

Block

1

BASICS OF SOCIAL CASE WORK

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EXPERT COMMITTEE

Prof. Surender Singh
Former Vice Chancellor
Kanshi Vidhyapeeth
Varanasi

Prof. Sanjai Bhatt
University of Delhi
New Delhi

Prof. Anjali Gandhi
Jamia Milia Islamia
New Delhi

Prof. Thomas Kalam
St. John's Medical College
Bangalore

Dr. Joseph Xavier
Indian Social Institute
Bangalore

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M.S. University
Vadodara

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Dr. B. R. Ambedkhar
University, Agra

Dr. Usha John
Loyala College
Trivandrum

Dr. Archana Dassi
Jamia Milia Islamia
New Delhi

Dr. Jyoti Kakkar
Jamia Milia Islamia
New Delhi

Dr. Ranjana Sehgal
Indore School of Social Work
Indore

Dr. Beena Antony
Delhi University
New Delhi

Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU
New Delhi

Prof. Neil Abell
Florida State University
USA

Prof. Patricia Lager
Florida State University
USA

BLOCK PREPARATION TEAM

Unit 1 Dr. Asiya Nasreen, Jamia Milia Islamia

Unit 2,3&4 Dr. Archana Dassi, Jamia Milia Islamia

COURSE EDITOR

Prof. Gracious Thomas
Director, SOSW, IGNOU

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

Dr. N. Ramya
Assistant Professor, SOSW, IGNOU

PRINT PRODUCTION

Mr. Kulwant Singh
Section Officer (P)
SOSW, IGNOU

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this course MSW-014 “Relevance of Social Case Work in Counselling”. This course provides a broad understanding of social case work practice and counselling as a helping relationship used by the social workers as one of the techniques of helping the clients. Casework is one of the oldest and primary method which is widely used by social work professionals in all the settings to deal with human problems. This course provides you a comprehensive understanding of basics of social case work and its application in various settings. It consists four blocks.

The **first** block on “Basics of Social Case Work” describes social case work as a method, its origin, development, concept, framework, process and provides an overview of counselling. The block will help you to know how counselling is done within case work and describes the similarities and differences between case work and counselling. It also explains various components of social case work as well as it elaborates on the principles of social case work. Finally the block discusses various phases of social case work.

The **second** block “Social Case Work as a Process”, elaborates various skills and techniques used during casework practice. This block highlights the scope of social case work and also helps you to understand the practice of social work in Indian context.

In the **third** block on “Interviewing and Recording” you will study about interviewing in social case work which describes the concept, purpose, types, skills, roles and qualities necessary for case work interviews. This block will help you to understand the techniques in interviewing in social case work, establishing rapport, interaction, observation and attending and responding. It also helps to understand the uniqueness of case work client relationship and the pre-requisite for social case work. The block also discusses the importance of recording and documentation in social case work.

In the **fourth** block “Application of Methods to Various Settings” you will learn the application of social case work in various settings, including family setting which acquaint you with various problems in the family and the process of intervention with families through case work. It further provides insight on the community problems and how social work method is applied in various life situations. This block also highlights the importance of social case work practice which has become an inevitable part of practice in health care setting. Apart from this, one of the units of this block highlights the immense application of social case work practice in correctional institutions. It also discusses the social case work method as an essential ingredient in industrial setting. Finally the block concludes describing the case work method which is widely used by the professional social workers in educational settings to deal with the problems of students.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Social case work as a method of social work is widely practiced by large number of social work professionals in a wide variety of social service and other institutions. The knowledge base of casework is enriched by disciplines like dynamic psychology, ego psychology, and the various theoretical developments in sociology, social psychology, psychiatry and cultural anthropology. This block “Basics of social case work” is the first block of the course MSW-014 which will provide you with basic understanding of social case work practice. It comprises of 4 units.

The **first** unit “Social case work as a method” describes the origin and development of casework, concept of casework, causes of human problems, the framework for case work practice and the process of social case work. The unit also gives an overview of counselling and the similarities and differences between casework and counselling.

In the **second** unit “Components of Case Work” you will study the different components of casework and relate to the role of a social worker in each component and appreciate the need to focus on the multi-person system of the client. This unit helps you to understand the meaning and dimensions of problems, functions, and purpose of an agency and provides an insight on the process of dealing with the problem of a client.

The **third** unit is on “Case Worker Client Relationship and Case Work”. This unit will enable you to understand the guiding principles of casework client relationship. The principles of casework are principles of action, based upon a fundamental which influences, guides and directs. The principles are also referred to as qualities or elements as they are present in every good casework relationship and are the constituent parts of the relationship. There are seven principles of the casework relationship which are discussed in detail in this unit. The unit also helps you to understand the application of these principles in the Indian context.

The **fourth** unit is “Social Case Work Process”. You will learn the different phases of social case work process and the relationship among them. This unit makes you to become aware of the application of social study, assessment, intervention, and termination and evaluation process in social casework practice. It also provides the meaning, dimensions of problems and helps to visualize the individual needs and the problem of individuals and families. The unit further highlights the importance of knowledge that a social worker should possess while providing service to the clients and elaborates on the role of a social worker in social casework process.

UNIT 1 SOCIAL CASE WORK AS A METHOD

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you will be able to understand:

- the origin and development of case work
- the concept of case work and causes of human problems
- the framework for case work practice.
- An overview of counselling
- the similarities between case work and counselling
- the differences between case work and counselling

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Social case work is a method of social work practiced by large number of social workers in a wide variety of social service and other institutions. Social case work is based on knowledge, understanding and use of techniques that are skillfully applied to help people to solve problems. It helps individuals with personal as well as external and environmental matters. It is a method of helping people individually through one to one relationship that taps personal and other resources for coping with problems.

Counselling which is also a 'helping relationship' alleviates problems of individuals by establishing a helping relationship. The practice of case work is based on humanistic attempt for helping people who have difficulty in coping with the problems of daily living. In this endeavor, counselling is used by the social case workers as one of the techniques of helping. Both case work as a method of social work and counselling have certain similarities yet there are differences between them. None of them could be used as a substitute for other.

1.2 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF CASE WORK

Though social work as a profession is a product of the twentieth century but as a helping activity it is as old as mankind. Historically, charity and philanthropy have always been concerned with religious, educational and personality building activities as well as the relief of destitution. It was during 19th century that helping was given professional shape. However, the exact beginning of social case work is still unknown. Several milestones enable in tracing its evolution.

The professional method of case work originated in America when in 1843, the Association for improving the conditions of the Poor (AICP) was found and that approached the problems of poverty individually. The purposes of AICP were to visit the poor at their homes, to counsel them, to assist them and help them in getting employment, to inspire them with self respect and self reliance and wherever absolutely necessary to provide relief that should be suitable to their wants.

The Charity Organisation Society (COS) was established in 1877 and started individualized service of providing relief to the needy through volunteers known as "*Friendly Visitors*". Through the efforts of *Friendly Visitor*, scientific charity was evolved and the seeds of social case work were sown. By the turn of the century, schools of social work emerged and visitors in training received instructions in methods of investigation, diagnosis and treatment from experienced social workers. Developing out of the COS movement the first family welfare association was organized in 1905 by Mary Richmond and Frances H. McKlean. Mary Richmond's book, *Social Diagnosis* which, was published in 1917 is considered as a first book in case work. It set forth a methodology of helping clients through systematic ways of assessing their problems and handling them.

Social conditions external to individual were characteristic of case work during the early part of the 20th century. The thinking was that if the environment could not be changed, the individual should be removed from the environment even if it meant separating families. A shift in emphasis from external sociological factors to the individual's conscious social attitudes marked an important step in the development of social case work. Problems were considered as the outgrowth of real life experiences such as neglect and rejection. These case workers found psychoanalytical and the concepts of psychology very useful in case work movement. This was the mental hygiene and psychiatric era of social work.

After World War I, the psychosocial component of the problem solving method in social case work was focused. The social and economic needs of the great depression refocused sociological and reality considerations for social work. The problem solving method applied in social case work now-a-days marks a shift from traditional approach.

In India, individualized form of helping has been in practice since ancient times. The literature of every religion contains the names and activities of teachers and sages who

gave themselves and their resources to help others. The ancient Hindu Shastras and the Buddhist philosophy emphasize the activity of *daan* or giving. The stories of Gautama Buddha remind his kindness and understanding of the individual, which led to the transformation of a prostitute and a murderer.

Social service as a helping activity has been in existence in India, in one form or other through the ages. Social work as a 'learnt activity, came to India in 1936, with the starting of Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work for imparting training to those who had a university degree and who were inclined to a career in social service. With the establishment of the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work, the training for social work was changed into a full time career oriented, educational programme. Case Work figured, both as a theoretical course and also as a method of practice in the academic programme, from the year 1946. The other methods of social work were incorporated into the curriculum later. Over the years, social work as a profession and as an academic programme has been enlarged and enriched by new perspectives, ideas and theories. Case Work still continues to be taught in school of social work and is used as a method of social work in different organizations.

Thus, one can see that case work, in its limited meaning of a helping activity existed from time immemorial. But case work as a mode of helping people on the basis of a person-to-person relationship originated in second decade of the twentieth century in U.S.A. to help the poor. In this development, the focus of concern has been people in some kind of distress and those who cannot help themselves. The case work of the pre-professional period depended very much on the qualities of the heart of the helper - warmth, generosity, kindness and to be of service to others. But modern social case work as a professional method requires besides qualities of the heart, sound knowledge and skills.

1.3 KNOWLEDGE BASE OF SOCIAL CASE WORK

The theory underpinning for case work is derived basically from the profession of social work and from case work practice. The contributions from the behavioral and natural sciences are well recognized by the profession. The important contributing disciplines are: dynamic psychology, ego psychology, and the various theoretical developments in sociology, social psychology, psychiatry and cultural anthropology.

