

SWK 557 FIELD EXPERIENCE
COMPETENCY JOURNAL
JOURNAL #6

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Review of Competencies:

This journal recording is based from my interactions with our clients at RNDC Mod 2 North on April 9, 2022. The specific activity from my Field Learning Agreement that was completed is on Practice Behavior 2.1, which is to record my personal beliefs, or values, regarding clients/staff who may be different than me (age, gender, race, religious affiliation, orientation, color, cultural background, marital status, family structure, class, physical ability, and how my beliefs/values impact my interaction with various clients.

This particular meeting was to engage clients on discussing their support system/trainings/needs. The setting was on the RNDC Mod 2 North dayroom of the housing unit where twelve detainees were housed. It was Saturday afternoon and usually detainees are having their downtimes. Thus, we found many of them glued on the phone walls catching up with their loved ones, sleeping maybe to catch up with some sleepless nights, some watching t.v., and other just hanging around.

What challenged me, not only this afternoon but even in the past, my assumption that every meeting under the program, must be conducted under a structured organized manner. To visualize it, it looks like that the detainees must be all up, ready and hope excited in every meeting. But that was not the case many times, and of course, could not be realistic. The question in my mind was that, would a preferred scenario and unmet expectation deter a worker to accomplish the tasks at hand?

To justify that my services as a worker does not need to be in a preferred setting or condition, I applied few observations with our clients at Rikers at that given situation. First, I

considered the age gap. These are young people. I have to explore more about developmental growth and consider this as a factor. Clearly, there is a generation gap. (Not as a bias interpretation). Second, they are not mandated. Meaning their attendance in the program is totally voluntary. Third, that their values, preferences, upbringing, etc. vs. mine must not necessarily be the same. Lastly, the physical location of these clients vs. living in a normal living condition outside the jail. All these are not to judge or becoming bias, but to give myself basic understanding of what was happening.

Strengths: To reflect on the performance competencies, it is crucial that at this challenge, I have to be reminded of the mission and purpose of a social worker that is “to enhance human well-being and help meet the needs of all people, pay attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty”. NASW Code of Ethics ,2017). With this, using the strength-based perspective, I resolve this challenge by looking positively with their good behavior instead of the negative ones. For example, they are not rude, unruly or fighting. They are peaceful, respectful, friendly, open, and fun to engage with. Only that they are willing to participate at their own timing.

Limitations: I need to grow deeper in engagement with diverse clients, with different values, preferences, age, gender, race, religious affiliation, orientation, color, cultural background, marital status, family structure, class, physical. Ability, etc. I want my beliefs/values will not interfere with my interaction with diverse clients at all times, at all settings.

Personal feeling related to this activity:

After reflecting with this challenge, I feel relieved. The pressure within me to have an expectation every time we meet our clients at Rikers was gone. I felt liberated and at the same time empowered to accomplish more to enhance the well-being of our clients at Rikers.

Values, Skills, and Knowledge:

Competency 2.1 is related to our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Social worker's skills in engagement, active listening, and empathy are important to consider with this competency, together with cultural humility.

Plans for Progress:

One learning experience from this interaction was the unveiling of the source of my apprehension and or false expectations. To foster personal growth, practicing social worker's value, particularly commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is a must. This means that my own values and preferences must not become a deterrence for a quality service at all times, at all settings. Furthermore, that my values and preferences must be put at the back burner. Thus, making my client's values and preferences at the front.