**Case Study for Chapter 12: Criminal Justice**

Karla is a social worker at a halfway house for transitioning women leaving prison. Most of her clients have been incarcerated for less than two years and have a history of substance issues. While in prison, clients received little, if any, addiction intervention. The halfway house imposes considerable structure on the lives of residents through a detailed behavior system. Clients perform daily duties and have curfews. They are required to attend group meetings designed to support sobriety and provide information about community based resources to maintain sobriety. If clients follow rules and expectations (e.g. attend house meetings, participate in groups, fulfill house duties, clean their rooms, act appropriately, etc.), they are rewarded by being able to leave the halfway house for specified purposes (e.g., to seek employment, see family members, secure housing) during designated blocks of time. When successful, clients use their time constructively at the halfway house and are able to connect with outpatient addiction services, obtained employment, and made arrangements for housing. Most women are marginally employable and will be seeking minimum wage, service-oriented (e.g., fast food, hotel cleaning) jobs.

As a consequence of the clients’ addiction and criminal status, family members, previous employers, and friends have become skeptical and disengaged from many residents. As appropriate, Karla works with clients to rekindle old support systems and build new relationships. She works with parole officers to provide feedback concerning client success. Clients know that a relapse can quickly result in a return to jail. Karla has been an excellent advocate for and partner with local addiction programs. These agencies look for her referral letters and phone calls and value her judgment and input for admission and acceptance for services. Similarly, Karla has identified local service industry employers and advocated for the hiring of her employees. She maintains an active list of properties that have rented to clients from the halfway house.

1. What specific strategies do you think Karla may find effective in rekindling those old support systems, challenging people’s perceptions of the clients with whom she works?

2. Do you think it would be difficult for Karla to work with any particular individuals, perhaps based on the specific crimes they have committed? How can a social worker maintain objectivity and believe in a client’s right to respect and dignity regardless of his/her criminal history?