

Nosey Parkers?

Professional curiosity in nursing and social work

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Curiosity - an essential attribute

- Curiosity and a desire to enhance and develop nursing knowledge are vital in nursing practice. (Easton 2010)
- There is a need for health care professionals to make routine enquiries -'the need for professional curiosity is paramount'. (Kirtley 2013: 10)
- Qualified, experienced, advanced SW should use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity (BASW 2015 online).

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The impact of a lack of professional curiosity (PC)

- Lack of professional curiosity repeatedly cited in enquires into the abuse of children.
- “Some families are very good at providing professionals with what they need to hear” [Disguised compliance] (Woolmore, interviewed by Naqvi 2013:15)
- Woolmore argues that in order to see “...beyond the barriers put up by families says it is vital social workers retain their ‘professional curiosity’”.

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Purpose

- Research question:
 - What is the significance of professional curiosity to contemporary nursing and social work practice?
- Aims:
 - Identify the knowledge base that has been produced by nursing and social work.
 - Identify themes with significance for trans-disciplinary practice.
- Objective:
 - To highlight the contribution that professional curiosity may make to practice in both professions.

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Methodology: Scoping Study

(Arkesy and O'Malley 2005)

Determine
research
question

Identify
items

Select
items

Charting
the data

Summary

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Identifying items

- To identify the literature produced in social work the following databases were searched from 2005 to 2015 :
 - Medline,
 - Psychinfo,
 - Soc Index,Cinahl,
 - ASUS
 - SCOPUS
- The search term used were ‘Professional curiosity’, “Professional curiosity” and “social work” and “curiosity” and “social work”.
- This process was then repeated for nursing, with ‘nurs*’ substituted for ‘social work’.

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Selecting items

- The social work search produced 29 results of which 20 were not about social work, 4 not on PC. One was a book review.
 - 4 were accepted.
- The nursing search produced 27 of which 22 did not meet the criteria and 1 was prior to 2005.
 - 4 were accepted.
- The iterative search produced 9 items results, none of which met the criteria.

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Findings – social work (Mantell and Jennings 2016)

Name	Milner V.	White J.	Voshel E.	Shenaar-Golan V. & Gutman C
Year	2005	2007	2012	2013
Country of origin	New Zealand	Canada	USA	Israel
Source	Social Work Review	Canadian Journal of Counselling	Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping	Social work with Groups
Title	Mapping the new frontier of Foodbank social work	Working in the Midst of Ideological and Cultural Differences	Reflections of a Field Director	Curiosity and the Cat: Teaching Strategies That Foster Curiosity
Practice area	Models	ADP	Reflective	Education (group work)
Knowledge type	Expert opinion	Expert opinion	Expert opinion	Expert opinion
Relevance	Relevant	Relevant	Low relevance	Very relevant

Findings – nursing (Mantell and Jennings 2016)

Name	Kedge, S and Appleby,B	Kedge, S and Appleby,B	DeSilets, L. D., & Dickerson, P. S	Eason, T.
Year	2009	2009	2010	2010
Country of origin	UK	UK	USA	USA
Source	British Journal of Nursing	British Journal of Nursing	Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing	Creative Nursing
Title	Promoting a culture of curiosity within nursing practice	Promoting curiosity through the enhancement of competence	Continuing nursing education: Enhancing professional development	Lifelong Learning: Fostering a Culture of Curiosity
Practice area	Education	Education	Education	Education
Knowledge type	Expert Opinion	Expert opinion	Expert opinion	Expert opinion
Relevance	Very relevant	Very relevant	Low relevant	Very relevant

What is professional curiosity?

- “What makes me question, know, act, ask again, recognize” (Freire 1998: 80)
- “A state of arousal brought about by complex stimuli that leads to exploratory behavior” Shenaar – Golan and Gutman 2013: , after Berlyn 1960
- “A desire to know, to see or to experience that motivates exploratory behavior directed towards the acquisition of new information” (Litman 2005: 793)

Immersing oneself

Explore

Inquisitiveness

Engage

Learning

Precursor to reflection

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Areas where curiosity plays a role

- ✓ Helps us engage with other cultures
- ✓ Helps clients explore their world
- ✓ Enhances reflection
- ✓ Enhances accountability
- ✓ Professional development

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Lessons from child protection: Uncovering the 'real' story.

Whose story do we hear?

- The client?
- The carer?
- Other professionals?
- Our employers?
- Our own?



Impact of stereotyping and professional prejudice?

Reflection - how do you know, what you don't know?

How do we uncover the story?

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Factors that inhibit us hearing and responding to the story

- Tactical lack of curiosity – to avoid ‘nosiness’
- Assumptions
- Uncertainty
- Lack of time
- Lack of inclination – going through the motions
- Anxiety
- Culture – don’t go looking for work
- Lack of insight into practice
- Lack of creativity in looking for solutions

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Mind Expanding: The importance of nurturing your own curiosity

- In nursing and social work in the UK, practitioners need to provide evidence of continued development to maintain their registration.
- Professional curiosity is a driver in acquiring knowledge and updating skills (Eason 2010).
- Competence impacts on self-esteem, self respect, professional status and meaningful work (Desilets and Dickerson 2010)
- It is a life long process (Eason 2010).

