

Worker-Client Relationship

A Rationality, Art and Spirituality Integrated Perspective

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The Genesis of Helping

Anthropology is not complete without referring to theology

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. **(Gen 1:27)**

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In His Image

<u>God is Rational</u>	<u>God is Creative and Artistic</u>	<u>God is Spiritual and Purposive</u>
Created in His image...		
<u>We are rational beings</u>	<u>We are creative and artistic</u>	<u>We long for spiritual connection and meaning</u>

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A Re-interpretation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Need

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Sources of Dissatisfaction

<u>We are rational beings</u>	<u>We are artistic</u>	<u>We are spiritual</u>
We cannot live out our full potential, if our rationality is not nurtured. (The longing for knowledge, problem solving capacity, critical thinking)	Our passion for life will be compromised if our artistic being does not find its expression. (Unable to see beauty, and creativity is restricted)	We will not have true satisfaction if we are not spiritually connected. (Isolation, lack of sense of meaning and purpose)

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An Integrated Perspective

Social Work is a knowledge-guided process

- Nature of knowledge in social work
- The purpose of knowledge in social work

Social Work is an art-facilitated process

- On the concept of beauty
- Creativity
- Struggle

Social Work is a spirituality-empowered process

- The longing for spiritual connection
- In Search for meaning and significance
- Social work as a prophetic profession

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An Integrated Perspective

Knowledge-guided process (1)

Nature of Knowledge

- Current knowledge is limited by ambiguity, immeasurability, and circumstantiality in human affairs
- Social work knowledge system needs to incorporate formal theory, tacit knowledge, practice wisdom, intuition into a flexible and open learning system

An Integrated Perspective

Knowledge-guided process (2)

- Purposes of Social Work Knowledge
 - Reveals **what is** – the distorted reality of poverty, injustice, oppression
 - Points to **what ought to be** – the imagination
 - A value-centered construction of the “ought-to-be”
 - Enables and informs actions for **pursuing the “ought to be”**

An Integrated Perspective

Art-facilitated process

- The use of art forms in social work practice
- Artistic use of knowledge in social work practice
- Social work itself is an art
 - Beauty
 - Struggle
 - Creativity

An Integrated Perspective

Spirituality-Empowered Process

From psycho-social to psycho-social-spiritual in assessment

- Valuing religion and spirituality as aspects of diversity
- Valuing religion and spirituality as strengths and resources
- Social work itself is spiritual

Social work is spiritual

We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience • (Teilhard de Charlin , 1959)

- At the micro level, social work facilitates the pursuit of self-transcendence – a spiritual journey of finding personal meaning and significance.
- At the macro level, social work is a prophetic profession with a spiritual mission for the liberation of human bondage – a community spiritual transformation process
 - He has anointed Me to proclaim the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and new sight to the blind, to set at liberty those having been crushed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).
- Social work has a spiritual mission of realizing the “kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.”

A DISCOVER model capturing the key components in RASI practice (Lin, et al. 2017)

Question:

What would the worker-client relationship look like based on such a RASI perspective?

"It would be hard to exaggerate the importance of the relationship in casework, not only because it is essential to effective casework, but also because it is the practical living out of our basic convictions about the value and dignity of the human person. It is based on the philosophy of life which is both realistic and idealistic, which encompasses matter and spirit, reason and faith, time and eternity." (Biestek, 1957)

"It is not an overstatement to say that right from its inception, the profession of social work and the relationship therein between the workers and the clients has been woven around the centrality of power." (Shahid & Jha, 2014)

"Power is maintained and exercised not always through advanced force and blatant oppression but through a subtle form of domination by consent." (Gramsci, 1971)

Does social work based on a construct of 'expert role' perpetuate an oppressive structure?

"...face to face contacts between human beings begin to take on the appearance of contact between things; terminology and language place a shield between worker and client." (Rojeck et al, 1988, pp.37-38)

"... service users uncritically accept the views of the social worker, both because that is what they believe is expected of them and because of the inherent power imbalance." (Fook, 1993)

The rationality, art and spirituality integrated perspective necessitates a reconstruction of the worker-client relationship for addressing the issue of the professional cultural hegemony described by Gramsci (1971).