Theories of personality and personality development, structure, and function are derived from dynamic psychology. Pavlovian and Skinnerian psychology is the newer strains of theory introduced into case work practice. Behavior modification proceeds from assumptions about operant behavior and practice focused on observable behavior that can be researched and explicated.

Social case work practice applies role theory to case work practice. Role theory provides understanding of people using the services of social agencies who frequently believe they have failed in one or more of their social roles or in society's expectations of them. Social roles are culturally ascribed or achieved and everyone chooses from among many roles within the group or culture to which he or she belongs. The performance or behavior of the individual in these roles, with some way, can be fairly accurately predicted. The knowledge about these forces and their culturally determined influences support the practice of the case worker.

Learning theory, adult socialization, small group and cognition theory, systems theory, and discoveries in biology and endocrinology are other streams that have been adapted for use in social case work practice and help to broaden the theory base of practice.

Although social work “borrows” knowledge from psychology, sociology, and from the biological sciences but the profession orders, arranges, adapts, and determines the emphasis from these contributions to make them more social work practice theory. The contributions of social work to the integration and adaptation of theories takes on a dimension of major proportions in its theory building.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1. Which service was started by Charity Organisation Society?

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2. Identify important landmarks in development of case work in India.

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3. Identify the disciplines that have contributed to the knowledge base of case work.

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1.4 CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CASE WORK

Mary Richmond pioneered scientific social case work. She states that, “Social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment. In 1915 she said that social case work is the art of doing different things for and with different people by cooperating with them to achieve at one and the same time their own and society’s betterment. Again in 1922 she told that social case work is for change of the personality of the individual for proper social adjustment.

Hamilton in 1956 defined that in social case work, the client is stimulated to participate in the study of his situation, to share plans, to make an active effort to solve his problems using his own resources and whatever community resources are available and appropriate.

Perlman (1957) described social case work as a process used by certain human welfare agencies to help individuals to cope more effectively with their problems in social functioning. In this definition, Perlman has indicated four essential components of social case work in their relationship to one another: A person with a problem comes to a place where a professional representative helps him by a given process. Since this is the

heart of almost any situation where a person seeks provisional help, the distinctive characteristics are delineated which are as follows:

Person: The person is a man, woman, or child, anyone who finds himself, or is found to be, in need of help in some aspect of his social-emotional living, whether the need be for tangible provisions or counselling. As he begins to receive such help, he is called a client.

Problem: The problem arises from some need or obstacle or accumulation of frustrations or maladjustments, and sometimes all of these together, which threatens or has already attacked the adequacy of the person's living situation or the effectiveness of his efforts to deal with it.

Place: The place is a social service agency or a social service department or some kind of human welfare agency. Its purpose is to help individuals with the particular social handicaps, which hamper good personal or family living and with the problems created by faulty person-to-person, person-to-group, or person-to-situation relationships. This purpose and functions of the agency come to life in the person and professional performance of the case worker.

Process: The process, named "social case work" denotes the individualized aspect of progressive transaction between the professional helper and the client. It consists of a series of problem-solving operations carried on within a meaningful relationship. The client develops effectiveness in coping with his problem and or to so influence the problem as to resolve it or vitiate its effects.

Over the years, since the time of Mary Richmond's pioneering work, it could be made out that social case work is a method of helping people to overcome their problems of social functioning through establishing relationship.

1.5 CAUSES OF HUMAN PROBLEMS

Problems of social functioning cause distress to the individuals and they require help to overcome them. It is important to note that these individuals are not mass of people but are unique persons. People seek social work help for their problems of living, as their normal coping methods may not be effective in dealing with the particular problems. There are reasons for coping patterns to be ineffective and these could be described as follows:

Lack of material resources: Social work agencies do not provide financial resources to give assistance to people who seek material help. However, when lack of resources makes it difficult for the individual to deal with a particular situation then it is possible that the client can obtain financial help through the services of case worker depending upon the nature of situation and the policy of the agency. For example, it is possible for the poor patients in a general hospital to get monetary help through the social work department of the hospital for buying medicines.

Misconceptions about situations and relationships: Wrong notions about situations or circumstances prevent people from handling them effectively. Sometimes ignorance about existing services and resources delays action. Help is required to correct distorted perceptions and for obtaining essential information.

Illness or health related handicaps: Physical or mental illness and health related handicaps of various types make people helpless or irrational in the face of difficulties.

For instance, if the main earner in the family develops severe illness, then wife may bear extra burden and face problems for which she may require help. The patient and the family members need help to accept illness of the former and to make realistic plans for the present and future.

Emotional distress: In certain situations strong feelings are aroused which make it difficult for the person to act sensibly. For instance, sudden death of a spouse could be a shock for other. In such emotionally upsetting situation, person needs someone to verbalize feeling freely for catharsis.

Personality features: Sometimes personality features of individuals create problematic situations for oneself and others but also make the person incapable of solving problems of life. These include unhealthy attitudes and beliefs deeply embedded in the personality, which may cause numerous problems in human relationship.

1.6 FRAMEWORK FOR PRACTICE

The foundation of the practice of case work is a conceptual framework consisting of certain philosophical values or assumptions. Purpose, values, sanctions, knowledge and methods are at the heart of social case work practice with individual's. These are as follows:

Purpose: Purpose is the reason for practice. According to Freindlander (1991), the purpose of case work practice is to help individual client to solve or to prevent or to cure the breakdown of a healthy relationship between an individual and his family or other associates. It helps people to identify and resolve problems in their relationships or at least to minimize their effects.

In general, the purpose of social case work is to help an individual client to solve his psycho-social problems in such a way that he finds himself capable of dealing with these problems at present and also may solve them in the future (Mishra 1994). Thus social case work has the following objectives:

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

Values: Values determine worker's attitudes and approaches. Social Work assumes inherent worth and importance of the individual and interdependence between the individual and society. In the democratic tradition, powers are delegated to the individual and people. Social institutions are created by people and are subordinate to their desires and wishes. They are formed by individuals and exist to serve them. They can be changed or renewed but the individual remains and enjoys a certain supremacy

Emphasis is placed on the importance of respect for the dignity of the individual, and on his or her ability to make important decisions. Basic assumptions about people profoundly influence professional practice and these philosophical value postulates are as follows:

- The value and worth of an individual is uppermost

- Man and society are interdependent upon each other and have social responsibility for one another
- Each person is essentially different and unique yet, each person has needs in common with all others
- In a democratic society the potential of each person is realized and it is assumed that they will accept social responsibility by actively participating in society
- When an individual is unable to function, society has a responsibility to remove the obstacles that prevent achievement.

These value orientations are the result of philosophic thought over years of human existence and belief in these values is a necessary pre-requisite in order that case work may be effective.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1. What are the four essential components of social case work that have been indicated by Perlman?

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2. Describe the values underlying case work practice

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1.7 PROCESS OF SOCIAL CASE WORK

The process of case work consists of different steps and activities. It is constant movement of the continuing development of the case that involves several activities that are carried by worker and client individually or by both of them together. Study, assessment, intervention and termination are the main steps of case work process.

Study: study is the systematic study of the client and circumstances in relation to the problem. During this phase, the client is engaged in presenting the problem. This marks the beginning of relationship that is an important thread throughout the process. In the study phase client makes decision to enter treatment. If the decision is not the service, then also the initial contacts should be positive. The attitude of worker is an important factor that controls the decision of the client. Respect for the worth and dignity and right to self-determination are communicated by interested concern, listening to statements of the problem and by assurance that the client's views are of paramount importance.

Data gathering and history taking concentrate on relevance. It helps in getting clues regarding the problem, the client's perceptions of the problem and the way the problem

was handled in the past. Such data are useful for assessment purposes and for decisions on treatment goals. Data gathering is not an end but a means and is justified if it serves the purposes of assessment.

Assessment: assessment provides basis for treatment by recognizing the uniqueness of every person and situation. Assessment is dynamic which begins at intake and continue till termination. It begins with the statement of problem by the client and result in understanding of the problem. It includes initial impressions that are accepted, modified or even rejected in the light of additional information that as the case moves on. Assessment includes judgment about the strength and limitations of individual in coping with the situation. The worker and the client in assessment phase decide the goals mutually. Planning for treatment and treatment itself are guided by assessment.

Intervention: Intervention or treatment begins with the first contact. The process of study is considered treatment when it helps the client to clarify the problem and make changes in life situation resulting from this understanding. The client and worker together decide the goals for intervention. Relationship is the mainspring of social case work that is nurtured by warmth, genuineness and congruence of the worker.

The skills of intervention include interviewing, recording, referrals to other agencies and services and helping the client use personal and other resources. The efforts during Intervention support and strengthen client's ego through emotional catharsis, reassurance, clarification of the problem and patient listening.

Termination: termination means the ending or limiting of a process that was commenced when the agency including worker agreed to enter into the interventive process aimed at helping a client with a problem. The processes of study, assessment and intervention are not ever lasting. The plans to terminate need to be considered and understood alike by the worker and the client.

Termination fosters growth and change. The client can look back with satisfaction on what has been accomplished. It signals that the worker has the confidence in the client's ability to cope with situations and that the role of the worker is that of an enabler. Termination planning avoids the fostering of crippling dependence and false hope that may have been build by some clients that in some way the responsibility could be shifted to the agency or to the worker.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. Explain the importance of assessment in case work process.

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1.8 AN OVERVIEW OF COUNSELLING

Counselling is a process in which the counselor assists the counselee to make interpretations of facts relating to a choice, plan or adjustment, which he needs to make. It is face-to-face situation in which, by reason of training, skill or confidence

vested in him by the other, one person helps the second person to face, perceive, clarify, solve, and resolve adjustment problem. It is a warm, permissive, safe, understanding, but limited social relationship within which counsellor and counsellee discuss the effective behaviour of the latter, including his ways of dealing with his emotionally toned needs and the situations that give rise to them.

