Staying curious

Professional Curiosity and Traumatic Brain Injury

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Curiosity - an essential attribute

• Qualified, experienced, advanced SW should use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity (BASW 2015 online).

• Curiosity and a desire to enhance and develop nursing knowledge are vital in nursing practice. (Easton 2010)
The impact of a lack of professional curiosity (PC)

• Lack of professional curiosity repeatedly cited in enquiries into the abuse of children.

• Disguised compliance -“Some families are very good at providing professionals with what they need to hear” (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’”.
Purpose

• **Research question:**
  – What is the applicability of professional curiosity to practice with people with traumatic brain injuries

• **Aims:**
  – Identify the knowledge base for professional curiosity in social work
  – Identify the knowledge base for professional curiosity in nursing
  – Compare these knowledge bases
  – Identify any profession specific and common factors that have specific relevance to work with people with TBI and their families.

• **Objective:**
  – To highlight the contribution that professional curiosity may make to practice with people with TBI.
Methodology: Scoping Study

(Arkesy and O’Malley 2005)

Determine research question
Identify items
Select items
Charting the data
Summary
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 was repeated for nursing, with ‘nurs*’ substituted for ‘social work’.

Identifying items
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 results.
  - 4 were accepted.

- The iterative search produced 9 items results, none of which met the criteria.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Practice area</th>
<th>Knowledge type</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Milner V.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Social Work Review</td>
<td>Mapping the new frontier of Foodbank social work</td>
<td>Models</td>
<td>Expert opinion</td>
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<td>White J.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Canadian Journal of Counselling</td>
<td>Working in the Midst of Ideological and Cultural Differences</td>
<td>ADP</td>
<td>Expert opinion</td>
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<td>Voshel E.</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping</td>
<td>Reflections of a Field Director</td>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>Expert opinion</td>
<td>Low relevance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shenaar-Golan V. &amp; Gutman C</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Social work with Groups</td>
<td>Curiosity and the Cat: Teaching Strategies That Foster Curiosity</td>
<td>Education (group work)</td>
<td>Expert opinion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Kedge, S and Appleby, B</td>
<td>Kedge, S and Appleby, B</td>
<td>DeSilets, L. D., &amp; Dickerson, P. S</td>
<td>Eason, T.</td>
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<td>Source</td>
<td>British Journal of Nursing</td>
<td>British Journal of Nursing</td>
<td>Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing</td>
<td>Creative Nursing</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Promoting a culture of curiosity within nursing practice</td>
<td>Promoting curiosity through the enhancement of competence</td>
<td>Continuing nursing education: Enhancing professional development</td>
<td>Lifelong Learning: Fostering a Culture of Curiosity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
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<td>Low relevant</td>
<td>Very relevant</td>
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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)
Areas where curiosity plays a role

• Curiosity:
  ✓ Helps us engage with other cultures
  ✓ Helps clients explore their world
  ✓ Enhances reflection
  ✓ Enhances accountability
  ✓ Professional development
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?
• Refection - how do you know, what you don’t know?
• How do we uncover the story?
Relevance to Traumatic Brain Injury: Uncovering the story

• Knowledge of TBI and its sequalea.

• Awareness of the impact on the individual’s presentation: Low insight, denial, rigidity and mental capacity.

• Awareness of the impact on families.

• Ability to relate to the emotional and psychological impact on the individual and their family.

• Failure to update knowledge base by practitioners.
Factors that may inhibit curiosity

• 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
The importance of nurturing your own curiosity

- In social work and nursing in the UK, practitioners need to provide evidence of continued development to maintain their registration.

- Competence impacts on self-esteem, self respect, professional status and meaningful work (Desilets and Dickerson 2010).

- Professional curiosity is a driver in acquiring knowledge and updating skills (Eason 2010).

- It is a life long process (Eason 2010).
The importance of PC 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).
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) with people with TBI.
  ✓ Practice dilemmas and role play including TBI.

• Curiosity needs to be encouraged across modules as an essential aspect of reflection.
The importance of PC 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 – FGM
The importance of PC for employers

Culture

• A culture which fosters curiosity is critical in the sustainment of a dynamic workforce (Eason).

• Open cultures encourage challenge to existing practices and development of innovative practices.

• A dynamic work environment promotes professional curiosity.
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 TBI ‘champions’
- Use specialists consultants
Discussion

• Aims

✓ The knowledge base for professional curiosity in social work nursing is still in its infancy (aims 1 and 2).

✓ 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 (aim 3).

✓ No explicit references to PC and TBI were found, but many of the concerns about PC identified from Serious Case Reviews are transferable to TBI (aim 4).
Discussion

• **Objective**

✔ PC has considerable potential in the field of TBI, where the unique nature and consequences of every injury requires an open curious approach, rather than a stock response.

➢ However, what is meant by professional curiosity as opposed to ‘common sense’ curiosity still requires clarification.
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.
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.

• Professional curiosity *describes*:

  - 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).
# Recommendations: curiosity check list
*(after Broadhurst et al. 2010)*

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

- It is curiosity that enables us to see and motives us to explore those other narratives.

- So what questions are you going to ask?
Thank you for listening

- Any questions?

- Contact Andy Mantell at: 
  mantella@lsgbu.ac.uk

- BISWG Website:
  http://www.biswg.co.uk

- INSWABI website:
  http://www.biswg.co.uk/html/inswabi.html
References

References


References


• Harbeck Voshel E (2012) Reflections of a field director: An opportunity to look into the past and see the future. Reflections 18 (2) 24-31.


References

• NMC (2015) [https://www.nmc.org.uk/.../nurses-and-midwives-will-have-to-report-cases-of-fgm/](https://www.nmc.org.uk/.../nurses-and-midwives-will-have-to-report-cases-of-fgm/) (assessed 18th May 2016)
References

- Shenaar-Golan V and Gutman C (2013) Curiosity and the cat: Teaching strategies that foster curiosity. Social work with groups 36(4) 349-359
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Jo Delree for her support.