Social Work Online Team Training (SWOTT) toolkit

An Introduction to Neurodiversity

CASE STUDY: MENTAL HEALTH

James is a 29-year-old man who has recently been referred to a social worker by his GP. James went to his GP to review his current health concerns and during this conversation he shared that he thinks he has ADHD. He has been struggling to maintain employment and manage day-to-day responsibilities, such as paying bills and attending appointments. James has become increasingly isolated, which has impacted his mental health.

James reports feeling overwhelmed by the demands of daily life. He has had conflicts with previous employers over missed deadlines and perceived disorganisation, leading to job losses. He is now at risk of financial instability, and the possibility of losing his home. A social worker arranges a meeting with James at their offices. James does not attend. When reaching out to James again, the social worker arranges a home visit. They attend James' flat, where they observe the house in a state of disrepair. James' presentation is that he almost appears intoxicated, stumbling and knocking into things and sharing scattered thoughts.

QUESTIONS

- What assumptions might someone who has not had any neurodiversity input or training make about James based on his appearance, behaviour or circumstances? With knowledge, what might be observed instead?
- What specific challenges related to ADHD is James experiencing, and how have they impacted his life?
- Could James' challenges and behaviour be connected to past trauma? How can the social worker approach this case with sensitivity and avoid re-traumatisation?
- How can communication with James be improved and made more accessible?
- How might a focus on strengths support James' situation and outlook moving forward?

At the end of the discussion take 5 minutes to complete the critical reflection survey and get a certificate of completion.

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