Counselling is a personal help directed toward the solution of a problem which a person finds he cannot solve himself and therefore, seeks the help of a skilled person whose knowledge, experience and general orientation can be brought into play in an attempt to solve problem.

Counselling is an interactive process conjoining the counsellee who needs assistance and the counselor who is trained and educated to give this assistance” (Perez, 1965). The counselor can initiate, facilitate and maintain the interactive process, if he communicates feelings of spontaneity and warmth, tolerance, respect and sincerity.

Smith (1955) defines counselling as “a process in which the counselor assists the counsellee to make interpretations of facts relating to a choice, plan, or adjustments which he needs to make.

Counselling is also defined as “a process which takes place in a one-to-one relationship between an individual beset by problems with which he cannot cope alone and a professional worker whose training and experience have qualified him to help others reach solutions to various types of personal difficulties” (Hahn and MacLean, (1955).

All these definitions view that counselling is a process, which involves bringing about sequential changes over a period of time leading to a desired goal. Counsellor-counsellee relationship is not casual but it is characterized by warmth, responsiveness and understanding.

Counselling aims-at enabling individuals to solve present problems to prepare themselves for future tasks, to attain higher standards of efficiency and well-being and to develop personal resources for growth. Some of the objectives of counselling can be summarized as follows (McLeod, 1998):

- a) Counselling helps in the acquisition of an understanding of the origins and development of emotional difficulties and lead towards increased capacity to take rational control over feelings and actions
- b) Person could become more aware of thoughts and feelings which, had been blocked off or denied, or developing a more accurate sense of how self is perceived by others.
- c) Counselling helps in the development of a positive attitude towards self, marked by an ability to acknowledge areas of experience, which had been the subject of self-criticism and rejection.
- d) Counselling helps in moving in the direction of fulfilling potential or achieving an integration of previously conflicting parts of self.
- e) It enables to find a solution to a specific problem which the client had not been able to resolve alone.
- f) It facilitates the client to acquire ideas and techniques to understand and control behaviour

- g) Counselling helps in acquisition of social skills such as maintenance of eye contact, turn-taking in conversations, assertiveness or anger control.
- h) The modification or replacement of irrational beliefs or maladaptive thought patterns associated with self-destructive behaviour could be done through counselling.
- i) Counselling could be used for the modification or replacement of maladaptive or self-destructive patterns of behaviour.
- j) Counselling seeks to bring systemic change by introducing into the way in which social systems operate.
- k) The client is empowered through counselling by working on skills, awareness and knowledge, which enable them to confront social inequalities.

1.9 COUNSELLING WITHIN CASE WORK

Social case workers offer variety of services to clients like providing financial relief, help in getting work, medical aid etc. In addition to these they also provide counselling help. The term counselling is not used so frequently in case work circles, it is used precisely to emphasize the fact that in giving the client an opportunity to release his feelings, to find new solutions to his adjustment problems, the case worker utilize the same process as the one used by the other helping professionals.

Counselling is in its essence is a 'helping relationship'. All of us seek to satisfy our personal needs. While trying to gratify needs, individuals find themselves in conflicting situations in which their interests clash with those of others. Often this could lead to a sense of personal inadequacy and inferiority which in turn leads to lack of self-confidence, withdrawal and lack of desire for achievement.

The counselling alleviates this suffering by establishing a helping relationship. In the words of Rogers, a helping relationship is one "in which one of the participants intends that there should come about, in one or both parties, more appreciation of, more expression of, more functional use of the latent inner resources of the individual". Shertzer and Stone (1968) mentions that a helping relationship is characterized by certain essential features, which are as follows:

1. It is meaningful because of its personal and intimate nature.
2. It is affective in nature involving mild to strong emotional relationships.
3. It involves the integrity of the helper and the helped and is sustained voluntarily.
4. It involves the mutual consent of the counselor and the counselee either explicitly stated or implicitly to be inferred.
5. It takes place because the individual in need of help is aware of his own limitations and inadequacies.
6. It involves confidence reposed in the helper.
7. It is often achieved and maintained through communication and interaction and it involves give and take that is, it is not a one-way process.
8. It involves a certain amount of 'structure'. The situation is either vaguely or clearly defined.

9. It is marked by the desire for change in the existing condition of the client, that is, it is concerned with the improvement of the client.

Most human relationships involve rendering or receiving of help. Over the years, importance is placed on providing help effectively and efficiently. In other words, helping has become professional in nature and social case work is a professional activity of helping. In addition to help like offering financial relief, medical aid etc case workers provide help through counselling. Case Workers, while offering counselling services, utilize similar process as used by the professional counselors. The emphasis is given on the process of counselling for releasing client's anxiety and strains. Therefore during the process of case work, counselling is provided to the clients under the following conditions (Aptekar, 1955, Mishra, 1992):

1. The individual is under tension, arising from incompatible personal desires or from the conflict of social and environmental demands with individual needs. The tension and stress so created are greater than the stress involved in expressing his feelings about his problems.
2. The individual has some capacity to cope with life. He possesses adequate ability and stability to exercise some control over the elements of his situation. The circumstances with which he is faced are changeable as to make it possible for him to control or alter them.
3. There is an opportunity for the individual to express his conflicting tensions in planned contacts with the counselor.
4. The person is able to express these tensions and conflicts either verbally or through other media. A conscious desire for help is advantageous, but not entirely necessary.
5. The person is reasonably independent either emotionally or spatially, of close family control.
6. The person is reasonably free from excessive instabilities, particularly of an organic nature.
7. The person possesses an adequate intelligence for coping with his life situations.
8. The person is mature enough to deal somewhat independently with life, and retain some elasticity of adjustment.

1.10 SIMILARITIES BETWEEN CASE WORK AND COUNSELLING

Counselling is one of the techniques of social case work, which is used to prepare the client to participate in the treatment plan. It means that there are certain similarities in case work and counselling and these include:

1. **Similar objectives:** The purpose of social case work is to help an individual client to solve his psycho-social problems in such a way that he becomes capable of dealing with these problems at present and also may solve in future if such problems arise. Counselling aims at enabling individuals to solve the present problems, to prepare themselves for future tasks and to attain a higher degree of efficiency in dealing with his problems.
2. **Similar type of clients:** In case work and counselling 'client' is a man, women,

or child, anyone who finds himself or is found to be, in need of help in some aspect of his social-emotional living, shelter, the need be for tangible provisions or counselling.

3. **Similar type of problems:** The problems within the purview of social case work are those that vitally affect or are affected by person's social functioning. In case work client sees his problems as lying in some interacting relationship between himself and some other persons or between himself and his environment. Help is provided to the client for some readjustment of the self in relation to the demands and expectations of the social role he plays. Help is also directed to the readjustment of some parts of his social environment. If the client finds that his inner problems exert such pressure over his problems of social functioning, he may need counselling.
4. **Relationship:** The relationship is the medium in case work as well as in counselling through which help is provided to the client. It is the channel of the entire case work process and counselling process through which the mobilization of the capacities of the client becomes possible. It is planned throughout in interviewing, study, diagnosis and treatment.
5. **Worth and Dignity of the Individual:** Case Work and counselling treat the client as an individual who has right to get hope and reorganize as a person of worth and dignity. He has every right to make his choice and decisions himself.
6. **Common principles:** Social case work and counselling, both believe in the individualization of all clients irrespective of their similarities in the problems. Both accept the client as he is and provide opportunities for self-expression. Case Worker and counselor do not impose their own judgment to the clients. Client has every right to determine his own path for his easy recovery from malfunctioning.

1.11 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CASE WORK AND COUNSELLING

There are many threads that run in common between case work and counselling yet the two processes are different and some of these differences include the following:

1. The main base of help in social case work is social service whereas in counselling, help is provided to the client without social service.
2. Social case work is always practiced in an agency but agency is not essentially required in counselling.
3. In social case work concrete service is rendered along with oral discussion but concrete service is not provided in counselling. Counselor and client talk together on the problem but no material help is provided.
4. In case work client is studied and understood as a whole but counselor is concerned and deals with one type of problem in one time.
5. Social case work gives an emphasis on activity but in counselling, the client is enabled to understand his problem.
6. In social case work the emphasis is basically on client and the type of service to be provided but in counselling an emphasis is laid on the problem, not the person concerned.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1. Explain the meaning of counselling.

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2. What are the characteristics of a helping relationship?

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3. Explain any three differences between case work and counselling.

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1.12 LET US SUM UP

Since twentieth century onwards social work has started being observed as profession. Charity and philanthropy embedded in religious, educational and personality building activities were the basis of this kind of social work initiatives. Professional social work or precisely case work began in America. In 1877 Charity Organisation Society (COS) was established and relief to the needy was provided through volunteers known as “*Friendly Visitors*”. In 1905, Mary Richmond and Frances H. McKlean organized the first family welfare association to deliver case work services in systematic manner. In India Social work as a professional discipline was started in 1936, with the starting of Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work.

The knowledge base of case work is enriched by disciplines like dynamic psychology, ego psychology, and the various theoretical developments in sociology, social psychology, psychiatry and cultural anthropology. Now, social case work is described as a process used by certain human welfare agencies to help individuals to cope more effectively with their problems in social functioning.

The practice of case work as method of social work rests on purpose and values and follows a four-phase process. Study, assessment, intervention and termination are the main steps of case work process.

Counselling is a helping relationship. The major objective of counselling is to help individuals become self-sufficient, self-dependent, self-directed and to adjust themselves efficiently to the demands of a better and meaningful life. Therefore, the counsellor’s services are preventive, developmental and therapeutic in nature. Both social case work and counselling are professional activity of helping, the former provides counselling to their clients in different circumstances following the similar process as followed in other

helping professions. Though there are intersecting strands between social case work and counselling yet the two are different from one another.

