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THEME 1: THINKING ABOUT YOUR THINKING

STUDY UNIT 1: Constructivism: Creating Knowledge

Constructivism – all human beings create their own realities, in interaction with their environment. Prop 2

All people are respected for the unique reality they have and are creating.

Each person constructs its own reality, it implies that each person is also responsible for the reality that they have created.

Although our constructions are created in interaction with our environment, including our significant others, it does not mean that the environment and/ other people determine our constructions. Prop 9

Constructivism – is a world view, it poses assumptions about how we view things and how we create that view or knowledge of all phenomenon.

A theory, involves assumptions about a specific phenomenon.

Positivism – there is a real reality outside us, which we absorb and thus get to know as it really is. It implies that we absorb knowledge from the environment, and get to know the environment in an objective way.

Believes all our knowledge is absorbed from the environment.

Objectivity – means to get to know an object the way it ‘really’ is, in itself, without interference from the one who is observing it.

- Also implies that we have to distance ourselves from this object, so as to minimize our own influences on this object.

If we can know the world outside of us as it really is, then it follows that we can know the *truth* about an object as it really is.

If we know the final truth, then I can *judge* something to be true or false to what is really real and right and what is wrong.

Therefore, if we absorb knowledge from the outside (environment), then knowledge about health and pathology must also be absorbed from the outside. Patients/clients must be given something from the outside to make them better. Also the decision as to what is happening with person is made from the outside, by way of a diagnosis.

Outsider is seen as the expert.

STUDY UNIT 2: Person-Centred Theory

Theory: the way one thinks about people or any phenomenon.

- provides assumptions or constructions which guide our thinking in a specific way.

Exploring one's own needs is very important, as your needs motivate your behavior (prop 5).

Pressure in the helping process:

1. Pressure from your self (identity)

One might feel that if one doesn't do what they ask or solve their problem, that u are a failure, both as a F and a kind, helpful, caring, giving human. That u are letting yourself and the clients down which can create an immense amount of stress (threat to self, prop 14).

2. Pressure from our clients – who feels they have tried everything they can think of, and now need the F to come up with alternatives

3. Pressure through using PCA – one might feel that if you do not solve the problem as the client ask you to, you are not working in a PCA way...

4. Pressure from the community – this could include friends, neighbors, the organization you work for, etc who might pressure you to do something for the clients.

STUDY UNIT 4: The Practical Implication of This Theory

We work with the person and not the problem, but the problem is part of the person and cannot be ignored.

We connect the problem to the person, on how this problem is affecting this individual person (their self or identity).

Important: the problem tells us about the person, and what that person is struggling with on an unconscious and threatening level.

Go to page 79 and go through the stories and responses

STUDY UNIT 5: Reflection Concerning The Self Of The Facilitator

The interaction between F and client creates an opportunity for influencing each other's self.

The F's self also changes in interaction with the clients' (and with other professionals, like lecturers, authors, supervisors, etc.

F's are self-determined: you determine your perceptions of yourself, your clients and the interaction between you.

Two F's, in interaction with the same client, will not experience the client, or themselves, or the interaction between them in the same way.

F needs to explore his own needs, behavior, feelings and values and the reason for them, in yourself, not in the behavior of the client, as your experiences are determined by you and not the client.

STUDY UNIT 3: The Centrality Of The Self In PCA

PCA:

- Deals with the whole person (p3), all their experiences, including their problems, situation or environment (p9)
- focuses on THE PEOPLE, with THEIR perceptions of themselves, THEIR problem and THEIR situation or environment.
- tries to teach us how to enable people to deal with these things in their own way (p12) and according to their values (p19) in a way which fits with their self, so that they can own it and also learn to deal with future problems and situations on their own (to stand on their own feet).

PCA tries to teach us how to deal with the person:

- Who they perceive themselves to be (p1-8)
- What stumbling blocks they experience in being who they want to be (p11c&d)
- How these stumbling blocks affect their identity or self;
- And what happens when they cannot be who they want to be (p13, 14 & 16).

PCA: - suggests what facilitators need to do in order to deal with these stumbling blocks and rediscover themselves (p7&17).

- shows what could happen with clients once this reconstruction has been achieved (12,18&19)

PERSON = SELF = IDENTITY

How the various props relate to the central theme of the self (or ID) of a person....

Prop 8 tells how the self develops, how it becomes differentiated from **all** our experiences.