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Enquiring minds: The importance of curiosity for educators

- The educator's role is to:
“... keep alive the sacred spark of wonder and to fan the flame that already glows” (Dewey, 1938: 34).
- “...good professional practice is driven by knowledge of the latest theory and research” (Munro 2011:19)
- Effective pedagogy must incorporate elements that promote interest and curiosity (Shenaar –Golan and Gutman 2013).

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Nurturing curiosity through education

- Zone of curiosity (Day 1982)
- Make training meaningful:
 - ✓ Clear linkage of the impact of curiosity in the clinical environment (Kedge and Appleby 2010).
 - ✓ Practice dilemmas and role play.
- Curiosity needs to be encouraged across modules as an essential aspect of reflection.
- Develop understanding of:
 - ✓ Issues to be alert to, such as, CSE and potential signs etc
 - ✓ How to respond (channeling their curiosity appropriately)
 - ✓ Legal framework, for example, young peoples competence.

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Professional curiosity: The importance of curiosity for employers

Systems

- Continuous Professional Development - Professional development underpins the role of social workers and nurses (Desilets and Dickerson 2010).
- Reduced hierarchy can reduce risk of organisational abuse.
- Inflexible, bureaucratic systems – hit the target, but miss the point.
- Legal implications, for example, Female Genital Mutilation

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Professional curiosity: The importance of curiosity for employers

Culture

- Open cultures encourage challenge to existing practices and development of innovative practices.
- A culture which fosters curiosity is critical to sustaining a dynamic workforce (Eason).

And

- A dynamic work environment promotes professional curiosity.

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The employer's role in nurturing curiosity

- Links to pay and promotion
- Study leave
- Secondments
- Staffing levels
- Time
- Value and cultivate professional opinion v routine
- Fund training
- Develop 'champions' in specialist areas.
- Use specialists consultants

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Discussion

- *Aim 1: Identify the knowledge base that has been produced by nursing and social work.*
- ✓ The nursing literature has a clear focus on education and the continued development of competence, whereas the social work knowledge base is more disparate in focus and origin.

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Discussion

- *Aim 2: Identify themes with significance for trans-disciplinary practice.*
- ✓ Serious Case Reviews identified the following inhibitors to PC:
 - Making assumptions
 - Fitting information to early hypothesis
 - Lack of understanding about specific issue
 - Lack of knowledge of legislation
 - Pressures of work,
 - Stress
 - Reluctant clients

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Discussion

- *Objective: To highlight the contribution that professional curiosity may make to practice in both professions.*
- ✓ The knowledge base for professional curiosity in social work and nursing is still in its infancy.
- ✓ What is meant by professional curiosity as opposed to 'common sense' curiosity still requires clarification.

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Discussion

Limitations

- i. Hearing practitioner's voices on practice.
- ii. Social work and nursing articles in non-discipline specific journals were not included.
- iii. Earlier articles not included.
- iv. Literature by other professionals not included.
- v. Nursing articles focused on the impact of professional curiosity in the classroom as opposed to it's impact in practice.

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Recommendations – the need to define terms

Curiosity by professionals *encompasses*:

- *Knowledge acquisition* – includes exploring situations, evidenced based practice, life long learning etc.
- *Reflective praxis* – exploring and developing our practice and the governing factors that may limit it, for examples systems and culture of organisations.
- *Purposeful Information gathering* from all sources in connection with an intervention and towards specific goals.

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Recommendations – the need to define terms

Professional curiosity *describes a method of practicing:*

- a strengths based and goal focused approach to engaging with individuals. A partnership of exploration that can enable the client to learn as much about themselves as the practitioner does (Buechler 2004).

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Recommendations: curiosity check list

(after Broadhurst et al. 2010)

Practitioners	Employers	Educators
Am I remaining curious and inquisitive about what I am seeing and assessing?	Is the “front-door” organised to ensure optimum conditions for the receiving and recording of information?	Is a culture of openness promoted in relation to practitioners’ anxieties and uncertainties?
Am I open to new information?	Am I able to prioritise the needs of people with TBI over performance targets where necessary?	Are students set practice orientated examples & role plays which stretch them, but are still achievable?
Would I be prepared to change my mind about this case?	Do assessment forms encourage the recording of gaps in understanding?	Are students taught how to critically scrutinise evidence?
Is there sufficient quality and quantity of evidence for judgment?	Does the culture allow for professionals to challenge each others findings?	Are students encouraged to challenge their biases?
Am I exploring process as well as content?	How are habitual practices avoided?	Are students taught how to observe and listen?
Am I able to challenge this person?	Can I recognise when staff are under stress?	Are students taught how to clearly pass on information?

Conclusion



Curiosity is the very basis of education, and if you tell me that curiosity killed the cat, I say only that the cat died nobly." (Arnold Edinborough cited in Shenaar-Golan 2013)

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- Curiosity has a central and overlapping role to play in our training, professional practice and individual development.
- So what questions are you going to ask?



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Thank you for listening

Any questions?

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