1.13 KEY WORDS

Person: The person is a man, woman, or child, anyone who finds himself, or is found to be, in need of social work help

Place: The place is a social service agency or a social service department or some kind of human welfare agency.

Study: Study is the systematic study of the client and circumstances in relation to the problem.

Intervention: Intervention is initiation of treatment in case work process that helps the client to clarify the problem and make changes in life situation resulting from this understanding.

Counselling: Counselling is a process, to bring sequential changes over a period of time leading to a desired goal.

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UNIT 2 COMPONENTS OF CASE WORK

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 The Person
- 2.3 The Problem
- 2.4 The Place
- 2.5 The Process
- 2.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.7 Further Readings and References

2.0 OBJECTIVE

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Understand the different components of social case work and relate to the role of a social worker in each component;
- Appreciation of the need to focus on the multi-person system of the client;
- Development of knowledge that a social worker must understand while providing service to a client in a particular agency;
- Understand the meaning and dimensions of problems;
- Understand the functions and purpose of an agency; and
- Gain insight on the process of dealing with the problem of a client.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Social case work is a complex, dynamic, and evolving phenomenon. It is complex by virtue of the varied knowledge which feed it, the ethical commitments which infuse it, the special auspices and conditions of its practice, the objectives and ends which guide it, the skills which empower it. It is complicated by the fact that it deals with materials which are in interaction and change among themselves and also in response to the interaction of case work itself. As it is experienced, practiced, or thought about, the social case work is a living event. As such it cannot be contained within a definition. Yet we can try to define it in a manner as it is used by the practitioners.

Social case work is a process used by certain human welfare agencies to help individuals to cope more effectively with their problems in social functioning.

Case work is both social and psychological. The term “social” implies which involves more than one person; the term “psychological” is that which takes place within an individual. Since the individual does not live in a vacuum, the content of much of his inner experience is “psycho-social.” In other words, there is no real dichotomy between the social and the psychological. There is an aspect of experience, however, which belongs to and is characterized by the individual himself.

The nucleus of the case work event is this: a person with a problem comes to a place where a professional representative helps him by a given process. Since this is the heart of almost any situation where a person seeks professional help, the distinctive characteristics must be delineated.

There are four components of case work known as the 4 P's:

1. The Person
2. The Problem
3. The Place
4. The Process

Let us examine each, one by one

2.2 THE PERSON

The person is a man, woman or child or anyone who finds himself/herself, or is found to be, in need of help in some aspect of his social-emotional living, whether the need be for tangible provisions or counsel. As he/she begins to receive help, he/she is called a "client". A client is one who seeks professional help, one who employs the help of another or one who is served by a social agency or an institution.

David Landy has identified the process a person goes through in seeking help or becoming a client:

1. The help seeker must decide something is wrong.
2. The help seeker must face the probability that family, friends and neighbours will know of his disability.
3. The help seeker must decide to admit to a helper he is in distress, failed or is not capable of handling his own problem.
4. The help seeker must decide to surrender enough sovereignty and autonomy to place himself in a dependency role.
5. The help seeker must decide to direct his search for help among persons and resources known to him.
6. The help seeker must decide to take time off a job or from other responsibilities to receive help.
7. The help seeker may realize that in receiving help relationship with others may be threatened.

The person seeking help brings to the helping situation concerns, needs and problems. The person comes with concerns, unmet needs and problems of social functioning. He/She comes from a societal and cultural milieu, a set of life experiences, and a set of transactions with other person's that make the person unique yet sharing the commonalities of humankind. The client of a social agency is like the other persons one has ever known, but he/she is different too. In broad ways he/she is like all other human beings; in a somewhat more limited way he/she is like all other human beings of his age or time or culture. But, as one moves from understanding him/her simply as a human being to understanding him/her as this particular human being, one finds that, with all his/her's general likeness to others, he/she is as unique as his thumbprint. By nuance

and fine line and by the particular way his/her bone and brain and spirit are joined, he/she is born and grows as a personality different in some ways from every other individual of his/her family, genus, or species.

The client role calls for active participation in the helping endeavor, which includes furnishing appropriate information to inform the decision making process, participation in the decision-making process to the limits of the clients ability and capacity, and the carrying put of the mutually agreed upon tasks.

Clients are of several types:

1. Those who ask for appropriate help for themselves.
2. Those who ask for help for another person or system.
3. Those who do not seek help but are in some way blocking or threatening the social functioning of another person (e.g., the neglectful parent in a child protection case).
4. Those who seek or use help as a means to reach their own goals or ends.
5. Those who seek help but for inappropriate goals.

Identification of clients type is the first step in the delivery of service, for the worker-client relationship and interaction will vary depending on the type of client and the nature of help sought.

Felix Biestik has identified seven needs of clients as they come to the helping situation:

1. To be dealt with as an individual rather than a type or category.
2. To express feelings both positive and negative.
3. To be accepted as a person of worth, a person with innate dignity.
4. Sympathetic understanding of and response to feelings expressed.
5. To be neither judged nor condemned for the difficulty in which the clients finds himself.
6. To make own choices and decisions concerning one's own life.
7. To help keep confidential information about self as secret as possible.

The client is a person with both needs and a problem(s). The problem may be related to a client. No one can ever know the whole of another person, though may sometimes delude himself/herself to that effect. The reason for this lies not only in the subtle dimensions and interlacing of any personality but also in the shift and reorganization of new and old elements in the personality that take place continuously just because the person is alive in a live environment and is in interaction with it. Nevertheless, the person is a whole in any moment of his/her living. He/she operates as a physical, psychological, social entity, whether on the problem of his/her neurotic anxieties or of his inadequate income. He/she is a product-in-process, so to speak, of his/her constitutional makeup, his/her physical and social environment, his/her past environment, his/her experiences, his/her present perceptions and reactions, and even his/her future aspirations. It is this physical-psychological-social-past-present-future configuration that he/she brings to every life-situation he/she encounters.

The person's behaviour has this purpose and meaning to gain satisfaction, to avoid and dissolve frustration and to maintain his/her balance- in- movement.

To understand a person, it is important to know his/her parts of personality that is Id (life forces of the individual), ego (conscious, drivers gliding our personality forces) and superego (unconscious, ethical values and principles) which have an important role in governing his/her behaviour.

Whether a person's behaviour is or is not effective in promoting his/her well-being depends in large part upon the functioning of his/her personality structure. The forces of the human personality combine in three major functions: (1) the life energies that seek satisfactory outlets; (2) the check system, automatic or voluntary, that halts, modifies, or re-channel these drives to make their ends acceptable to their owner and his/her environment; and (3) the organizing and governing operations that controls the negotiations and balances within the person himself/herself, as between what he/she wants and what he/she can and ought to do, and between himself and his/her physical environment. Freud, a psychologist defined them as id, ego and superego. The harmonious concerted action of these forces in one makes for personal and social balance and competence; their discord of faultiness is revealed in behaviour that is personally thwarting or socially unacceptable.

A person at any stage of his/her life is not only "a product" of nature but is also and always "in process" of being in the present and becoming in the future. What happens to the individual today may be as vital to him/her as what happened yesterday. Those physical, social and interpersonal situations he encounters in his/her operations today as worker, parent, spouse, student or client will have an impact upon him/her and will respond that can affect his/her development either morbidly or benignly.

The persons "being and becoming" behaviour is both shaped and judged by the expectations he/she and his/her culture have invested in the status and the major social role he/she carries- a man may be a father, a son, an employee, a club member and a client of the case worker, all in the space of a few hours. His/her social role consists of the major function he/she carries at a given time with broadly designated behaviour, responsibility and rewards. His/her conflict may be cause by his recognition of what his role calls for and his emotional inability to meet it.

The person who comes as client to a social agency is always under stress. Regardless of the client's reason for coming for help, the client brings much more than concerns, needs or problems to the helping situation. The client brings the total self as a biological, psychosocial, cultural and spiritual being. This include the resources of self and the personal environment and also environmental constraints. What the client brings includes perceptions of self and the situations and patterns of coping with stress and patterns of interpersonal relationships. The clients present need and/or problem is affected in part by the way developmental needs have been met and by needs arising from the diverse aspects of the client's lifestyle and from the expectations of the client's environment.

One of the major tasks of the worker is to understand the client as a unique person in a unique situation. There can never be total knowledge about a client; that is impossible. The worker seeks knowledge about the client that is needed for giving the service to be delivered. The client is the major source of the facts used to develop the understanding of the person in the situation.

Before a person seeks help from a social agency, he or she has usually attempted to deal with a problem in a way that has worked with previous problems commonly known as "coping". Coping results not only in solving problems but in the reduction of tension and anxiety. If the coping is not successful, a person may then turn to his or her natural

support system ,that is, friends, relatives, associates etc. Thus, individuals often come to the agency after a period of unsuccessful attempts to deal with their problems.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

- 1) What are the characteristics of the Person?

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- 2) What can be the roles of a social worker in understanding and dealing with the client?

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2.3 THE PROBLEM

Problem, according to the America Heritage dictionary is a “question or situation that presents uncertainty, perplexity or difficulty”. This definition is rather inadequate without elaboration for defining in this unit.

- 1) When does a situation become problematic?
- 2) When does a problematic situation become appropriate for social work concern?

Clarification of the term becomes somewhat easier if one looks at a problem in terms of both need and social functioning,. Concern for and need of human systems is the basis of the social work response. When the need is seen as mitigating a block to social functioning, a problem of concern to social work is said to exist. This concern should be understood also to include potential blocks to human functioning so as to include preventive as well as ameliorative concerns. The perplexing situation is then related to removal of the obstacle that blocks need fulfillment. For problem solution, goals are related to need fulfillment.

