

## Reflection 1 (Jenna Lee)

- 1- Describe the basic ideas of the Ecological Systems Perspective in Social Work.

Based on ecological principles, the Ecological Systems Perspective proposes that human beings can be understood only in the context of the systems in which they live. The ecological system perspective supports the holistic view of human beings while focusing on the transactive functions of each system. Human beings are influenced by the social environments in which they live, as well as influencing social environments. Throughout our lives, human beings engage in reciprocal transactions continuously.

The ecological perspective allows social workers to look holistically at their clients' conditions and social environments. This allows them to gain a better understanding of their presenting issues and to develop comprehensive service plans. It is a useful approach to the assessment and treatment of clients. Germain (1991) and Weiss and Lopez (2013) contribute to our understanding and application of the ecological systems perspective in social work practice: 1) social work focuses both on human beings and the social environment, 2) social workers assess human beings holistically including the person, the situation, and the system within which he/she lives, and 3) social workers help people to progress and to nurture a sustainable environment through addressing environmental issues.

- 2- Explain the four levels of systems that conceptualize the social environment that were developed by Brim and Bronfenbrenner.

Brim and Bronfenbrenner recognized four categories or levels of systems that can be used to conceptualize human beings and their environmental transactions.

The microsystems are the first level and contain the things with which the person has direct contact. For example, the microsystems encompass the family, school, religion, peer groups, and local community.

Mesosystems occur when a person's microsystems interact and influence each other, rather than working independently. For example, a child's parents

can communicate with the child's teachers in a way that affects the child's development.

The exosystems are the larger systems that impact the person's development, although they don't directly interact with the person. This includes governments, parents' workplaces, parents' friends and the mass media.

Last, the macro systems are the larger cultural and subcultural contexts where all other systems are situated. It includes economic conditions, laws in society, cultural beliefs and customs of society, political systems, and educational resources.