P3: wholeness of a person – also includes our perceptions (p2); our needs and behavior (p5) and our values (p10).

Prop 1-8 relate to the self, how it develops and what it consists of. To understand a person, we have to understand all their experiences, and how these experiences relate to the self.

People determine their own identity: self-determination.

CLIENT RESISTANCE - the F is expecting the client to do, or be, something which he does not want to do or be.

The F is working from his own frame of ref, expecting the client to give up his self-determination and let us determine what he should do or become, but the client is resisting this.

Resisting tells the F about the client self-determination; illustrates that clients know what they do or do not want.

Behavior (on client's part) indicates a need for self-determination. Prop 16: protection of the self

The client's perception: the client's experience of his situation (environment) determines his experiences and his self, which we have to understand.

The self, or sense of identity is a cornerstone of the PCA.

It's not always easy to hear or identify which self clients have symbolized for themselves, yet we need to take it into consideration all the time:

Propositions that relates to the ... self.

Prop 4: people have as their one overriding aim 2maintain & enhance the self; 2be what they need or want 2be, as a person.

Prop 9: the self is formed in interaction with others, as perceived by the self.

Prop 11: explains how certain experiences which do not fit with the self are denied or distorted.

Prop 12 & 13: explore the relationship between the self & behavior: not just any behavior will do. It has 2fit with the self.

Prop 14 & 16: explore what happens when we deny experiences which threaten the self: it creates Stress (14) and defence of the self (16) to protect the self.

Prop 17: what is needed for the denied/distorted experiences to be allowed into the consciousness.

Prop 15: explains what happens to the self when the client encounters a safe environment, where he can face the unsymbolised or denied/distorted experience.

Prop 18: tells us that if clients can accept themselves, they are more likely to accept others.

Prop 19: when people accept more of their various experiences into their self-structure, they can develop their own valuing system.

The Self is central to what we do and feel, how we interact with others and what we value.

The exploration of self, of 'who I am' and 'who I am becoming' is therefore one of the key issues of PCA.

THEME 2: PROFESSIONAL VALUES

STUDY UNIT 1: The Role of Values in a Profession

A particular profession defines itself by the values it stands for.

Values in PCA: individuality; Confidentiality; Respect and Self-determination.

Discussing values from a different perspective: How they relate to our clients as unique, complex and vulnerable human beings, who are also responsible for their own self-development.

Uniqueness and Complexity

People are unique, with a multitude of experiences (perceptions, needs, behaviour, feelings, values and self) which need to be considered.

Individuality relate to these principles: each person you encounter in your professional capacity has to be valued and treated as a dynamic individual, with all his intricate experiences.

Acceptance does not mean condoning anything, but taking things as they are presented (and experienced) by the client, and *understanding* them from the client's frame of ref.

Related to the value of individuality is **respect**: that we must respect each person we encounter as someone with his own multiple experiences and ways of sharing these with us.

When we respect a person's unique experiences, we show interest and listen carefully, not assuming that we already know what they are going to tell us.

When we hear their story, we treat it with **confidentiality**.

Uniqueness and Complexity are also related to the value of **self-determination**: each person not only determines his own experiences and, from all the changing experiences, derive their sense of self, but also determine what they want to share and how this is to be done.

Vulnerability

People can be hurt, but even in pain, the person determines what is hurting, how intense it is and how it affects them as a person. No matter what painful situation a person is experiencing, they are always **self-determined**. We cannot decide for another how they are feeling, or should be feeling or acting under any circumstances. We have to **respect** this self-determination and, respect their ability to overcome or deal with their suffering in their own way, and become who they want to become.

Responsibility

People are responsible for themselves; which implies **self-determination**.

Each person is the only one (**individuality**) who knows and is responsible for their inner world.

We need to **respect** this inner knowledge and see it as a resource, from which change has to flow.

STUDY UNIT 2: Reflection on Yourself and Your Professional Values

You are a human being with your own ideas and values and beliefs.

You are a self-determined person, whose self and values develop in interaction with others.

Different selves and different values may develop in interaction with different people.

Simultaneously, you're a human being and facilitator, and the two cannot be separated.

Two different needs, may create an inner conflict. Inner conflicts are not only related to our working contexts, we have to deal with them in our everyday lives, ex. You feel like eating chocolate, but you are on a diet.

The theory and values you are studying maintain that we have to respect people; respect and acknowledge that they know the level or intensity of their pain and are able to deal with it, in our enabling presence. We need to show empathy and respect, rather than sympathy and easy solutions, to enable them to find their own way forward. The F cares in order to enable people to become independent, to help themselves, while the friend only has to express their own concern for others and give comfort.