In order to work out a problem, one must first understand it, comprehend it and be oriented too In the attempt to understand any problem, there must be some analysis of it, some translation into other familiar terms, some sets of associations which can be brought to it. This is the way case worker function when they are confronted with a problem. They must come to the point where they can see through it. The frame of reference which is used in seeing through the problem may vary, but the necessity to understand, it is universal. Moreover, one must understand not only the nature of the problem, as a social, economic or psychological entity but also the personal context of the problem, in other words the personalities which are involved in it. No service can be administered effectively without such understanding.

Dimensions of how a problem arises:

1. The problem arises from some need or obstacle or accumulation of frustrations or maladjustments and sometimes all of these together which threatens or has already attacked the adequacy of the person's living situation or the effectiveness of his/her efforts to deal with it.
2. The social-functioning problem may rest in interpersonal relationships; for example, the inability of a parent to understand an adolescent child's need and thus, is so strict that the relationship between parent and child is at the point where there is open rebellion and an inability to discuss the situation
3. The problem may rest in an inability to negotiate with systems in the environment for e.g., a patient in a hospital is unable to ask the doctor the questions that are bothering the patient or to make his/her concerns known to the doctor.
4. The problem may rest in inadequate or inappropriate role performance; for example, the parent does not meet the nutritional needs of the child or maintain a suitable home for that child. May be one of deficiency; that is, an individual does not have either the material resources or the personal capacity (temporary or permanent) to carry out the task needed for coping with a situation. An older person with a limited income and limited physical capacity may not be able to maintain a home or fix nutritious meals.
5. One may not have the preparation needed to carry out a social role. For example, the mother who did not have adequate mothering as a child and has received no instruction in childcare may not be able to properly care for her child because she just does not know how to care for small children.
6. May be due to disturbances or disorder resulting in intrapsychic turmoil, constriction or distortion. For e.g. the person may be mentally ill or have some perpetual difficulties which result in using inappropriate or ineffective means for coping with life situations.
7. May be there is discrepancies between expectations of a person and the demands of various segments of that person's environment. For example, an individual expects that food, clothing and shelter will be provided by a social agency without work on his/her part, but the agency can only provide partially for those needs.
8. Problems may arise due to discrepancies between environmental demands and personal needs. For example, a teenage girl whose mother is ill is expected to care for younger siblings, but she needs time for completing her education and for socialization with her peers.

According to Perlman, the social functioning focus of social work began to emerge when problems were seen not as pathological but as part of life. Problems are frequent and unexpected in the human situation, and solutions are usually found without professional help. The concern of social work narrowed to those problems in which persons cannot readily unblock the fulfillment of need with their own resources. Problem in social work usage refers to a social-functioning situation in which need fulfillment of any of the persons or systems involved is blocked or has a significant potential of blockage, and in which the person involved cannot by themselves remove the block to need fulfillment.

Characteristics of a client's problem:

1. The problems within the purview of social case work are those which vitally affect

or are affected by a persons social functioning. The problem may be some unmet needs-economic, medical, educational, recreational-which hampers or undermines a person's adequate living. Or it may be one of stress-psychological, social, physical- which causes the person to be ineffective or disturbed in carrying his/her social roles.

2. The multifaceted and dynamic nature of the client's problem makes necessary the selection by the case worker and client of some part of it as the unit for work. Three main considerations enter into the choice of problem focus: 1) what the client wants 2) what the case worker's professional judgment's points to as possible and desirable solutions and 3) What the agency is for and can offer.
3. Problems in any part of a human beings living tend to have "chain reaction." This is because while in the study of a person he/she may be compartmentalized and analyzed as a biological or psychological or social entity, a person lives a dynamic interrelated whole, reacting to and upon the dynamic whole of his/her environment. Whatever hurts one parts of his/her living will have its impact in other parts.
4. Any problem which a person encounters has both an objective and a subjective significance. A problem may be seen and understood by an onlooker; it is felt by its carrier, and it is experienced with the particularity of individual difference. Two aged men unable to work and needs money. This is a simple problem for which there is a ready solution in the form of age old assistance, yet it may not feel simple for the two. One may feel depressed by the problem itself-that he is old, is found useless, and is dumped by employers and so on. The other may accept his ageing and feels he has a right to be "given a hand", but his anger and anxiety are aroused by the solution proffered-he cannot see why he must prove residence in his state or how he is expected to manage on so little money. Case worker must elicit and often deal with such feelings so that they may implement rather than obstruct the client's work on his/her problem.
5. Not only do the external (objective) and internal (subjective) aspects of the problem co-exist, but either one may be the cause of the other. Everyone encounters situations in ones social living that, by his/her own momentary or chronic inability to deal with them, create internal problem in oneself. Case work help in problem solving, provides other things, an intervention which breaks or modifies the cause- effect chain of difficulties. Since this intervention may in itself prove problematic to the client, the social case work must seek to understand his/her means and processes as astutely as is possible so that he/she may facilitate rather than complicate the client's problem solving efforts.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

- 1) What are the dimensions in which a problem may arise?

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- 2) At what stage can the social functioning of social work begin to emerge in the context of the problem of the client?

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2.4 THE PLACE

The place is a social service agency or a social service department of another kind of human welfare agency. The place to which the person comes for help with his/her problem is known as a social agency. The term “agency” has a misleading American sound, but it was used in British case work literature in the late nineteenth century. Present day usage refers to the institution within which the case worker practices; sometimes it is the larger institution that is intended (e.g. the local authority) and at other times it is the smaller social work microcosm (e.g. the psychiatric social work department in a mental hospital). The institutions in which case workers practice (schools, child guidance clinics, children’s departments of the hospitals and courts and so on) have all been established to achieve certain broad social purposes and case workers have a part to play in achieving them. Its purpose is to help individuals with the particular social handicaps which hampers good personal or family living and with the problems created by faulty person-to-person, person-to-group or person-to-situation relationships. This agency’s purpose and functions come to life in the person and professional performance of the case worker.

Social case work agencies differ one from the other in a number of ways, but there are three major factors that determine their classification:

1. Their source of support- public taxation (child welfare, physical and mental health programmes etc) or voluntary contribution.
2. Their source of professional authority – primary agencies carry full authority and responsibility for their social functions and secondary agencies derive their authority and responsibility from the host agency.
3. Their special function and area of concern- primary agencies both public and private, may define certain areas of social need as the particular fielding in which they give services. Secondary, case work help is related to the work of some other profession, such as medicine, education or law and to its specific knowledge and purpose.

Perlman has described some of the characteristics of Agency:

1. The social agency is an organization fashioned to express the will of a society or of some group in that society. An agency embodies a society’s decision to protect its members against social breakdowns, to prevent their maladjustments and/or to promote the development of better or higher levels of humans functioning.
2. Each social agency develops a programme by which to meet the particular areas of need with which it sets out to deal-The agency programme consists of the aids and activities by which its intent is translated into provisions of help. The ways and means which an agency programme provides will convey its function effectively or

not, depending on a number of factors: money, the knowledge and competency of the agency staff; the interest, resources and support of the community; the consistency between ascertained needs and the proffered means.

3. The social agency has a structure by which it organizes and delegates its responsibilities and tasks, and governing policies and procedures by which it stabilizes and systematizes its operations-structure, as it may be depicted on an organizational chart, is the agency's anatomy. The agency's body is made up of many members with different purposes and powers, all dependent upon one another in the body's total working. The structure of an agency identifies and assigns separate and joint responsibilities, authorities and tasks to each personnel and demarcates the relationship among various functions in the total agency body.
4. The social agency is a living, adaptable organism susceptible to being understood and changed, much as other living organisms-If agency structure may be seen as its anatomy, its operations may represent its physiology, and the purposes, attitudes, and goal directions of its personnel and board are its psychology. The circumstance of its inception, the person's who nurtured it and the social situations it encountered will have affected the agency's present behaviour.
5. Every staff member in an agency speaks and acts for some part of the agency's function, and the case worker represents the agency in its individualized problem-solving help-What a case worker can do with and for his client derives both from his professional commitment and skill and from the agency which hires him/her. In order to represent the agency, he/she must be psychologically identified with the purpose and the policies of his/her agencies. Every social agency banks a fund of knowledge about the experience with the particular problems it has set out to solve.
6. The case worker, while representing his/her agency, is first and foremost a representative of his/her profession-The social case worker practices in the conviction that individual human welfare is the purpose and the test of social policy; that his/her attitude combine open enquiry with dedication to the people and the person he/she serves; that he/she maintains "social-conscience" and that he/she conducts himself ethically in all his/her professional transactions.

Social work is an agency-based profession. The agency is the immediate environment of the worker-client interaction. This interaction often takes place in an office or building identified as the "agency". The influence of the agency is strong even when the interaction takes place elsewhere in the community. As an employee, the worker is a part of the agency system, and because of this the worker is accountable to the agency. The form and content of the service offered must be within the agency's purview and guidelines. The manner in which the agency is structured and functions greatly influence the nature of the worker-client interaction. The agency also provides resources for both the worker and the client.

The agencies are established to carry out broad social functions as healing and rehabilitation in the case of hospitals, ensuring good parental care in the case of children's department of the local authority and so on. The worker is expected to contribute to these objectives and to clarify and develop his/her own function within this broad social purpose. Yet, the most important aspect of agency function is that it constitutes the meeting point of social worker and the client, it is what brings them together and gives meaning and sustenance to their continued contact. The community provides financial

and other support and sanction for the agency; community attitudes impact the agency and its capacity to deliver services. It also has expectations for the nature and outcome of services. There are two kinds of expectations: the professional and the bureaucratic. The greater the organizations, the larger the differences. Bureaucratic expectations call for loyalty to the organization; acceptance of authority from achievement of goals, on specialization and on efficiency. Professional expectations call for commitment to professional values and to the service of clients; ability to have a broad span of decision-making power; collegial relationship and an emphasis on meeting client need and allowing for client self-determination and individualization.

