

Case Example 6666: Grace Drug/Alcohol Treatment Interpretive Report

Grace, a 16-year-old African American, was being evaluated in an alcohol and drug treatment center following a drinking incident and an automobile accident. Her 18-year-old boyfriend was driving the car. The investigating officer found an open liquor bottle and a small amount of marijuana in the car, and arrested both of them at the scene.

Grace lives with her maternal grandmother. Her parents are divorced and her mother lives and works in another state. Grace visits her mother during the summer and at Christmas. For the rest of the year, their only contact is occasional phone calls. Grace's father left the family when she was five months old. Over the course of the last year, she has had increasing difficulties with her grandmother. Three weeks prior to the current incident, Grace did not come home for three days and did not let her grandmother know where she was. When she returned home and her grandmother confronted her about her behavior, Grace left in anger for two more days. Her grandmother reported that Grace is very sullen and argumentative at home.

Increasing difficulties in school over the past year were also reported during the initial session with Grace. She was under disciplinary suspension for fighting with a classmate in the lunchroom just before the drinking incident. Although her academic performance was strong during middle school, her performance in high school has been marginal. She has had a number of unexcused absences, and she is failing many of her classes.

The Minnesota Report was included during Grace's initial evaluation in the alcohol and drug treatment center, revealing considerable psychological distress and acting out problems from all three profiles (i.e., Clinical and Supplementary Scales, Content Scales, and PSY-5 Scales). Problems with anger control, aggressive behaviors, and possible violence are especially prominent in the narrative given the elevations on the Anger Content Scale and the Aggressiveness PSY-5 Scale. Her life at home and in school is full of conflicts. Although placed in an alcohol/drug treatment center, Grace did not acknowledge problems in this area, given her score on ACK, and that she only endorsed one of the nine substance abuse item level indicators (see p. 15 of her Report). However, her score was highly elevated on the Alcohol/Drug Problem Proneness Scale, and the narrative indicates that substance abuse is a strong likelihood.

Grace's Minnesota Report also indicates several internalizing problems found in her somewhat mixed symptom pattern. Interestingly, given the prominence of her acting out problems, and high score on Proneness, suggesting negative peer group influences as part of her issues with alcohol and drugs, she appeared shy, possibly socially withdrawn and anxious. In addition to information in the narrative sections about tension, worries, and sleep, the clinician can use the Harris-Lingoes Subscales and Content Component Scales (pp. 10-11) to refine the interpretation of Grace's MMPI-A. Of note are the indicators of feelings of depression, somatic complaints, alienation and social isolation, in addition to her problems of impulse control, anger, and authority problems.