Individual Planning: A Treatment Plan Overview for Adult with Legal Problems
Spend at least 1 hour completing a treatment plan.

Overview:
Legal problems may be civil or criminal in nature. Civil legal problems take many forms (from being served with notice of a lawsuit, to a letter from home) and can involve a wide range of issues, such as lawsuits, divorce and separation, debt collection, taxes, citizenship issues, landlord-tenant problems, estate planning, and literally hundreds of other issues. A common element is that such problems can have a devastating effect on a person's state of mind and readiness if these problems are not adequately addressed.

Facing criminal charges can be a significant stressor for a person. Not all individuals handle this type of stress the same way. As a therapist one needs to be aware that any legal conflicts whether a criminal investigation, disciplinary action for alleged misconduct will, or any legal issue will cause significant stress and trouble. The weight of criminal charges or civil proceedings can have a devastating effect on that person's state of mind, readiness, and ability to perform.

Definitions
Marital Separation:
The physical separation from the members of the immediate family (spouse, children). Marital separation may include, but does not require a court order or formal agreement between the parties.

Identity Theft:
Cases in which a criminal holding himself out as another person, makes fraudulent transactions using that person's identity.

Phishing:
Fraudulent requests (usually by email) for personal information (ssn, dob, account numbers) from criminal individuals posing as legitimate business or persons.

Investigate:
The act of inquiring into the facts and circumstances of alleged criminal conduct. An investigation may be formal or informal and may entail analysis of the crime scene, interview of potential witnesses and interrogation of suspects.

Arrest:
The act of taking a person into custody.

Charge:
The act of making an official and specific accusation.
Indict:
A term used in civilian state and Federal courts. The act of determining that probable cause exists in any given charge. An impartial fact finding body makes the probable cause determination.

Convict:
The act of finding a person guilty of a charged offense at trial.

Confine:
The act of imposing physical restraint upon a person. Confinement may be pretrial and/or post trial.

Risk Factors

Financial problems.
Alcohol misuse.
Immaturity.
Relationship problems.
Stress

Although factors such as financial problems, alcohol abuse, and lack of life experience can invite legal problems, even the most experienced person is likely to face the business end of a legal problem during his or her career. In many cases, the difference between relative success and failure in a matter rests in how well and quickly the individual reacts to the problem.

A majority of the crimes are related to the abuse of alcohol. Alcohol clouds one's judgment. Additionally, financial problems and relationship problems can also lead to commit criminal acts.

BEHAVIORAL DEFINITIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING LEGAL CONFLICTS:

Legal charges pending.
Parole or probation due to legal charges.
Facing legal problems central to the decision to enter treatment.
A long history of numerous incarcerations.
History of chemical dependence resulting in several arrests and current court involvement.
Pending divorce accompanied by legal and emotional turmoil.
Possibility of loss of freedom due to current legal charges.
History of legal charges.
Being sued or facing a court legal fight.
A long history of criminal activity.

LONG TERM GOALS FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING LEGAL CONFLICTS:
Accept and responsibility and respond to the mandates of court.

Show how chemical dependence has contributed to legal problems and help patient accept the need for recovery.

Acknowledge responsibility for decisions and actions that have led to legal problems, and develop higher ethical standards to govern behavior.

Internalize the need to change values, thoughts, feelings and behavior.

Lean to be a responsible citizen in good standing within the community.

Accept uncontrollable actions of the court.

SHOR TERM GOALS FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING LEGAL CONFLICTS:

Explore any behaviors that have led to current involvement with the court system.

Refer to legal counsel and meet to make plans for resolving legal conflicts.

Keep regular contact with court officers to meet all legal sentencing requirements.

Explore the role drug or alcohol abuse has played in legal problems.

Express a desire and commitment to remain abstinent.

Keep sobriety in accordance with rules of probation or parole mandates.

Accept responsibility for the series of decisions and actions that led to illegal activity.

Explore new values and behaviors within the boundaries of the law.

Explore the emotional state of anger, frustration, helplessness, or depression, and how this has contributed to illegal behavior.

Identify and list the causes for the negative emotional state that has contributed to illegal actions.

Identify and list cognitive distortions that reinforce antisocial behavior.

Learn positive self talk that encourages positive behavior.

Agree to attend an anger control group.

Identify and list different manners to meet life needs (such as, social, financial) without resorting to illegal activities.

Agree to attend class to earn new skills to successfully seek employment.

Understand the importance of honesty in building trust in others and esteem for one self.

Develop a plan for restitution for illegal activity.
STRATEGIES OR INTERVENTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING LEGAL CONFLICTS:

Explore the behaviors that contributed to legal conflicts and assess whether it meets a pattern of antisocial behavior.

Encourage meeting with an attorney to discuss plans for resolving legal issues.

Encourage patient to keep appointments with court officers, and monitor for compliance.

Explore any chemical dependence and how it may have contributed to legal conflicts.

Confront any denial of chemical dependence or abuse, review negative consequences of addiction.

Develop a plan for recovery and sobriety to improve the chances for positive judgment and control over behavior.

Monitor and encourage sobriety, using medically approved physiological measures to confirm sobriety.

Help with clarification of values that allow illegal actions.

Confront denial and projection of responsibility to others for his or her own illegal actions.

Set values encouraging the respecting legal boundaries and the consequences of crossing these boundaries.

Explore negative emotional states that contribute to illegal behavior.

Explore roots underlying negative emotions that consciously or unconsciously encourage criminal behavior.

Refer or provide psychotherapy deal with emotional conflicts and antisocial impulses.

Explore antisocial behavior that is linked to current or past emotional conflicts to encourage insights and resolution.

Explore and clarify cognitive belief structures that foster illegal behavior.

Restructure cognitions to those that foster keeping of legal boundaries and respecting the rights of others.

Refer patient to an impulse or anger management group.

Explore different ways he or she can meet social and financial needs without involvement with illegal activity (such as, employment, further education or skill training, spiritual enrichment group, etc.).

Teach the difference between antisocial and pro social behaviors, and develop concrete plans on how to show respect for the law, help others, and work regularly.

Refer patient to an ex offender center for help in obtaining employment.
Help the patient comprehend the importance of honesty to build trust and self respect.

Help patient understand the importance of restitution to self worth and then help in developing a plan to provide restitution.