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Worker-client relationship

- Mutual appreciative exploration process
 - Appreciate beauty and uncover the oppressive mechanisms that hinder the appreciation of beauty
- Co-creators
 - Struggle together and exercise creativity for the creation of beauty
- Spiritual companions
 - A spiritual journey together in search for meaning and significance

The seven habits

Habit 1	The practice of praise and admiration
Habit 2	The practice of self-reflection
Habit 3	The practice of gratitude
Habit 4	The practice of faithfulness
Habit 5	The practice of self-care
Habit 6	The practice of celebration
Habit 7	The practice of letting go

Praise and Adoration

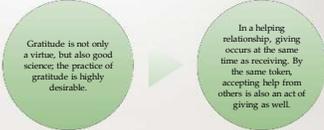
- People are masterpieces in the making. Give them a "thumbs up!"
- Appreciate the fact they have come this far in life, against all odds. Gaze at their beauty and struggles!
- Appreciate their desire to become fully human!
- Look at how far they have come, instead of how far they still have to go.

Self-Reflection



- *Have I listened attentively to the desires of their hearts?*
- *Have I built a relationship based on trust?*
- *Have I done my best to create a safe environment to facilitate creativity and risk-taking?*
- *Have I utilized the best practices available in the helping professions?*
- *Am I humble enough to acknowledge my limitations and be open to learn and to improvise?*

Gratitude

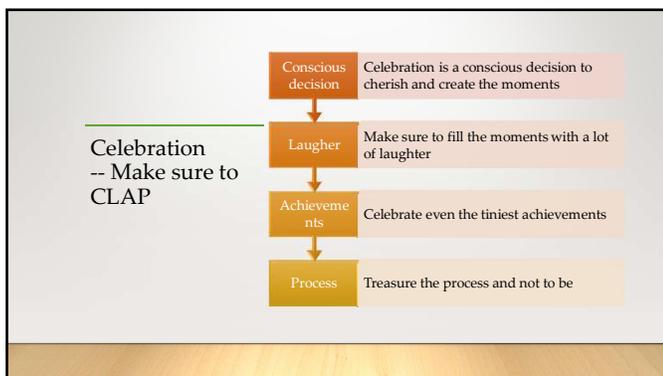


Faithfulness

FAST	To be faithful is hold "FAST" onto the one you are helping
Firmly Fixed	To be firmly fixed to people we try to help. Be spiritual companions and walk together with them.
Available	To be available to them when they are in need, make their needs our first priority.
Servanthood	To have the attitude of servanthood .
Trustworthy	To be trustworthy and reliable, so people can count on you. Knowing that you will do your best for their well-being.

Self-Care

SWEAR	Make a "pinky SWEAR" with yourself—that you are going to take good care of yourself!
Spiritual practice	Engage in regular spiritual practice, such as prayer and meditation.
Work out	Work out regularly, add exercise to life...not just work.
Eat	Eat well.
Air	Take in a lot of flesh air! ~ Breathe deeply ~
Rest	Get enough rest!



- ### Letting Go
- Recognize your own limits.
 - Accept that you are *only human*.
 - While we do our best in the helping process, we cannot control the outcome.
 - Life is never perfect. There are always new sources of dissatisfaction coming our way. Learn to embrace, rather than ignore them.
 - Remember that where there is love, there is hatred. Where there is success, there are setbacks. Where there is joy, there is sorrow. In the course of our lives, we must embrace both as reality.

Fostering a positive relationship based on mutuality to minimize the impact of the power imbalance

Promotes personal efficacy for the client

Does not demand a change of environment to start these beneficial practices

Benefits of the Seven Habits

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- ### Conclusion
- The practice of the seven habits contributes to becoming an effective and healthy social worker
 - Further codification of the seven habits is needed
 - Research for testing the hypothesis is needed