



The Trauma-Informed Courtroom

Scenario # -- Joe

Joe is a combat vet who did four tours of duty in Afghanistan. As a Green Beret, he had close brushes with death three times including almost being killed by a suicide bomber. He was the sole survivor in an armored truck incident. He was awarded three Purple Hearts as well as other military accolades. Ever since he returned home, he has exhibited all the classic signs of PTSD. It took the VA months to get him into an appropriate program.

He has been participating in your Veterans' Drug Treatment Court for 10 months on a charge of driving while impaired and his progress waxes and wanes. Two weeks ago, he had a positive test for opiates and swore he would never use again. This week not only was he positive for opiates, but he tried to sneak in someone else's urine to be tested. He admits to you he lied.

While the drug use would have its own sanction, the dishonesty is the hot button issue this week. You are furious with Joe and, when he figures out you are going to remand him into custody, he begins to shake all over. Joe starts crying and begging you not to put him in jail.

You call a quick sidebar with the team. What do you want to know? What, if anything, do you want to do?