

**WORKING WITH THE DIFFICULT CLIENT**

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**BANG HEAD HERE**

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**WHY IS YOUR CLIENT DIFFICULT?**

- Mental illness
- Personality Disorder
- Appreciates the seriousness of the case
- Scared or anxious?
- Lying?
- Hasn't had enough contact with attorney or team?

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**MENTAL ILLNESS**

- Client may be paranoid
- Client may feel he isn't understood
- Client may be in denial of charges due to delusions
- Client may be too manic to process information
- Client may have dementia
- Client may be intellectually impaired
- Client may be developmentally disabled
- Client may be depressed and want to die

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**PERSONALITY DISORDER**

- Entitled, thinks he knows more than you
- Deceptive, thinks he can fool others
- Dramatic, may like the attention and jerking the team around
- Bullying, aggressive because that's how he rolls!

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CLIENTS WHO DON'T APPRECIATE  
SERIOUSNESS

- Denial usually indicates psychotic thought process
- In rare instances, it indicates a narcissistic/antisocial personality type that is used to getting his way
- Could have dementia or intellectual disability that prevents him from understanding

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CLIENT IS SCARED OR ANXIOUS

- This is the easiest scenario to fix
- All conversations should decrease anxiety until trust is established
  - Examples of conversations that decrease anxiety
- Frequent visits by different team members will help

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LYING

- Will eventually give in over time
- Usually right before trial ☹
- Confront with evidence
- Will try to fire you
- Will file post conviction
- Keep good notes

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DO...

- Visit often
- Have many different team members see client so client spreads attachment to more than one person
- Get mental health involved for specific pointers
- Try to end all visits by decreasing client's anxiety
- Keep your word
- Be consistent
- Involve family when necessary
- Consult with expert

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DON'T..

- Lie to or mislead client
- Break appointments
- Avoid emotional extremes
- Keep good boundaries
- Expect your client to trust you after one visit
- Involve family without client's permission

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