A Knowledge, Skills and Values Practice Framework: integrating theory and practice in social work

The importance of critical thinking, analysis and critical reflection/reflexivity – and locating the relationship at the heart of social work practice

- Abstract theories
  - The application of theories drawn from other disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, anthropology, political science, law, medicine, history, etc.

- Abstract theories/publications analysing past and current developments in social work

- The role and task of social work

- Factual knowledge domain
  - Law
    - Principles of law and knowledge of relevant legislation
  - Social policy
    - Knowledge of relevant social policy e.g. health, housing, welfare benefits
  - Agency policy
    - Knowledge of relevant agency policy, procedures and practice (managerialism?)
  - Problems
    - Knowledge of specific social problems e.g. drug addiction, etc.
  - People
    - Knowledge of specific client groups e.g. older people, children, etc.

- Practice knowledge domain
  - (knowledge gained through direct practice/practice wisdom)
  - Role and task of social work
    - Use-of-self/the relationships we build: self-awareness, intuition, tacit knowledge. Importance of self care
  - Service users’ theoretical, factual, and practice knowledge

- Use: applying knowledge, skills and values in practice
  - 1. skills and interventions
  - 2. practice theories (CBT, client-centred, solution focused)
  - 3. social work methods (groupwork, community work, family work, etc.)
  - 4. social work values

- Creativity: the creative use of knowledge, skills, values creatively in practice
  - Working creatively with complex problems and difficult and unpredictable situations that have new or unique features

Interventions - how we intervene, communicate and relate to others reveals our use of knowledge, skills and values in action. Locating the relationships and use-of-self at the centre of practice helps to ensure that we use our social work skills and interventions in ways that are more sensitive and responsive to the different people we encounter and the range of contexts we work in - therefore enhancing our effectiveness in the areas of assessment, analysis, decision-making and action.

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