When Your Ethical Boundaries Meet Other Cultures and Traditions

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September 2014
What do these words mean to you?

- Healing
- Recovery
- Abstinence
- Harm Reduction
- Spirits
- Magic
Perspective...
(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.
Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.
Value: *Dignity and Worth of the Person*

- **Ethical Principle:** Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.

- Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.

- Social workers promote clients’ socially responsible self-determination.

- Social workers seek to enhance clients’ capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs.

- Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients’ interests and the broader society’s interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.
Value: *Competence*

- *Ethical Principle:* Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

- *Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.*
1.01 Commitment to Clients

- Social workers’ primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients. In general, clients’ interests are primary.

- However, social workers’ responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may on limited occasions supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised. (Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)
1.02 Self-Determination

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals. Social workers may limit clients’ right to self-determination when, in the social workers’ professional judgment, clients’ actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves or others.
1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

(a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients’ cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients’ cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.
Ethnographic Interviewing

- essential core of ethnography is a concern with meaning

- to understand the human experience as it is lived, felt, and known by its participants

- understanding the individual client’s unique frame of reference, rather than a cultural group’s frame of reference.

- the “whole point” of ethnographic inquiry is “to aid us in gaining access to the conceptual world in which our subjects live so that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them”
Ethnographic Interviewing

- **Adopting the stance of learner.**
  - the professional, not as expert knower, but as learner.
  - I want to understand things from your point of view

- **Listening for meaning.**
  - re-stating and incorporating key phrases and terms used by the respondent as a way of prioritizing the respondents’ voice over the professional’s voice.

- **Acknowledging power and sociopolitical context**
  - ways in which experiences of entitlement and powerlessness shape perceptions, feelings, and behavior.
Ethnographic Interviewing

**Negotiating understanding dialogically**
- the “conversation” does not depend on shared meanings, only on shared *exploration* of meanings

**Engaging in Self-reflexivity**
- Move beyond the passive notion of self-awareness and stresses the more active concept of reflexivity.
- the control or elimination of bias is not assumed possible, nor even desirable. Subjectivity is not controlled but *incorporated* into the inquiry by making biases explicit and acknowledging how biases dictate questions and category construction
BEYOND EMPATHY: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH TO CROSS-CULTURAL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Janet Clark, Ph. D.
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“I was so shocked. That was the first time I was brought face to face with what is done here to people exhibiting the same symptoms I’ve seen in my village.” What struck Dr. Somé was that the attention given to such symptoms was based on pathology, on the idea that the condition is something that needs to stop. This was in complete opposition to the way his culture views such a situation. As he looked around the stark ward at the patients, some in straitjackets, some zoned out on medications, others screaming, he observed to himself, “So this is how the healers who are attempting to be born are treated in this culture. What a loss! What a loss that a person who is finally being aligned with a power from the other world is just being wasted.”
Case Example to Process as a Group
Problem Solving Ethical Issues
Identify the problem and factors maintaining the problem.

- Why is this bothering me?
- What is the primary dilemma?
- Are there ethical issues involved?
- What are the facts?
- Who will either face ethical issues or be affected by them?
- What value conflicts are present?
- What ethical issues are in conflict?
- Are some more important than others?
Identify the problem and factors maintaining the problem.

- What are the alternative courses of action/conflicts?
- What demonstrates the greatest mutual respect?
- Can any of the alternatives be universalized?
- Would I advise anyone else to follow the same course of action?
- What are the consequences and risks of the courses of action?
- What are the motives of those involved?
- Am I being true to myself?
- In light of these considerations what is my decision?
2. Identify all person, groups, organizations involved in the situation.

3. Determine who should be involved in the decision making.
4. Identify values involved in the situation – client, family, worker, professional, group, institutional, societal.

5. Identify the goals and objectives which may resolve or reduce the problem.
6. Identify alternative interventions to reach the goals.

7. Assess the effectiveness of each of these alternative strategies.

8. Select a strategy;
9. Implement the strategy;
10. Monitor the implementation of the strategy;
11. Evaluate the results.
Ethics and Values in Social Work: An Integrated Approach for a Comprehensive Curriculum

Barsky, Allan Edward
New York, Oxford University Press, 2010