

Social Work Self Care Workshop

Restraints to Self Care

Significant personal and professional problems can occur if treatment providers working with this population do not address the unique challenges that this work presents.

Restraints to Self Care

Points to Consider

A treatment provider can:

- Experience personal and professional burnout exhibited by irritability and feelings of hopelessness.
- Exhibit physical manifestations resulting from the stress related to working with this population.
- Develop problems as a result of denial or minimization of the challenges that this work presents.
- May develop personal and/or professional difficulties relating to others as a result of working with this population.
- Job performance may be adversely affected due to working with this population.

Individual History, Values and Beliefs

Your personal:

- Experience of your own development, including victimization, may impact work with these families.
- Relationship with others impacts your work with the families.
- The intensity of work in this field impacts individual security and sexuality.
- Proximity, or boundary definition, impacts work with families.
- Normal human responses to the committing offenses of these families impacts individual security.
- Issues of sexual preference and homophobia impact work with this population.

Invitations for Self Care

A treatment provider can handle the stress of working with this population in very healthy ways by learning to identify problem areas and acting in self-interest.

Invitations for Self Care

Points to Consider

- A treatment provider can respond in healthy ways to physical needs for stress management.
- A treatment provider can obtain personal and professional support for social and emotional needs.
- A treatment provider can obtain training and consultation that addresses issues in working with this population.
- A treatment provider can negotiate ways of sharing responsibilities for work with this population.
- A treatment provider can make decisions when working with this population that promote self care.

- A treatment provider can take time off in order to obtain a distance from the intensity of work in this area.

Professional Boundaries

Why are boundaries necessary?

- Establishes identity
- Maintains Privacy
- Keeps us from becoming enmeshed
 - Empathize, not over identify
 - Caring vs. caretaking

Professional Boundaries

What does it mean to be a professional?

- It is a process. Often new workers are over eager and want to please. May be too formal or rigid.
- Veteran staff may not be open to change regardless if it will help them in the long run. May have developed habits that are hard to break.
- Each agency has it's own norm and standards.

Professional Boundaries

How does an individual learn about what it means to be a professional?

- Training
- Orientation
- Supervisors
- Co-Workers
- Consultants
- Personal Exploration

Professional Boundaries

What is the difference between professional and personal?

Professional

- Paid
- Time limited
- Structured
- Power
- Greater responsibility
- Requires prep/training
- Contractual agreement
- Can I work with this person?

Personal

- Not paid
- May be forever
- Spontaneous
- More equal
- Equal responsibility
- Does not require prep
- Personal choice
- Do I like this person?

Professional Boundaries Additional Points

- Professional does not mean cold or detached
- Professional does not mean being so involved or enmeshed that we are no longer helpful
- We are responsible for establishing and maintaining boundaries, not the client.
- The client comes first, but this does not mean we come second and can interchange our needs for theirs occasionally. This means the client can be second or third if it is appropriate.

Professional Boundaries What about...

- Touch: can you really help someone if you never touch them? (handshakes, hugs)
- Self disclosure: speaking of personal problems, showing kids' pictures?
- Use of language: swearing, first and last names, how do we refer to our families?
- Meeting time/place: house, office, coming in on your time off?

Professional Boundaries What about...

- Presents: do we give or accept?
- Business transactions: is it okay to do business with our clients?
- Socializing: when is it okay to spend social time with clients?
- Clothing: how do we dress, is it professional, how do we present ourselves?

Professional Boundaries Relationships Between Staff

- Touch: when is it okay to touch staff?
- Self disclosure: how far should we go when it comes to talking about ourselves with other staff?

- Use of language: swearing, calling other staff “pet names” (honey, sweetie)?
- Meeting time/place: do we discuss personal plans or issues with clients in the vicinity

Professional Boundaries Relationships Between Staff

- Presents: should there be a problem with staff exchanging gifts?
- Business transactions: is it okay for staff to do business with other staff?
- Socializing: will it be okay and what implications could this hold?
- Clothing: what could this be saying to others?

Professional Boundaries

- Anything you say or do; or neglect to say or do may result in a boundary problem. Ask yourself: “Would you want what you said or did printed in the paper or on the news?”
- Avoid risky behavior! Don’t go looking for trouble by crossing boundaries.
- When in doubt, check it out. Ask for a second opinion from a coworker, supervisor or manager. This is our professional duty!

Professional Boundaries

- Be client centered. Keeping the focus on the goals of treatment prevents role confusion and worse, role reversal.
- Be responsible. You establish and maintain boundaries of the relationship, not the client. Your client may have poor boundaries and this may need to be addressed by you.

Effective Involvement Questions to Ask Yourself

- Am I comfortable having this course of action made public?
- Could this behavior be easily misinterpreted?
- Am I satisfying personal needs?
- What are my feelings and reactions toward this client?
- Do I repeatedly think about the client outside of treatment?

Effective Involvement Questions to Ask Yourself

- Do I believe I am the only person who can help this client get better?

- Do I believe I can make up for all the client's past life deficits, sadness, or disappointments?
- Do I get angry when the client won't change?
- Do I have a balance between my work, home, social and spiritual life?

Neutrality

Neutrality is defined as a state of being in contact with disharmony without bias and side taking.

Being neutral does not mean we don't have biases, because we all do.

Biases come from our culture, social and economic groups, family, personal experiences

What is Neutrality?