THEME 3: ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

STUDY UNIT 1: Introduction

PCA facilitators are active but non-directive.

As a facilitator you will be:

- Listening actively;
- Exploring basic empathy (understanding all the client's experiences and self, find appropriate ways of communicating your understanding of these experiences back to the client).
- Distinguish between conscious and unconscious experiences – basic empathy to adv empathy.

In both empathy and advanced E, you need to actively show (do, say, act out, convey, express, articulate) your understanding of the clients' inner worlds to them.

In advanced empathy you need to search out the inner experiences from between the lines of what the client tells you.

Being nonjudgmental – requires being aware of and comfortable with your own values, and actively setting them aside so as to be able to explore the client's values.

- If you judge the clients, they will feel threatened and might withdraw from or defend themselves against us. Clients may take over your values to please you, but do not own them and cannot base their life on them.

Advanced skills can be divided into three different (but not separate) categories: Advanced Empathy, Exploring Discrepancies and Immediacy.

Advanced empathy can be implemented in three ways: by identifying the implied messages, connecting the different experiences of a person (connecting 'islands') and developing themes.

STUDY UNIT 2.1: Using Both the Basic and Advanced Skills

We have to attend to the whole client – we always listen to, understand and empathise with the symbolized (or conscious) experiences and self (basic empathy), as well as the unsymbolised (or unconscious) experiences which threaten the self of each client (advanced empathy).

A person's experiential world can be explored and understood on two levels:

1. Conscious or symbolized level of the self. Experiences become evident when clients share their experiences.
2. Unsymbolised or unconscious experiences. Experiences threaten the self, they are kept hidden. Clients are not aware of them, and cannot share these experiences directly. Advanced skills have to be used to understand the hidden meaning and then to communicate this understanding to Clients so that they can symbolize them in some relationship to the self.

Wholeness of clients' experiences: When c share their experiences, they give us pieces of themselves and their total experiential world. We have to understand how each piece is related to the whole. We then communicate to the c this understanding of how the 'pieces' are related and linked to the whole. C can agree or disagree whether they fit. If they do fit, the client also comes closer to seeing 'a bigger picture' of the self.

Through empathy we are able to examine and understand the 'pieces' of experience that clients show us.

Next we have to link these islands or pieces of experience to each other and **communicating** this advanced understanding to clients, we enable them to understand themselves more fully.

STUDY UNIT 2.2: Client's Own Experiences and Self

If we show acceptance and understanding of all their experiences, and the self they are trying to maintain, then they themselves can decide to change.

They are already battling their own experiences which they perceive as threatening to their self.

It would make it even harder on them if we too asked for change which they are not ready for.

STUDY UNIT 2.2.1: Stability and Change

It can be seen as an interplay between self-determination and the clients' changing world of experiences.

This constant striving to keep some sense of who we are, while we are at the same time continuously changing, is part of every person's life.

STUDY UNIT 2.3: Accurate and Inaccurate responses

It is the clients who determine whether your responses are accurate or not, that is, whether they fit with their experience and self or not.

We always have to assess whether our responses are made from the client's frame of ref or from our own.

STUDY UNIT 2.4: Function of the Advanced Skills

The advanced skills are not separate entities as they all deal with the unsymbolised or distortedly symbolized experiences of your client. People are seen in their totality, that is, the totality of all their experiences, symbolized as well as unsymbolised.

In helping, we are trying to enable clients to find out what ingredients went into the making of the self – what is missing or added – to give that self (bread) its particular flavour or identity.

This process often makes clients aware of things concerning themselves that they cannot tell them, because we did not 'bake' them, and once baked, the ingredients can only be determined from the inside. Iow, once the client's self has been established, it is up to the individual person to discover the dynamics that make up this self.

The advanced skills are therefore our efforts to help clients explore and symbolize their own internal 'ingredients' (experiences) and put them together in such a way that they can see their selves for themselves.

Function of advanced skills:

- Implied message: hidden experiences
- Connecting islands: putting all the experiences together
- Developing themes: determining the overall id of the self when all the experiences are put together.

Only experiences which **threaten the self**, are denied symbolization, or are distorted to fit with the self.

Advanced skills deal with the self and how it is being threatened / they deal with experiences which do not fit within the self.

