

Social Case Work

Social work profession has different specific methods for solution of problems at individual, group and community level. Primary or basic methods of social work profession are social case work, social group work and community organization and development. Social casework, as taught and practised in many countries is understood as an approach to help individuals. As a method of social work profession, it seeks to help individuals in a systematic way based on knowledge of human behaviour and various tested approaches. Every individual, child or adult, in order to grow and develop, has various needs (psychological, physical and social) to fulfil. In this task, he has to interact with different types of people and face different environmental conditions. Very often, the individual fails in his attempts fully or partially and sometimes, he has to face non-helpful reactions of the people around him.

Lack of resources, non-fulfilment of needs, unpleasant social reactions and unfavourable physical conditions disturb human development and functioning. An individual, under these stressful conditions, seeks help, sometimes from family and friends and sometimes from the professionals (teachers, lawyers, doctors, social workers, etc.) For example, a physician will help only with physical problems, a teacher with educational problems and a lawyer with the legal problems. Social workers help the individuals for solution of socio-economic problems and better social functioning in family and society.

Definition of Social Case Work

As a method of work, it involves a very careful observation of a problem. Social case work has been defined into various ways:

According to Sanford, “*Social case work is a method employed by social workers to help individuals find a solution to problems of social adjustment which they are unable to handle in a satisfactory way by their own effort.*”

According to Marry Richmond, “*Social case work is the art of doing different things for and with different people by co-operation with them to achieve at one (in harmony) and the same time their own and their society’s betterment.*”

Perlman (1957) describes this process of helping individuals in words:

*a **person** with a **problem** comes to a **place** (an agency) where a **professional representative** (trained person) helps him by a given **process**.*

She identifies the four basic components of social casework, i.e., person, problem, place (agency) and process.

Objectives of Social Case Work

- To understand and solve the internal problems of the individual
- To strengthen his ego power
- Remediation of problems in social functioning
- Prevention of problems in social functioning
- Development of resources to enhance social functioning