- Unconditional positive regard
- Between drive and reverse
- Bracketing
- Don't give answers, help them discover answers
- Two sides to every story
- Focusing on needs rather than reacting
- Emotional objectivity
- Professional distance
- Know the difference between your issues and someone else's
- Non-judgmental
- A stance, not a feeling
- Open-mindedness about self and others
- Sitting still

Why is Neutrality so Important?

- Establishes basis for relationship
- Establishes basis for learning
- Provides for stability
- Prevents alienation
- To be a good role model
- Allows you to "see" differently
- Allows us to get new information
- Lowers resistance
- Prevents inciting

How can we Achieve Neutrality?

- Stand back and take time to see both sides
- Keep an eye on our own emotions
- Identify our own biases and set them aside

Neutrality and Personal Boundaries

By Professional Boundaries, we use the neutral stance in the therapeutic environment, while understanding the appropriate social, cultural, gender and role limits of our behavior.

Neutrality and Professional Boundaries

- Appropriate touch
- Language
- Humor
- Socialization
- Relationships between peers, clients and management
- Personal expressions

Neutrality and Professional Boundaries

We project our mission to our clients, their families and the public through our behavior, speech and the boundaries we portray.

Self Disclosure

- You do not have to have similar experiences as someone to be able to build rapport.
- You can answer questions in many ways:
 - Tell them the truth (be careful!)
 - Use third person stories (“I knew someone who...”)
 - Say, “I wonder why you would ask me that? Would it help our working together if I said yes...or what if I said no?”

Self Disclosure

- More ways to answer questions:
 - Say “That’s not why we are working together, we need to focus on you.”
 - Say “I think that’s too personal...”
 - Say “Would it make a difference?”

Types of Self

- Spiritual: the part of self that makes up who a person is and what they stand for in their life.
- Physical: the physical attributes that help to make up how a person is perceived by themselves and others.
- Emotional: the feelings that a person feels that effect the way they view everything in the world.
- Cognitive: this is a person’s intellectual ability that is used to examine and evaluate the world.

Temperaments

- Sanguine: the talker
- Choleric: the worker
- Melancholy: the thinker
- Phlegmatic: the watcher

Sanguine – *The Talker*

Strengths

Animated	Sociable
Convincing	Spirited
Promoter	Popular

Weaknesses

Brassy	Undisciplined
Unpredictable	Wants Credit
Restless	Forgetful

Choleric – *The Worker*

Strengths

Persuasive	Competitive
Resourceful	Decisive
Leader	Tenacious

Weaknesses

Bossy	Nervy
Workaholic	Domineering
Loud-over-others	Manipulative

Melancholy – *The Thinker*

Strengths

Analytical	Sensitive
Planner	Thoughtful
Idealistic	Loyal

Weaknesses

Pessimistic	Insecure
Depressed	Skeptical
Loner	Fussy

Phlegmatic – *The Watcher*

Strengths

Adaptable	Controlled
Satisfied	Inoffensive
Consistent	Listener

Weaknesses

Unenthusiastic

Indecisive

Aimless

Worrier

Doubtful

Sluggish

The 8th Habit

- Your Unique Personal Significance

Code of Ethics

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

You have some problems finding places to have sibling visits.

Can you have them in your home?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

You have been having some problems with Foster Parent A. Do you discuss these problems with Foster Parent B?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

One of your co-workers has a client who is your sister's best friend.

You have learned that she is using crystal meth. Your co-worker is working vigorously to reunify this family. Do you share the information?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

You have children placed with a single female foster parent. You have just learned that she is a lesbian. What do you do?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

What are your boundaries about giving your pager, cell phone and/or home telephone numbers to clients? What about to other professionals? When would it be appropriate?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

What about if the foster parent is a gay male?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

One of your parent/child visits in consistently at McDonald's.

Your client offers to buy your meal for you at each visit. Do you accept?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

You have grown close with a foster parent. She has asked you to do things outside of work. Do you continue the personal relationship?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

A commissioner has court-ordered supervised visits only. The visits are in the parent's home. One of the children has to go to the bathroom. What do you do?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

Mr. Jones was a parent on one of your cases. He has successfully reunified with his children, and you closed the case five months ago. He is calling asking you out on a date, and you are interested. What are your guidelines?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenario

You have been involved with the Smith family for some time, and you are pretty comfortable with each other. Mrs. Smith has told you that the front door is open, and to let yourself in. She is on her way home. What do you do?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

You've begun working with the Carters. When you visit in their home, they seem to be sidetracked by many other things (kids, TV, telephone, preparing dinner, etc.) How do you establish rules for these home visits?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

Ms. Parker is a 25 year old single mother. She had her first child fourteen, and is pregnant with her fourth. She is extremely stressed about parenting responsibilities, and does not have a large support system. Your life has some similarities to Ms. Parker's life (you were also a teenage mother). How do you offer assistance and guidance while also maintaining some boundaries?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

You have just received a new case in which one child was severely beaten and died as a result. The two surviving siblings are passive and scared of everything. The facts, police pictures, and kids' behaviors are overwhelming to you. How do you cope?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

Your immediate family is going to Worlds of Fun this Saturday. Three children in your caseload have been begging you to take them there this summer because they have never been. What do you do?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

John is beginning first grade. His foster mother has told you that she does not have school supplies and needs you to purchase them. Do you purchase them? Do you ask the biological parents to assist? What are your options?

Boundaries and Ethics Scenarios

The Brady family visit is usually at 3 p.m. today. You just learned that the children will be unavailable. The only way to reach Mr. Brady is at Burger King, where he works. What are your guidelines in contacting him?