Before a worker can effectively deliver service as a professional in a bureaucratic organization, the worker must first understand the organization. The first task in understanding an agency is to define its boundaries. The second task is to determine environmental factors that influence the structure and functioning of the agency. The third task is to understand the structure and functioning of the agency system.

Social worker not only needs to understand the agency in which they are employed but they also need to be able to understand other social agencies. This is important if the worker is to help the clients in order to use the resources and services of other agencies.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

- 1) What are the functions of an agency?

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- 2) What are the characteristics of a social case work agency?

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2.5 THE PROCESS

The process, is a progressive transaction between the professional helper (the case worker) and the client. It consists of a series of problem solving operations carried out within a meaningful relationship. The end of this process is contained in its means: to influence the client-person that he/she develops effectiveness in coping with his/her problem and /or to so influence the problem as to resolve it or reduce its effects. As the social worker develops skill in the problem-solving process, thinking about the phenomena being confronted will begin to take place in orderly steps. These steps appear to be simple but are quite complex in application.

Sal Hofstein states: "Process refers to the recurrent patterning of a sequence of change over time and in a particular direction." It is important to note three qualities of this process: 1) recurrent patterning or stages 2) takes place over time 3) in a particular direction (the process is irreversible). The problem-solving process as used in social work has its source in the classic work of **John Dewey** and in his description of the

thought process used by human beings when confronted with difficult situations. Social work problem solving is finding a way through feeling, thinking, and acting. It progresses over time in a cyclical, irreversible manner that is focused on removing blocks to need fulfillment that individuals cannot remove with their own resources.

In order to understand what the case work process must include in its problem-solving help, it is necessary for the social case worker to take stock first of the kinds of blockings which occur in people's normal problem-solving effort. These six are among the most common:

1. A problem cannot be solved if the necessary tangible means and resources are not available to the person. A client, for instance, may see and assess his/her problem and its solution accurately and may lack only the material provision for it.
2. Sometimes, people are unable to solve their problems simply out of ignorance or misapprehension about the facts of the problems or the facts of existing ways of meeting it.
3. A problem is difficult of resolution when the person who has depleted or drained of emotional or physical energy. He/she needs to mobilized himself/herself- "pull himself together" - when he/she must plan and act according to plan.
4. When problems sets off a conflagration of feeling, a person's thought processes, delicately attuned as they are to his/her emotions become clouded and tumbled about.
5. The problem may lie within the person: i.e, he/she may have become subject to, or victim of, emotions that chronically, over a long time have governed his/her thinking and action.
6. Some people find problems in solving a difficult situation because they have never developed systematic habits of orderly methods of thinking and planning. So, the difficulty lies chiefly in the person's lack of experience in organizing his/her power to grapple with problems.

In the case work relationship, a constant medium is provided that is accepting, nurturing and supporting at the same time that the stimulus of problem-solving work is injected to promote the client's effort to feel, to be or to act in the ways leading to his/her better social adjustment. The case work process sustains and fortifies the functions of the client's ego. The first part of the case work process, as in all problem-solving, is to ascertain and clarify the facts of the problem. The second aspect of case work problem-solving grows out of and interweaves with the ongoing eliciting of facts, it is thinking through the facts. The conclusive phase of each problem-solving effort in case work is the making of some choice or decision.

Stages of Problem-solving Process

1. Preliminary statement of the problem,
2. Statement of preliminary assumptions about the nature of the problem,
3. Selection and collection of information,
4. Analysis of information available,
5. Development of a plan,
6. Implementation of the plan, and
7. Evaluation of the plan.

- 1) **Preliminary statement of the problem**-A clear statement of the problem is necessary before processing to subsequent steps. Often, problem statement tends to be vague, global, and lacking in precision. For example, school dropouts or unwed mothers are often referred to as problems. A more adequate formulation in the area of unwed mothers might be: lack of educational resources for teenage pregnant girls. In this statement, the need of the individual and society is education.
- 2) **Statement of preliminary assumptions about the nature of the problem**- This step is necessary to help make explicit the type of information needed for understanding and planning. As the problem is stated, implicit assumptions are made about its nature and cause, which provide indications as to the need in the situation and as to the block to need fulfillment.
- 3) **Selection and collection of information**-Sources for information should include a variety of perspectives that may be chosen from historical, social-psychological, biological, economic, political, religious, and ethical understandings.

Both the facts of the problem itself and the meaning of the problem to those concerned are important. Skill in the collection of information also calls for skill in communication and social interaction with persons who are sources of the information. The values of social work call for the client to be a primary source. There is a need to determine and accumulate relevant evidence about the situation, and this evidence needs to be related to the salient features of the situation.

- 4) **Analysis of information available**- Analysis of information is influenced and directed by the purpose for which the analysis is to be used. Other purposes include determination of feasible goals and possible outcomes and of possible plans of action, interpretation of the meaning of the information gathered, and evaluation. The cyclical nature of the process becomes very apparent, for one returns to analysis as an ingredient of each step of the process. The carrying out of the process generates new information.
- 5) **Development of a plan**-Information and its analysis lead to understanding of what can be done to remove obstacles blocking need fulfillment. A social worker uses assessment in developing a plan of action.

Plans develop from a consideration of a variety of possible strategies and techniques. As a plan becomes more specific, the social worker will return to early steps in the process to gather and analyze new information needed for the specifics of planning. Consideration of a variety of plans is important in creative planning.

- 6) **Implementation of the plan**-In social work, implementation involves interaction between people and is interventive in nature. It is action based on thinking that has its source in feelings about concern or need. In addition, it is action based on substantial knowledge from many sources that explain and predict behaviour of persons in the situation.
- 7) **Evaluation of the plan**-This step may result in redefinition of the problem, expanded information gathering and analysis, of reformulation of the plan. If the goal has been reached, evaluation is an appropriate and necessary climax to the process. Regardless of the outcome of the plan, evaluation of what happened can lead to an understanding that can be transferred to other situations and to more effective problem solving in those situations.

The intent of the case work process is to engage the person himself/herself both in working on and in coping with the one or several problems that confront him/her and to do so by such means as may stand him/her in good stead as he/she goes forward in living.

These therapeutic means are as follows:

- 1) The provision of a therapeutic relationship that sustains the client and effects the nature of his/her emotional relation to his/her problems;
- 2) The provision of a systematic, though always flexible, way by which the client may discuss and work over the nature of his/her problem, his/her relation to it and its potential solutions; and
- 3) The provision of such opportunities and aids (those of communication and/or resources) as will further exercise and implement the client's adaptive action upon his/her problems.

Three essential operations of problem-solving process are:

1. The facts that constitute and bear upon the problem must be ascertained and grasped. Such facts may be of objective reality and of subjective reaction, of cause and effect, of relatedness between the person and his/her problems, of the solution sought and of the actual means available;
2. The facts must be thought about. The facts must be played upon and organized by ideas-ideas springing from knowledge and experience and subject to the governing aim of problem solution;
3. Some choice or decision must be made that is the end result of the consideration of the particular facts and that affects or has the intent of resolving the problem.

The process can be conceptualized as having four major components: assessment, planning, action and termination. Although assessment precedes planning, planning precedes action and action precedes termination, the process is cyclical in nature.

Planning often leads to the need for new or different understanding of the person in the situation (assessment). Action often produces new information for use in understanding or demonstrates the need for additional planning. Evaluation, the assessment of what has happened as a result of action, is ongoing in the process and leads to new understanding and sometimes to new plans and action. Thus, all four stages are always present, but at various points in the work one or more may be the focus and receive the most attention.

All four stages as well as the interactional process constitute intervention. All can influence changes in the transactions between clients and the systems in their environment. All can influence the social functioning of individuals and social systems.

The aim of case work process is to engage the client with his/her problem and his/her will to do something about it in a working relationship with the agency, its intentions and special means of helpfulness. The context of the process is a fairly constant one, and its method is a fairly systematic one-as constant and as systematic as a process keyed to living, feeling, changing human beings can be-while it yet remains fluid and flexible.

Finally, for the solution or mitigation of many problems there must exist certain material means or accessible opportunities which are available to the needful person and which he/she can be helped to use. Money, medical care, nursery schools, scholarship, short-

stay homes, foster homes, recreational facilities- these are the kind of resources that any person may need in order to resolve a given problem in his/her daily living. The case worker should know about these resources or know how to become informed of them. He/She should be able to pick the right ones imaginatively in their relation to the client's problem.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

- 1) What are the stages of problem-solving process?

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- 2) What is your conceptual understanding of the aim of the case work process?

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2.6 LET US SUM UP

At the door of the agency, stands the person, who has a problem. It may be simple or complex, old or new, commonplace or peculiar, but it always has significance to the person: it is something that he/she is experiencing as he/she is frustrated in his/her present living situation, and it is something that he/she finds he/she cannot cope with unaided. The problem which the person carries to the agency, sometimes clutches to him/her tightly, sometimes distastefully held out at fingers tip, hurts or incapacitates him today. The social agency is prepared to receive and if possible to give help to the person whose problem brings him/her to it. The agency has a stated purpose, a special set of functions, structures, policies and procedures, which they have validated. In other words, the problem must be one with which the agency is equipped to help. From the facts regarding the problem and out of the client's verbal and behavioural responses, the case worker's understanding of the client grows. The case worker understands what are the inner and outer resources the client brings to the problems solving situation.

The case worker must not only be a keen listener but also an active agent in helping the client to communicate about his/her problem and focus his/her attention and expand his/her understanding of the client. He/she must also focus on the purpose of the agency and ability to help.