STUDY UNIT 2.5: Using The Client's Frame Of Reference

Your focus is your client's experiences and **not** your own or anybody else's ideas.

STUDY UNIT 3: PRACTISING YOUR SKILLS

Mental and professional skills are also skills, requiring effort and preparation.
People's lives and mental health depend on your skills.

STUDY UNIT 3.1: Implied Messages

- a. Nonverbal behaviour: smiles, frowns, closed posture...
- b. Humour: making jokes, expressions,

STUDY UNIT 3.2: Examples and Exercises to Link Islands and Develop Themes (p55)

STUDY UNIT 3.3: Examples Related to Professional Encounters (p56-58)

STUDY UNIT 3.4: Exploring Discrepancies (p59)

STUDY UNIT 3.5: Exercises Related to Professional Encounters (p60)

STUDY UNIT 3.6: Immediacy

Immediacy deals with the interaction and relationship between the F and the client as it unfolds in the here and now.

You will need to connect the implied message of what is said with the client's self and your relationship (connecting islands) in order to be able to understand fully what is happening between you and the client. Immediacy includes all the advanced empathy skills in addition to the ability to deal with the relationship in a non-defensive way.

F must be in touch with and in control of your own self, needs and feelings.

F's are self determined; we determine who we are and what we feel or experience, so we cannot blame the client for what we are experiencing.

Immediacy: is **not** an invitation to F's to blame clients for what the F is experiencing.

- is **only** used when clients are sharing their present experiences about **your relationship**. For all other experiences they share, you use basic or advanced empathy.
- can be used to clear up any uncertainties and stumbling blocks in the F/client relationship, whether these are created by the F's or the client's fears of threat.
- deals with the self, developing in interaction with significant others; like how the self of the client might be threatened in interaction with you, as their significant other and F.

STUDY UNIT 3.6.1: More Examples of Immediacy (p64)

STUDY UNIT 3.7: Tentativeness

It is important that all empathetic responses, basic as well as advanced, be given tentatively. It's necessary because people's frame of ref and perceptions differ.

When dealing with the deep-seated (unsymbolised) experiences, the possibility of mistaken understanding is even greater, because the client does not spell it out to us. Checking your understanding with the client is therefore even more important when dealing with the advanced skills.

STUDY UNIT 4: Reflection on Yourself and the Communication Skills

Thinking whether what you have studied regarding professional communication with people makes sense to you and fits with how you see yourself as a facilitator.

THEME 4: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assessment: thinking about what you thought about the people you work with (whether and how you used theory to think about your clients), how you were able to use your professional values and communication skills with your clients. It's necessary in order for you to get an overall picture of, and be **accountable** for, what you think, believe and do in any professional relationship.

Assessment is a tool, used to ensure that you reach and maintain the high standards required of a professional F.

Assessment: the ability to understand clients, to spot "what's going on" with them, to see what they do not see and need to see, to make sense out of their chaotic behaviour and help them make sense out of it... It's a kind of learning in which both client and facilitator practice.

Assessment is an ongoing activity throughout the whole process, and includes understanding of what the facilitator does and what is happening between the facilitator and the person being interviewed.

3 Facets to assessment:

- (a) Understanding the client (on both the conscious and unconscious levels)
- (b) Understanding yourself, (your theory, values and skill) as a facilitator and how these were used.
- (c) Understanding the process of interaction as it unfolds between you and the client.

The client also participates in this process, as it is the client who determines whether the responses made and approach taken by facilitator fit with his/her self, needs and values."

EVALUATION – 'How Are We Doing'

- a process of taking stock of the whole process of helping.
- needs to be done from the earliest moment.

Detection criteria need to be 'theory-based, ongoing, practical and sensitive to whatever new perspectives might emerge from the helping process.

The **process** of assessment and evaluation entails continued observation, understanding and analysis of what is happening during the helping process, according to certain **criteria**.

Criteria are set by both the client and the F. In the F's case, this will include the theoretical assumptions guiding the helping, the skills which flow from this theory, and the values of the profession.

Assessment is not judging whether the client's behavior is right or wrong, but understanding the behavior, in terms of the needs, self and values of that client.

THEME 5: THINKING ABOUT CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Thinking during a crisis is still important – thinking under pressure / thinking on your feet.

Meanings attached to crisis and its management.

What is a crisis? Different people will experience different events as a crisis.

- It is the person experiencing a crisis who determines whether they are going through a crisis or not.
- It means increased emotional tension.

