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Swk499: Integrative Seminar

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Reflective Assessment on Competency #4

Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

- **In what ways have I accomplished this competency/practice behaviors?** I have accomplished this competency practice by completing surveys & doing questionnaires with Participants. In my practicum, I have assisted with screening participants with MAYSI-2 during the intake process. The MAYSI-2 is a brief behavioral health screening tool designed especially for juvenile justice programs and facilities. Its purpose is to identify youth who may need immediate attention regarding possible suicide risk and emergent mental health and substance use needs. After conducting these questionnaires, I become more knowledgeable of the mental state that my client is in. Another way I practice competency 3 is by utilizing the information that I gather for the participants and developing an effective practice that goes according to their needs.
- **How has my thinking changed over time?** Before learning about Competency 4, I was uninformed about the importance of research in the social work profession. As time passed, I understood that informed research practice is vital to the social work profession. As a Practitioner, I have learned to rely upon different sources like Quantitative and Qualitative Research, Social Work Research, and Case studies. I have come to the understanding that having more access to quality research and evidence is extremely important. As a Social Worker, I now know that to better serve my client, I have to research what are the practices and approaches that can be best implemented in their situation.
- **What are the practice behaviors that indicate my competency in this area?** The practice behaviors that indicate my competency in this area would have to be a Research Methods assignment that I completed during SWK 558 course. This assignment was based on the connection between young adults that experienced Childhood trauma (CHT) and the connection with lowered self-esteem. I was able to research different statistics that indicated that children

who had been abused had greater levels of poor self-esteem and were unable to handle emotional difficulties, according to studies. Another statistic explained that Low self-esteem in children tends to be related to physical punishment, loneliness/bullying, and withholding of love and affection by parents.

- **What curriculum content areas (social policy, practice, etc.) relate to successfully completing this competency?** The curriculum content that was most related to completing this competency has to do with what Data Collection Methods that I completed during my SWK358/558: Social Work Research Methods. For example, during the data collection method, I study participants that were receiving 12 weeks of in-depth CBT individual and group therapy. Throughout these sections, participants would be engaging in various activities in the CBT model that would assist them in the process of changing their automatic thoughts and core beliefs to address their low levels of self-esteem. The findings of this study indicate that CBT is the most effective form of therapy for Adolescents who experienced CHT in Childhood. The study has shown that providing intensive CBT to adolescents increases their levels of self-esteem significantly.

- **What learning experiences helped me to accomplish this competency?** During My *SWK 558 Research Methods*, I completed an assignment that helped me better understand the importance of researching in the Social Work Profession. Engaging in Evidence-based practice allows me to apply critical thinking whenever I am analyzing a participant. For example, Whenever I do any biopsychosocial assessment, surveys & questionnaires, or any genogram on a participant, I become aware of the different factors that are affecting or benefiting my client. This would allow me to translate to improving my practice and bettering my service to my client.

- **What “gaps” can I identify in my learning experience? What will I do about these “gaps”?** As a social worker, I have to be aware that there are multi-factors that would allow me to better understand my client but the primary source is the information that my client is actually giving me. That being said, I also need to understand that Engaging in Evidence-based practice research is going to be required of me. Before learning about Competency 4, I was thinking that all I needed was to hear from the client and get to know them. However, now I understand that there are scientific inquiries and research that would allow me to translate research findings into effective practice.

• **Professional Growth Plan, identify goals for continued personal and professional growth and discuss how you plan to reach these goals).** My professional Growth plan is to continue to grow in my understanding and connect myself with reasonable resources that can challenge me to keep growing. Joining different groups of social workers and becoming closely affiliated with different coalitions is a goal that I would like to accomplish. I look forward to finishing my MSW and becoming licensed to eventually have my own private practice. I plan to reach these goals by taking the proper steps like continuing my education and connecting with the right people. I also would volunteer my time in places that I know that I would learn and grow from.

Integration

- **What kinds of research questions have you developed as a result of your experiences working with clients? In other words, what would you like to know more about?** The research question that comes to mind is how can I find the correct information for my client when implementing Practice informed research. Another question is, how can I use and translate research evidence on a quantitative scale to change policy that improves people's lives on a macro level?
- **In what ways did you use both quantitative and qualitative research methods and/or research findings in your field setting?** I used quantitative research during my field practice by researching the agency's statistical recidivism rates and compared it with average recidivism rates. The outcome of the quantitative analysis illustrates that the rate for Average Recidivism Rate is %76, while Bronx Connect Recidivism Rate was only 17%. This information is useful because, whenever we as court liaison advocate for alternatives to incarceration, we can back up our claims with actual evidence.
- **Provide examples of how you used research evidence to inform your practice.** I used research evidence to inform my practice by conducting case studies, improving case-planning practices, matching youth to the services that they need, engaging with youth and their families. Also, one of the most common evidence-based practice approaches comes by interviewing our participants. During the assessment process, I gain information that allows me to understand my participant's needs and risks.