Problem solving implies that both the case worker and his/her client are simultaneously and consciously, though differently, engaged in problem-solving from the beginning. The clients sharing and working-through his feelings, and the impetus and help given to him/her to know and think about his/her attitudes, behaviour, needs and goals are in themselves an experience and experience of adaptation. The by-product of both these ongoing activities yields the case worker a large part of what becomes his/her diagnosis.

And the taking of next steps out of considered choice, the planning of action or the internal settlement arrived at involves the executive and integrative functions of the ego.

Three interrelated guides have been set down to achieve and hold focus on dealing with helping the client who comes to the agency: the selection 1) of that problem or aspect of which the client himself feels is most important; 2) of that part of his total problem which falls within the helping function of the agency; and 3) of that problem which in the worker's judgment most need and can yield to help

The mental work of examining the parts of a problem for the import of their particular nature and organization, for the interrelationship among them, for the relationship between them and the means to their solution is known as a diagnostic process. Diagnosis must result in a "design for action". Probably no process has been as troubling to case workers as diagnosis. The content of case work diagnosis falls into the triangular pattern as that of other professional design for action. It consist of: 1) The nature of the problem brought and the goals sought by the client, in their relationship to 2) the nature of the person who bears the problem (his social and psychological situation and functioning) and who seeks (or needs) help with his problem, in relation to 3) the nature of the purpose of the agency and the kind of help it can offer and /or make available. The content of the case work diagnosis, then, is focused, weighted and bounded by the purpose and means of the client and the agency.

2.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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UNIT 3 CASE WORKER CLIENT RELATIONSHIP AND PRINCIPLES OF CASE WORK

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Nature of Relationship
- 3.3 Relationship in Case Work
- 3.4 Uniqueness of Case Work Client Relationship
- 3.5 Attributes of Case Work Relationship
- 3.6 Principles of Case Worker Client Relationship
- 3.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.8 Further Readings and References

3.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the types and nature of relationship;
- understand the uniqueness of case work client relationship;
- understand the attributes of a case work relationship;
- understand the guiding principles of case work client relationship; and
- learn the modalities for the usage of the principles.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Human beings as social animals thrive and prosper on social interactions with fellow beings. Growth and development of an individual's personality depends largely on his/her relationships with significant others. Human relationships are indeed known for their warmth, comfort, security, nurture and emotions. Relationship is a catalyst, an enabling dynamism in the support, nurture and freeing of people's energies and motivation toward problem solving and the use of help. Vital relationships between people arise out of shared and emotionally charged situations. The climate for the growth of human personality, the nutrient for its development, and the stimulus for its subtle adaptations are emotionally charged relationships with other human beings. The very first contact that most persons have when they are born is with their mothers. Parent child relationship is the most vital relationship that contributes in a major way towards laying the foundation for one's personality development, confidence, attitudes, towards self and others. It would be no exaggeration to state that our very existence is in terms of our relationship with people around us – our family, friends, colleagues, relatives and others. All the societal institutions around us - family, marriage, caste are all built on social relationships.

3.2 NATURE OF RELATIONSHIPS

According to Helen Harris Perlman (1957), 'Relationship is a human being's feeling or sense of emotional bonding with one another. It leaps into being like an electric current or it emerges and develops cautiously when emotion is aroused by and invested in someone or something and that someone or something "connects back" responsively. We feel "related" when we feel at one with another (person or object) in some heartfelt way'.

Relationships may be 'good' or 'bad', brief or enduring, complex and heartfelt or superficial and skin deep, swift and spontaneous or carefully built. But whatever be its nature and substance, its dynamics are the presence, recognition, deposit, reception and responsiveness of emotion between individuals or between a person and an object or activity by which he/she has been moved. The emotions felt and shared may be joy as well as anguish, gratification as well as deprivation, hope and despair, merriment and despondency, rage and gracefulness, guilt and hostility and any or all of these. To illustrate, a child who is extremely attached to his/her parents, feels joyous on meeting them. On the other hand, an abandoned child would react in a different way on meeting the family. The emotions felt in the latter case may range from hatred, anger to resentment. In most mutually reciprocative relationships, there is a hunger for emotional bonding and dependency like in parent child relationships. In the usual life of an adult, hunger for emotional bonding with others is gratified in many ways- in love and friendship bonds, in marriage and in parenthood. The words used to describe a meaningful relationship are- warmth, love, care, acceptance, responsiveness, concern and understanding. It may be remembered that any relationship that seeks to enable a person, child or adult to feel secure and move forward, to risk new learning and new experiences combines a warm acceptance of the person in his/her uniqueness as a human being.

3.3 RELATIONSHIP IN CASE WORK

Relationship is termed as the *soul* of social case work. The relationship between the case worker and the client is of utmost importance. It is the principal of life which vivifies the process of study, diagnosis and treatment and makes case work a living, warmly human experience. Social work thrives in its belief in the basic worth and dignity of individuals and enhancing their capacities to reach their human potential to the fullest. Relationship between the case worker and the client is the medium through which the knowledge of human nature and of the individual is used; knowledge alone, without skill in relationship is inadequate. Relationship is also the channel of the entire case work process; through it, flow the mobilization of the capacities of the individual and mobilization of the community resources; through it flow the skills in interviewing, study, diagnosis and treatment (Biestek: 1957).

3.4 UNIQUENESS OF CASE WORK CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

Case Work client relationship is different from other relationships that exist in society at large like the parent-child relationship, teacher-pupil, friend-friend and colleague-colleague. The case work relationship differs from other relationships on a number of points. One needs to analyze and compare other relationships with case work relationship keeping in mind the levels of equality, mutual benefits being derived, presence and the level of emotional involvement in the relationship. Firstly, it may be borne in mind that case work relationship is temporary in nature. It begins with the referral of the client to

the case worker with a problem and terminates after the completion of the case work process and treatment. Parent- child relationship or relationships between siblings are lifelong relationships as they are tied by blood and kinship. Secondly, the emotional component in the case work relationship is not very deep and penetrating. This is unlike the relationships that exist between the spouses, parent- child or siblings. Though case work process is an emotionally charged one, it is operationalized in such a way that the expression of emotions is controlled and purposeful, focusing towards achieving clear cut goals of client's well being and treatment. Such an approach is missing in the relationships cited above. The third difference between case work relationship and others, is based on the levels of equality and mutuality. For example, friend-friend relationship is characterized by its equality, mutual help and sharing. The case worker and the client are fundamentally equal as human beings. In a case work relationship however, case worker takes on the role of a professional helper while client is the person who needs help. Thus the grounds of equality are not uniform since in this relationship, case worker is the person having knowledge, skills and is assigned to help the client through a professional relationship. Client on the hand is a person having some maladjustment and in need of professional help. Thus, this type of relationship is not based on mutual help and equality. One can also compare the case work relationship with that of a teacher-pupil relationship, which is more on an intellectual level. The teacher or the *Guru*, in the Indian context is highly respected as it is the *Guru* who guides the *shishya* about the values, inspires, transmits knowledge and information. However, in this relationship, there is hardly any intentional use of emotional involvement. If at all emotions do crop up in the teacher-student relationship, they are accidental and more on the part of the pupils rather than the teachers. Case Work relationships, as mentioned earlier are throughout highly charged with emotions in a purposeful manner.

Case Worker client relationship also differs from other professional relationships such as doctor-patient and psychiatrist-client. From an Indian perspective, health has become a serious area of concern. The medical services available are insufficient and lack adequate infrastructure, quality and maintenance. Doctor is considered only next to God. It is not a custom to question the doctor about the nature of one's illness, leave aside enquiring about the line of treatment. Patients in most cases are the passive recipients of medical treatment being administered by the doctor. This is in contrast to the case work client relationship where client is an equal partner in the treatment process and is encouraged to open up and express inner thoughts and feelings.

The only relationship that case work is close to, yet distinct in its finer aspects is with the Psychiatrist-Client relationship. In this relationship, client is encouraged to talk about his/her problems. However, the psychiatrist focusses on the unconscious mind of the client in contrast to the case worker who pays attention on the environmental manipulation and working on the personality maladjustment at the conscious level of the client's mind.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Explain the term Relationship. Why is it considered as a necessary ingredient for the delivery of case work relationship?

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- 2) How is the case work relationship different from the other social and professional relationships?

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3.5 ATTRIBUTES OF CASE WORK RELATIONSHIP

Case Work relationship goes much beyond merely a friendly relationship between the case worker and the client. Clients bring into the case work relationship their feelings, attitudes and behaviour which they have experienced with others. The client therefore tends to react to the case work situation in a manner derived from his/her personal experiences. Case Work focusses on understanding the client, his/her psychosocial needs and making a 'contact' to build the relationship. If this contact is to be of any value at all, the client must have confidence in the worker's good faith and the worker must have respect for the client as an individual. It is the responsibility of the case worker to establish this relationship. This professional relationship is formed with the purpose of developing in the client a personally satisfying and socially useful life. It is the individualized purpose which is unique to every relationship and is set to be achieved in each case. The conscious purposive and deliberate efforts to develop a helping relationship comprises of the following attributes:

1. **Warmth:** Warmth connotes some positive, lively, outgoing interest in another person (or object or activity), a spontaneous reaching out to take in another with pleasure or compassion (Perlman: 1979). By exhibiting an open, 'warm' attitude, case worker is able to convey to the client his/her openness and concern to understand the client's problem, client's attitudes and sharing of experiences. Warmth is demonstrated by the worker when he/she attends to the client with attention, listens patiently, gives confidence and conveys an understanding of the client's problem.
2. **Empathy:** Empathy means feeling *with* and *into* another person, being able to get into the other person's shoes ((Perlman: 1979). It may occur spontaneously or may be a carefully learnt 'listening with the third year' and responding in tune to the other person. Empathy involves looking at a situation/ case from another person's perspective. Through empathy, the case worker is able to convey to the client his/her understanding of client's problem with accuracy and 'oneness'.