During a crisis, F's needs to keep in mind that the client may be confused and afraid, and needs the F to act immediately to make things better.

A crisis is also some kind of problem, which affects the whole person in an intense way.

THEME 6: CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking can also be called logical thinking – you are expected to analyse what you think, hear and read into its internal logic.

Critical thinking may be approached by considering similarities and discrepancies, and deciding for yourself whether something makes sense and is useful.

3 Steps to thinking critically:

1. Study the literature empathically – to endeavour to understand what the author is trying to convey.
2. Look for discrepancies or contradictions in incoherent, obscure or illogical statements.

This exploration still takes place from the author's frame of ref and can be linked to the advanced skills.

3. We look to see whether or not the author's ideas fit with our own ideas (or logic) on the topic involved. Specifically look at where and why an idea fits or not, and we need to specify why we Believe this to be so.

Critical thinking and observations can also be applied to what happens to you in your practical work throughout the year.

THEME 7: CREATIVE THINKING

Creativity – thinking about ordinary, everyday things or ideas in new, different and imaginative ways or, as innovative thinking.

Why creativity?

It's important that the theory and communication skills are applied to fit with:

- The uniqueness of each facilitator as a unique person
- Each client's unique experiential world and self.

F therefore needs to be creative and flexible in order to constantly adapt to each client's unique self and needs. F's also need to guard against using skills mechanically and routinely.

Everyday use of creativity

Together with our client, a whole new story as well as a new self, and an own value system is created. This implies that we believe clients are and can be creative.

Humour – to see a familiar situation from a new, funny perspective.

Play – play (especially with children) is a communication medium. There you will find alternative and creative ways of communicating and interacting in ways which help children to feel understood by the F.

Metaphors – can be used with adults and children.

It makes the response indirect, therefore less threatening and maybe easier to symbolize.

It prevents us from repeating the client's message like a parrot, to everybody's irritation.

THEME 8: THINKING ABOUT WORKING WITH CHILDREN

STUDY UNIT 1: Introduction

Parents and children have different experiences. This makes life difficult for facilitators, as we need to understand each individual (children & parents) from their own frame of ref. Do not judge.

This is complicated when we have only one of their stories at our disposal.

Our self is shaped by our perceptions of our interactions with significant others.

Children deserve to be treated with the same professional values as adults.

Problems often experienced when working with children

Children are often totally ignored in the process of safeguarding the children in the following ways:

1. We try to protect children, and therefore fail to consult and inform them of what we intend to do.

Children are not consulted about important and drastic decisions about their lives.

2. Children are not allowed to show negative emotions, behaviours and other experiences.

3. Problems relating to the F's attitude:

- F's believe that it is no use speaking to children since they do not understand.
- Some F's think that different forms of interaction and communication with children are a waste of time.
- The attitude that it is damaging to a social worker's dignity to operate, literally and figuratively, at a child's level.
- Play and other forms of communication with children often take the form of unstructured, free flowing activity which depends on the social worker's spontaneous participation. This may create uncertainty about the F's "professional" role and threaten their personal space.

STUDY UNIT 2: Play as a Communication Medium

STUDY UNIT 2.1: Space

Create space for play at different levels:

1. Sufficient physical space for free physical movement; but also private space for concentrated, undisturbed play.
2. There should be emotional space so that both the F and the child have room, and permission, for unstructured play. This implies complete acceptance of the child's fantasy at the emotional, intellectual and social levels.
3. Restrictions on excessively obstructive behavior with a view to the physical safety of both facilitator and child.

STUDY UNIT 2.2: Play Material

Simple materials, such as crayons and paper, puppets or clay can be carried in your briefcase or handbag when you visit children at home. These can help you relate to them. Example: ask them about their favorite toys and the places where they like to play. You may then, with child's permission, join them in playing there.

STUDY UNIT 2.3: Language

Children, like adults, do not communicate by verbal means only. Example, when children are upset, we can say that their (or their doll's) heart is breaking.

STUDY UNIT 2.4: Forms of Play

The following forms of play are applicable when working with an individual child *as well* as with families. Guidelines on initial contact with the child, are provided below:

1. Relate immediately and directly to children in the presence of the adult accompanying them.
2. Gain eye contact by moving to the child's level: crouching, sitting or lying down.
3. Ask the child's name, use it and give your name.
4. Comment on whatever might be relevant to the child's present scenario, ex. child's clothing, what He/she is looking at, or eating...
5. Offer a choice of activities, including talking, for the time that you are together. If a playroom is not accessible, be sure that you have a basket of toys, games and drawing material with you.
6. For the younger child, drawing a picture is a popular first activity.
7. Use the first activity as a foundation for further talk or for other activities, focusing the talk and other activities on the child's perception of the scenario.

