

THE THREE STAGE THEORY FRAMEWORK

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GUIDELINES FOR USING THE FRAMEWORK

STAGE ONE

Service User Profile (Kit)

Why 'Kit'? A service user profile is a form of 'identikit' using an abbreviation of identikit we have 'Kit'.

'Kit' is a service user (non gender/race/ethnicity/age/ability specific)

We are introduced to 'Kit' as a 'stick person' in the centre of a sheet of flipchart paper.

The training group or student/practice teacher/social worker is invited to build up a profile of 'Kit'.

- To begin the work with 'Kit' it is essential that we clarify the *referral* and the *context* for the work. For example, clarify the agency context (*Voluntary, Statutory, Residential, Day-care, Social work centre etc*)
- Using 'brainstorm' technique, information about 'Kit' emerges i.e. *Age, gender, race, culture, history, family, friends, likes, dislikes, life events, other significant agency connections etc.*
- We are encouraged to consider the usage of this information ie that it is used with 'Kit' as a means to become acquainted with his or her world. That the S.U.P. ('Kit') can be used as a front sheet to the case file and as an assessment tool for initial, interim and ongoing storage of useful information. (*Building up a picture*)
- There is a need to consider how much information is shared, with whom and when. There may be two profiles, the first shared and built up with 'Kit', the second held by the worker until the 'appropriate' time for sharing.
- That the S.U.P. enables us to consider the next stage for social work practice i.e. The Theory Circle.

STAGE TWO

The Theory Circle

The Theory Circle is introduced as a 'whole' with two distinct halves i.e. a circle divided vertically into two equal halves.

The two halves signify the importance and interdependence of 'theory' to explain what is or may be going on in 'Kit's' world (left half) and to consider appropriate social work intervention with 'Kit'. (right half)

- We are encouraged to consider the range of social work theory drawn from psychological, sociological and other perspectives, ie theoretical perspectives that will help us to understand 'Kit' and the environment (s)he inhabits. (*Attachment, developmental, systems, resilience risk etc*)
- Having drawn from theory to begin to understand 'Kit's' current situation we realize that this body of knowledge will not necessarily enable us to intervene and work with him or her.
- We now need to consider theoretical methods for intervention. These methods will assist with our processes of intervention linking assessment with identified goals or desirable changes. (*Task-centred, life story, crisis, person-centred, psychodynamic, behaviourist, play*)

work)

- The completion of the Theory Circle enables us to consider the Knowledge, Skills and Values component of social work practice.

STAGE THREE

Knowledge, Skills and Values

Social work education and training have since 1990 identified the need for students and practitioners to work within a framework of Knowledge, Skills and Values. The Theory Circle can be clearly linked with this framework with the identification of:

- The left side of the circle identifies **Knowledge** required for practice i.e. *What* a practitioner needs to know to be able to appropriately engage with 'Kit', the knowledge, drawn from theory will be supplemented with legal, policy and procedural, organisational and resources information
- The right side of the Circle identifies **Skills** required for effective intervention i.e. *How* a practitioner uses social work method to intervene with Kit to effect necessary change. For example, communicating, engaging, assessing, planning, advocacy and report writing skills
- The **Values** Stage underpins the practitioner's understanding of the situation and the variety of choices to be considered, this is depicted under the theory circle representing the 'holding up' or 'underpinning' of the theory and practice. Theory, the organisational context and the practitioner's professional identity is acknowledged as not 'value free'. Consideration of **Values** enables us to ask:
Why our organization operates in a particular way?
Why the practitioner chooses a particular theory and theorist to explain 'Kit's' experience? For example *why* Ainsworth and not Daniels on attachment theory?
Why a particular method was considered an appropriate choice to intervene with 'Kit'? For example *why* a person-centred and not a behaviourist approach?
The practitioner/student brings his/her own personal and professional value base of experience to the work with 'Kit'. This stage also facilitates the consideration of difference, diversity and power. We are encouraged to consider that our practice choices are therefore informed and underpinned by **Values and Ethics**.

Pat Collingwood

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