

Principles of Social Case Work

Social case worker has to deal with persons having problems of varying nature, different personalities, different behaviors and different situations. Due to the dynamic nature of human behavior, he has to use different approaches & methods for the solution of problems. However, there are some well-recognized general principles which serve as guidance to every case worker. These principles are as under:

Principle of Request:

This principle is mostly used in western countries in case work method. In actual practice, social case work is started through the usage of this principle. Request from client side for solution of his problem is first contact between case worker and client. We can understand this principle in such a way that when an individual having some problems fails to solve his problems by his own efforts, he goes to an agency or case worker for solution of his problems. He requests through application or through verbal discussion. In cases of emergency, this principle is not followed by case worker.

Principle of Acceptance:

The relationship between a case worker and a client emerges under two diverse conditions. After the first introduction, the client attempts to weaken the interview due to his psychological tensions. On the other hand, social case worker tries to strengthen the interview with the help of his experience and professional skills. At the time of preliminary interview, the client suffers from inferiority complex. Under such condition the social worker provides him full sympathy and dignity. He takes keen interest on his problems. Consequently, the client reveals many facts which help to understand the solution of his problem. Thus, the principle of acceptance is based on the basic assumptions of humanitarianism. One of the most commonly used term in social work is acceptance. The principle of acceptance implies that social case worker must accept and acknowledge his client with respect and dignity. Warmth, courtesy, listening, concern, interest, fairness and willingness to enter and share life experiences are necessary for proper acceptance.

Dr. Asif Naveed Ranjha

Principle of Communication:

Communication is a process through which the ideas and thoughts of one person reach to another person. Throughout the ages, communication has served to bring man and man together, has helped him to understand his fellow being. Case worker and client communicate their ideas and views to each other. At the start, client does not provide his secret information so long as he is not able to know their proper utilization. When he realizes the sympathy and interest of the case worker, he discloses many facts with regard to his problem. Thus, the principle of communication reveals to that situation in which the client and the case worker are attached with a professional relationship.

Principle of Individualization:

In case work, the client and the case worker enter into a close relationship. But all clients do not face similar problems and circumstances. Besides in same cases, the problems of clients are similar, but the factors involved in their causation entirely differ from each other. Similarly, the individual capacity of a client requires a differential treatment. In fact, a common and general treatment is not sufficient for all types of clients. Thus the principle of individualization is based on the treatment of each client as an individual. So, a case worker should treat with his client as an individual with different thinking, feeling and emotions.

Principle of Participation:

Social case work is oriented towards the establishment of adjustment between a client and his social environment. In this reformatory process, the participation of client is very essential. The client should participate in the efforts which are undertaken with regards to the solution of his problem. Thus, the principle of participation gives the due recognition to client's individual efforts. Problem is faced by client and he knows better about reasons so his participation in throughout process is very essential.

Principle of Confidentiality:

In the process of social case work, the client discloses many of his secret facts. These facts are very useful for his treatment. But the revealed secrets should always be treated

Dr. Asif Naveed Ranjha

as confidential. In the other words, the client must have a firm faith that the facts disclosed by him will remain confidential. Confidentiality, in case work can be considered from two points of view, as an item in the professional code of ethics and as an element of the case work relationship. Confidentiality is the preservation of secret information concerning the client which is disclosed in the professional relationship. Case worker can disclose the secrets of client when he:

- Damages the rights of case worker
- Damages the rights of others
- Damages the rights of agency
- Damages the rights of whole society

Principle of Self-Awareness:

Like a client, the social case worker himself is a product of a particular environment. He has his own faiths, beliefs, attitudes and emotions. Therefore, the social worker should not be guided by his own emotions and attitudes. The principle of self-awareness is thus based on the assumption that case worker should be aware about his own conviction. In dealing with the client's problem, his approach should be objective.

Principle of Growth & Change:

Every individual has the potential for growth and change. The greatest help that any one can offer is to enable another person to realize his own potentiality for growth and change. However, one cannot realize such changes in another person unless one knows how to motivate that person. A person is motivated to change in the hope of getting some satisfaction. So the case worker has to motivate the client to change in the hope of attaining greater satisfaction.

Principle of Purposeful Expression of Feelings:

One of the greatest challenges in human living is to keep the emotions well ordered. If the basic psychological needs are deprived of expression, frustration results and this may lead to unhealthy mechanism. Purposeful expression of feelings is the recognition of the client's need to express his feelings freely, especially his negative feelings. The case

worker listens purposefully neither discouraging nor condemning the expression of these feelings.

Principle of Controlled Emotional Involvement:

The case worker must not be emotionally involved with the client during the case work process, when the client communicates his feelings or problems with the case worker. He should avoid to mix his emotions with the emotions of client who is with a problem.

Principle of Self-Determination:

During whole case work process, the case worker avoids to force his client for doing any actions. He assesses his problem and finds out possible solutions. He guides his client for better solution of problem and gives him choice to decide any and everything about problem solution. Client can make good decision after guidance from the worker. So, the worker should give him right of self-determination.