis which could directly impact and change my life for the worse. I can use this knowledge to further reflect on my use."

It was surprising to the facilitator to see that the SU came out with a NEGATIVE metric for the course outcome, however, the qualitative evidence shows that this isn't necessarily the case. Although the SU had a "negative" outcome on the course, the learning and reflection from the course was positive for the SU. This was reinforced during the exit assessment call, when the SU told the facilitator that, *"The service with Red Snapper has been great and helpful."*

Regarding changes to their behaviour, the SU said the following: *"I am smoking less now, the course has made me really think twice and I've done some reflection and realised I was over doing it."*

The SU said they did not require any more support at this time. The facilitator informed the police of the SU's compliance and discharged the SU with signposting to NHS 111 and the Samaritans should they require any help in the future.