Children enjoy telling their stories to an empathic listener, and they do so more easily in the context of a nondirective approach where their experiences can be expressed and symbolized by means other than formal language, or where the symbols can be used as a foundation for verbal communication.

STUDY UNIT 2.4.1: Dramatised Play

Dramatised Play – play where the child is presented with the opportunity to act out or dramatise situations. Its effectiveness in helping the child is the most important consideration in using play as a means of communicating with the child client.

Social workers may use conversations to interview children, but this will negatively affect the final quality and achievement of objectives.

STUDY UNIT 2.4.1.1: Benefits of Dramatised Play

This type of play enables the child to symbolize and share intense feelings and other threatening experiences by revealing them in the drama. This happens spontaneously through a medium which is familiar and specifically related to the child.

Using this technique offers children the opportunity to reveal their feelings as well as their wishes and thoughts spontaneously by means of dramatized play and fantasy.

Even adolescents will sometimes prefer to portray certain events and feelings in their lives through actions rather than by talking about them.

STUDY UNIT 2.4.1.2: Apparatus

Various types of apparatus may be used in employing dramatized play, including:

- Dolls, which may be used in various roles, ex, a father doll, mother doll, girl or boy doll.
- Puppets and paper dolls
- Masks
- Guns or pistols
- Boxing gloves
- toy telephones
- miniature models
- second hand clothing

Dramatized play also offers children the opportunity to remember, repeat and work through incidents or situations in their life. The principle is that when children relive events, they are brought into closer contact with their experiences. Children therefore set out on their own to explore by means of play and see their world through their own eyes.

The play environment has to structure the material to provide the opportunity for a child to find expression through play.

The value of children's spontaneous and natural expression of fantasies and events in their play is twofold: on the one hand it conveys important information to the therapist, and on the other hand it creates the opportunity for children to grow and develop.

a tape recorder can be incorporated in dramatized play. The recorded sociodrama can be useful to both child and therapist. The therapist may also use the recording for a deeper understanding of the unsymbolised experiences.

STUDY UNIT 2.4.1.3: Application of Dramatised Play

The sociodrama, which is a dramatized portrayal of relationships between people, is so important.

Sociodrama may take place without the use of any additional apparatus.

When it becomes necessary to make the therapy session enjoyable, interesting and stimulating for the child in question, aids such as dolls, masks and toy telephones may be used.

STUDY UNIT 2.5: Creative Play

Two aspects are of particular importance in CP:

- (1) The information regarding the experimental world that children reveal during creative play, and
- (2) The means for communication between therapist and child offered by this medium.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.1: Drawing

Drawing is used particularly because it:

- offers children the opportunity to express their experiences
- provides information about the experiential world of the child involved
- is conducive to communication between therapist and child
- allows children to develop self-understanding
- allows children to experience success and victory

STUDY UNIT 2.5.1.1: Use of Colours, Space and Size

Children can express their feelings in certain ways.

Emotions may be revealed by the size of the child's depiction of people or things or in the colours used.

Relationships, the security experienced by the child can be depicted by the layout and positioning of objects.

Size and positioning of objects/people should be noted. It may be the child's way of indicating emotional closeness between individuals or the distance separating people.

Interpretation of the child's drawing should be avoided – only the child themselves can truly confirm the emotion and experiences involved..

It's important to communicate with the children while they are creating the drawing, and to discuss their position in relation to the objects and people in the drawing.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.1.2: Uses of Drawing

Drawings provide a means of communication between therapist and child. The success of the communication is also determined by the therapist's attitude towards the drawings.

Guidelines to enable you to fully utilize this technique to gain access to children's life world:

1. Children should be able to draw their experience and to share it. They therefore share their creative process.
2. Ask children to describe their own drawing.
3. Ask the children to explain the details. This is an expansion of the deeper level of meaning.
4. Focus on shapes, colours and clothes. This allows children the opportunity to say why they have made the specific choices.
5. Ask children to describe picture as if they were in the picture.
6. Ask children to describe the picture in the way that they see and experience it.
7. Be continually aware of children's nonverbal responses, ex, tone of voice, body language, facial

expression, breathing and silences.

