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**Case Vignette:
Linda**

Assume that you are a counselor in a community mental health clinic, that you have a Gestalt orientation, and that the counselor at the local high school tells you about Linda, a 15-year-old client he has seen several times. He feels that she needs further counseling, but he is limited by a school policy that does not permit personal counseling of any duration. He would like you to see her for at least three months because she is facing some difficult decisions. Here is what you learn about her from the counselor:

Linda comes from a close-knit family, and in general she feels that she can seek her parents out when she has problems. But now she says that she just cannot turn to them in this time of crisis. Even though she and her boyfriend had been engaging in sexual intercourse for a year without using birth-control measures, she was convinced that she would not get pregnant. When she did learn that she was pregnant, she expected that her 16-year-old boyfriend would agree to get married. He did not agree, and he even questioned whether he was the father. She felt deeply hurt and angry about this. On the advice of a girlfriend, she considered an abortion for a time. But she decided against it because she felt she could not deal with the guilt of terminating a life within her. The possibility of putting her child up for adoption was suggested to her. But she felt this to be totally unacceptable because she was sure she could not live knowing that she had created a life and then “abandoned” the child. She considered having her baby and becoming a single parent. Yet when the counselor pointed out all the realities involved in this choice, she could see that this option would not work—unless she told her parents and lived with them, which she was sure she could not do. Now her pregnancy is moving toward the advanced stages, and her panic is mounting.



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