

Reflection on an intensive,  
multidisciplinary, case  
management approach to  
working with marginalised opioid  
dependent pregnant women

Jo Northey  
Counselling Unit Manager  
Kirketon Road Centre

# Acknowledgments

- The traditional custodians of this land
- The professional and dedicated multidisciplinary team at the Kirketon Road Centre
- Daphne Hewson for her Peer Consultaion training materials
- Our clients

# Kirketon Road Centre (KRC)

- Primary healthcare service in Kings Cross
- Target groups – ‘at risk’ young people, injecting drug users (IDUs) and sex workers
- Multidisciplinary team – doctors, nurses, counsellors and outreach workers
- Drop in, free, confidential service
- No Medicare card required

# The 'one stop shop'

- General health care
- Sexual health services
- Drug & alcohol services including a specific and targeted methadone access program
- Prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and other transmissible infections
- Counselling, psychosocial and welfare support

# Some of the challenges

- Extra commitment
- We care
- Requires skill & experience
- Need to effectively engage the client
- Timeframe for intervention is limited
- High and complex needs
- Multi agency involvement

# Critical reflection

- Can reduce stress and burnout
- Maintain worker's commitment
- Increase knowledge, skills and practice
- Benefit our clients

# Why reflect cont..?

- It is only through reflecting on what we do and drawing out the implicit or tacit knowledge that we can hold these up to be examined (Thompson & Thompson, 2008)

# Why reflect cont..?

- Innovation and improvement are only possible when we examine and question, or challenge, our current practice

# Clinical example

What would you do if your client was in deep grief and sobbing as she told you about the removal of her child.

Intended action:

Active listening

Espoused theory:

People in deep grief  
need space to be heard

# Example cont.

Actual action:

Give reassurance and advice on how to cope

Theory-in-action:

I need to be providing something positive to be useful to clients (and to comfort myself)

## Another example

A pregnant client we haven't seen for a few weeks comes in and tells us they haven't used for three weeks. They look much better than the last time you saw them.

What assumptions might we make?

What are we tempted to say?

# Critical Reflection

- Asks why
- Examines assumptions (Fook & Askeland, 2007)
- Acknowledges power relations
- Recognises that actions and events are located within, and influenced by, multiple social, political, cultural & historical contexts (Hewson , 2010)

# Some theoretical perspectives on Reflective Practice

# Reflective practice and/or peer consultation

- Is necessary for self care
- Central to our professional development
- Now a requirement for psychologists
- Can work across disciplines or agencies
- Only requires a couple of like minded people

# And so

- We are working in a changing and challenging environment, no matter how experienced we are we can always learn and improve
- Reflection is necessary to discover what we don't know
- A structured process of reflection will improve our practice
- Benefits us, our colleagues and our clients.

# Contact details

Jo Northey

Counselling Unit Manager

Kirketon Road Centre

[jo.northey@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jo.northey@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

PO Box 22

KINGS CROSS NSW 1340

Tel – (02) 9360 2766

Fax – (02) 9360 5154

# References

- Argyris, C. & Schön, D. (1972) *Theory in Practice: increasing professional effectiveness*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.
- Dewey, J. (1933) *How we think: a restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston: DC Heath
- Fook, J & Askeland, G.A. (2007) Challenges of critical reflection: “nothing ventured, nothing gained”. *Social work Education*, 1-14.

# References cont.

- Fook, J. & Gardner, F. (2007) *Practising Critical Reflection. A resource handbook*. Open University Press: McGraw Hill.
- Gaye, T. & Lillyman, S. (2010) *Reflection: principle and practices for healthcare professionals*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) Quay Books: London.
- Hewson, D. (2010) Reflective Practice in Peer Consultation Groups. Workshop presented at Portside Conference Centre, & Handbook, October, 2010, [www.pdworkshops.com](http://www.pdworkshops.com)

# References cont.

- Thompson, S. & Thompson, N. (2008) *The Critically Reflective Practitioner*. Palgrave MacMillan: New York.
- Schön, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner*. Basic Books: New York.
- Schön, D. (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.
- Schön, D. (1992) 'The crisis of professional knowledge and the pursuit of an epistemology of practice'. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*. 6, 1, 49-63.