8. If certain colors have been used predominantly, you could ask what those colors make the child think of.
9. Help children to identify and verbalize their feelings.
10. Stay with what the child presents ... do not try to analyze it from your own frame of ref.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.2: Clay

Using clay affords children the opportunity to change their environment and the people in it to their own liking.

Through such experiences, children may develop the desire to do something about their own situation.

The use of clay holds the following benefits:

- Clay may be used to portray different relationships between people.
- The use of clay in therapy is of particular value to very quiet and withdrawn children, as it allows them to demonstrate their feelings.
- Kneading the clay offers children the opportunity to express feelings of aggression. The cause of the aggression is not removed, but, because the child is calmed when kneading the clay, it creates the atmosphere that prepares the child for investigating the source of the aggression.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.3: Letters

The creation and writing of letters can be of particular value. This technique is used with children of various ages.

For some children it might elicit a sense of value to have a special pen pal.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.4 Biblio play

The use of biblio play once again paves the way for communication. It offers the opportunity for children to identify with characters from the stories, and in this way become aware of their own experiences.

We look at the use of children's stories by social workers, compiling a life story book, the value of magazines and pictures, and creating cartoon strips and diaries.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.4.1: Children's stories

Stories can help children to share in the universal emotions of mankind, not only the pleasures and delights of life, but also the sorrow, sufferings, despairs, and mistakes mankind has undergone and endured.

This technique has a definite place in helping children with specific reference to the process of mourning.

(a) The value of children's stories in therapy with children

- Children's stories create the opportunity and space for emotional expression. Children are able to project their unsymbolised experiences onto the characters and then release such experiences indirectly when they do not dare to reveal, experience, relive or express such experiences directly.
- This technique offers children a symbolic world within which they can manipulate feelings, circumstances, wishes, thoughts, etc.
- It creates indirect channels along which children may enter their unsymbolised and threatening world. Important to children that the characters in story cannot hurt, scare or disappoint them. Therefore they can safely project their feelings and thoughts onto the characters.
- It offers children the opportunity to view themselves from an emotional distance. Starting with the words "once upon a time..." creates this distance.
- The story points to the universal nature of experiences and situations. It therefore emphasizes the fact that in certain respects the child is not alone.

(b) Criteria for children's stories

- Story should relate to the particular child's life phase and world of experience. Prerequisite for use of such stories is that the social worker be thoroughly familiar with the child as his or her experiences, meaning that it will not be easy for a child's story to be used at the very first interview.
- Story should relate to the child's experiences, iow, it should form an emotional parallel. It's almost a primary requirement, because this will make it possible for the child to meet himself in the story.
- Story should have a protagonist with whom the child can identify. This hero should preferably be a child hero, because it will make it easy for child to identify with the hero.

Child hero should represent a real child; someone who is also naughty and disobedient, scared or uncertain, and that significant others in the story, (parents or foster parents) should accept this child with all his experiences and also allow the child ex to express negative feelings.

- Story should also have supporting characters (brother, sister, grandmother) who correspond to some extent with the child's situation. One of the supporting characters should be an unacceptable character, ex stepmother, which allows children to project their negative feelings onto such a character.
- The children's story should present an example of a way of coping via the characters in the story. To achieve the aim of assimilating emotions use following requirements:
 - a. Children should be able to express their feelings and to relive events in spite of their negative and painful nature.
 - b. They should be able to develop emotional symbolization, iow, they should consciously recognize and experience emotions and relate them to the situation.
 - c. Children should be able to recognize and acknowledge their potential and abilities and apply these for the benefit of their own constructive development.

(c) Different forms and uses of children's stories

SW may utilize different forms of children's stories.

1. The SW may use existing literature, such as well-known or entirely new children's stories.

It's important to select the story on the basis of

- The requirements as set out above
- The child's specific needs

The children's story may be implemented in different ways, for instance by:

- reading it to the child over a period of time and then discussing it
- giving it to the child to read, to be discussed later
- asking the parents, foster parents or staff to read it to the child.

The therapeutic process and the relationship between reader and the child are the things to benefit by using the children's story,

2. Second form of children's stories are those created by children or SW's themselves.

Important that these stories meets the requirements discussed earlier, and also that it relates to the child's experiential world.

SW's dramatization and facial expressions makes the story enjoyable for children, and also allow them to become completely absorbed in the story. F's may encourage children's involvement by starting the story and asking the child to complete it.

3. Third form are those told by children themselves, after which the social worker follows with his own story, based on that told by the child. Therapist's story is a variation of the child's.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.4.2: The Life Story Book

Children may not be able to build new relationships with substitute parents unless they first symbolize their departure from the parental home. This preoccupation with the past may prevent children from developing a clear perception of the present, and consequently also affect their desire and ability to plan for the future.

(a) The therapist and utilizing the life story book

Joining a child in documenting his life story may give rise to conflicting and disconcerting feelings in adults. It is important that the therapist who is selected to design a life story with a child is suitable for the job, which depends in part on the intensity of the work to be done – the most appropriate person is usually the SW who has regular contact with the child and with whom the child has a secure therapeutic relationship. It is usually the SW attached to the children's home or the social worker providing supervisory services to the foster parents who undertakes such a task.

(b) Methods of using the life story book

Important feature of using the life story book in therapy is that the SW and the child are both involved in one activity

To facilitate communication between therapist and child, the use of the life story book should be child-centered. The children decide:

- Where in their past or present the life story should start
- Determine the rate at which the life story will be compiled
- Which people will have access to their life story book and the degree of confidentiality with which it should be treated.
- How neatly and carefully this book will be handled
- Whether they will keep the book or destroy it and at which stage they wish to destroy it.

(i) Run-up to using the life story book

The run-up should be a spontaneous process. It may develop simply from a play situation, during conversations, while the therapist and the child are discussing the child's self-knowledge, or when children wish to obtain certain information relating to their past.

(ii) Starting the life story book

The children decide where in their past or present the life story book should start. Some children prefer working backward from the present, or starting at a particularly pleasant memory in the past.

(iii) The contents

The contents may include the following:

1. Children may ask their SW to write a report on their lives, which is pasted into their life story books. Children then illustrate the contents with pictures, photographs or drawings. This may include child's removal from the parental home and the associated feelings.
2. Children themselves may compile a chronological account of their lives, from birth to the present. This will be a time-consuming process in which the SW provides children with information they may not have had before, such as the date of intervention, the various places of safety, addresses where they have lived and the hearing in the children's court.

This form of life story makes considerable demands on the SW and should be treated with great circumspection. It offers children (especially adolescents), an overall picture of their

3. The life story book may be confined to dealing only with significant people in children's lives.
4. The life story book may be confined to important events in children's lives, for instance the day of their birth, their parents' birthdays, removal from the parental home and their first day in the children's home or foster home.
5. The life story book may also be an account of the various homes or addresses in children's lives. In this case the life story book would discuss the various addresses at which they have lived and the people with whom they have lived. It is important to deal with children's feelings regarding the various placements. It could even be valuable to visit some of these addresses and people with the child in order to discover bits of information about the child's development.
6. The life story book may also be aimed at self-description. This is important in the case of adolescents, who what to answer the question: "who am I?". Some attention will necessarily be paid to the child's background and developmental history, but the emphasis falls mainly on the present, and the adolescents are given the opportunity to write spontaneously about themselves.
7. Adolescents may also ask to write an autobiography, and in this way, explore their developmental history.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.4.3: Magazines and the use of Pictures

Children find magazines and picture books particularly eye-catching. The aim of using magazines and pictures is to facilitate communication between the therapist and the child.

The following are some of the purposes for which the pictures could be used:

- To construct the child's biological family, or the foster family in the case of a foster child.
- To share with the child, by using pictures, the various emotions that people experience, and in so doing to explore and deal with the child's emotions in different situations.
- To decorate the life story
- For making cartoon strips
- For a scrap book with a special purpose, for instance a scrap book on a favorite sport to build up the child's self-esteem.

Paging through magazines with children may relieve the tension and create an atmosphere of congeniality, which will open the door for meaningful communication between therapist and child.

At the same time it offers the opportunity for children to reveal their perceptions, feelings and needs.

STUDY UNIT 2.5.4.4: Cartoons

The use of cartoon strips is a technique that has been successfully implemented in therapy with children and is a technique recommended. Cartoons present the social worker with a valuable opportunity for communication with the child. In contrast to photographs, which may be too real and bring children in direct contact with painful (or threatening) experiences, cartoon pictures allow more room for identification and fantasy.

The SW could, ex, compile a cartoon strip on the children's experiences and thoughts relating to their departure from the parental home, the trip to the children's home, their first introduction to the children's home, or any other issue that the children themselves see as relevant.