Empathy is different from sympathy which gives a bond of feeling of being helped by another person. The case worker conveys sympathy by saying statements such as 'I understand how you feel', 'I can feel that you are feeling sad and upset'. Empathy is leading one self to another to feel into and take in the moment's essence of the other. By feeling case worker's empathy, the client feels understood and important. It may be noted here that empathy does not mean the loss of objectivity. Case Worker in a professional relationship with the client, remains objective by being aware of his/her own emotional and reactive responses to persons and situations.

3. **Genuineness:** To be genuine and congruent, the case worker relies on his/her own moment to moment felt experiences in the relationship with the client. To be genuine is to free of pretension. It is to have a sense of wholeness of being put together, of knowing who and what one is, what one's guiding values are, and as

a result of being on fairly good terms with oneself. Genuineness is the product of life experiences that make it possible to be self-observant, self-aware and self-accepting of strengths and limitations (Perlman: 1979). A genuine and congruent relationship consists of a consistent and honest openness and behaviour matching with the verbalized intentions and values of social work. For example, a school social worker is asked about contacts of an adoption agency regarding which she/he may not be aware of. It would be honest and genuine on the part of the worker to be frank and admit to the client about his/her lack of information. If possible, the worker may however, assure the client of making an effort to seek information about the agency and getting back to the client within a stipulated time. The worker must also then get back to the client or give a source of contact that may provide the requisite information.

4. **Authority:** Authority is an essential element of case worker client relationship. Authority has been referred to by Perlman (1979) as 'ableness' to be used *for* the client and not *over* or *against* the client. Authority in a case work relationship does not mean domination or willful imposition. Client has the right to accept, reject or modify advice given by the worker. Authority rather conveys the meaning of carrying those rights and powers that are inherent in special knowledge and are vested in special functions (Perlman: 1957). Having authority does not make the worker superior to the client. It rather implies that the case worker possess the expertise in understanding, assessing and dealing with the problem faced by the client. Authority is that of knowledge and expertise. The Client goes to a worker in need of help who has the authority of knowledge and skills, someone who knows more than him/her.

Hand in gloves with authority comes the responsibility to be borne by the case worker. The responsibility is to make judgements on the basis of theoretical knowledge and practical experience. For example, let us take up a case of a man who fears that his wife is trying to kill him. He cites several incidents to the worker to prove that his wife was conspiring to end his life. On meeting the client's wife, the worker finds her to be a fairly reasonable and objective person who might not plot her husband's murder. Thus, on the basis of assessment of the client's expression of feelings, behaviour and gaining facts of his environment, the worker gains a wholistic understanding of the client's life situation. The worker draws up the conclusion that the client is suffering from delusions and needs psychiatrist's help. Here, the worker has every authority to refer the client to a psychiatrist and it is also his/her moral responsibility as a professional not to continue with the case if she/he feels that the client's problems would be best handled by another expert. Thus, authority and responsibility go hand in hand.

5. **Transference and Counter Transference:** The most frequently encountered necessity to 'work' a relationship occurs with the phenomenon called transference or transference reactions. To any emotionally charged relationship, each of us bring conscious and unconscious feelings and attitudes that originally arose in or still belong to the earlier important relationships (Perlman: 1957). For example, in case work with an adolescent girl to help her regarding her career options, the worker listens to the girl's aspirations and dilemmas. The worker helps her to draw a choice of careers helping her to keep in mind her aptitude as well as preferences and also arranges for her visit to a nearby vocational training centre. In such a case, what may happen is that the girl may begin to feel toward the worker as she felt towards her mother/grandmother when she was young. The degree of emotional satisfaction which the client gets from such a relationship is far

beyond the realistic limits of the case worker-client relationship. It may be remembered that the client who approaches the agency often feels helpless and inadequate for not being able to tackle his/her own problem. Due to this, the clients are prone to transfer irrational elements into the relationship and want to regress, desiring to have parental nurture and parental domination. These however, are damaging to the client since it can tempt the client to stay in an unrealistic, infantile dependence instead of moving towards self reliance in the relationship.

These transferred elements could be affection, attraction or repulsion, yearning or defensiveness, liking or dislike and may occur at any point in the helping relationship. **Transference** is said to have taken place, when the client reacts inappropriately, with excessive or distorted feelings towards the case worker. As seen in many case work relationships, clients often remark to the worker, *You are like a father/mother/sister to me* or may say, *let us be friends*. Transference may also manifest itself in the way the client reacts towards the worker by being very obedient, helpless and approval seeking. The worker has to recognize these non verbal cues. The effort in the case work relationship is to maintain reality and to keep the client and the worker aware of their joint objective, their separate and realistic identities and their focus upon working some better adaptation between the client and his/her current problem. Transference manifestations need to be recognized, identified and dealt with as they occur. Every effort has to be made to manage the case work relationship and to give minimum encouragement to transference (Perlman: 1957).

The case worker may also be expected to unconsciously transfer into the professional relationship, certain positive or negative reactions that are realistically uncalled for, for example, distrust and hostility or strong feelings of attachment. This phenomenon is called **Counter Transference** that is, transference on the part of the helping person. Any subjective involvement on the part of the case worker with the client or client's problem may be part of a real counter transference or it may represent only a single instance of loss of professional objectivity. To illustrate, let us take up the case of a medical social worker who worked at the emergency ward of the hospital and was handling a man who had brought his wife to the hospital in a critical condition from a road accident. The man was in a heightened state of emotional trauma while narrating about the love for his wife and how the accident had taken place. The worker got so moved with the details of the case that she began to identify with the man and somewhere related his life with her own. Finally, when his wife died, both the client as well as the worker sobbed. In this case, the worker got involved with her own personal feelings and lost the objectivity. She was unable to provide professional help that she ought to.

The case worker must remain objective throughout the helping relationship and be aware of his/her own feelings. If at all, they do crop up, they must be handled and controlled.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the characteristics of a Case Worker Client Relationship?

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3.6 PRINCIPLES OF CASE WORK CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

Principles of case work are principles of action, based upon a fundamental which influences, guides and directs. The principles are also referred to as qualities or elements as they are present in every good case work relationship and are the constitutive parts of the relationship (Biestek). There are seven principles of the case work relationship:

- A) Principle of Individualization
- B) Principle of Purposeful Expression of Feelings
- C) Principle of Controlled Emotional Involvement
- D) Principle of Acceptance
- E) Principle of Non Judgmental Attitude
- F) Principle of Client's Right to Self Determination
- G) Principle of Confidentiality

Let us take these principles one by one and get a clear understanding on their application in the Indian context:

A) PRINCIPLE OF INDIVIDUALIZATION

Individualization is the recognition and understanding of each client's unique qualities and the differential use of principles and methods in assisting each towards a better adjustment. Individualization is based upon the right of human beings to be 'individuals' and to be treated not just as human beings but as this human being with his/her personal differences (Biestek 1957).

Principle of individualization emanates from the basic recognition of each person as a unique entity. Individualization is one of the essential notes in the concept of a person who according to Boethius is 'an individual substance of rational nature'. Each person is individualized by his/her heredity, environment, innate intellectual capacity, strengths and limitations. Each person experiences unique life situations from birth, forms distinct inter personal relationships. The thoughts, feelings, behaviours and capacities of each individual are distinct and differ from each other. Thus their problems and the help they need are also distinct from each other. Case Work help, therefore, must be differentiated to meet the particular needs of the individual clients and to help the clients use their abilities and resources for self help in order to work towards problem resolution.

Each person is conscious of being unique (Biestek: 1957). This awareness is particularly poignant when the client approaches the agency in a state of maladjustment in social functioning. The client needs the worker's undivided and individualized attention to discuss his/her problem. By gaining worker's respect for his/her as an individual with rights and needs, the client feels understood. The success of helping relationship depends upon the individualization of each case by the worker, treating each person as a unique individual having special problems rather than being treated as a 'case/category/patient'. It is observed many times in agencies that clients who approach the agency for help are referred to as *patients* by the staff. This makes an individual clients feel like 'medical patient'. Clients must be referred to with their names in a respectful manner.

Pre Requisites for application of Principle of individualization

- *An open and unbiased attitude:* It is essential for the case worker to be aware of personal biases and prejudices and not to let them have an influence on the case work relationship. Accurate assessment of the client's problem, his/her life situations requires the worker to be objective and free from pre conceived notions and prejudices, if any. The prejudices can pertain to diverse categories or groups like low caste, class or gender distinctions, destitute, drug abusers, alcoholics, criminals, sex workers, unwed mothers, people indulging in pre or extra marital relationships etc. A worker while handling cases must be honest and aware of personal feelings, needs and counter transference tendencies.
- *Knowledge of human behaviour:* Case Workers often have to deal with complex human behaviours, people with diverse personalities. It is imperative for the case worker to have inter-disciplinary knowledge and understanding derived from psychology, sociology, psychiatry etc.
- *Listening and Observing:* Attentive listening to the narration of client's problem brings an understanding of the problem for the case worker. As the client talks about his/her relationships with family and community, case worker is able to gain a wholistic understanding about the client. Competent and professional listening requires not only paying attention to the words being said by the client but observing and analyzing the body gestures, physical signs of hesitation, emotions and facial expressions. Ability to interpret non verbal communication can yield a lot of information to the case worker which can help in guiding future direction to the case worker.
- *Moving with the client's pace:* As the case worker sees each client, he/she must begin where the client is and proceed at the client's pace. In the application of the principle of individualization, correct pacing is the secret to the timing at every stage of the case work process- study, diagnosis and treatment. For example, case worker working with a HIV positive person might be interested in quickly gathering information about how the client contracted the virus or to fill up all the personal details in the case sheet perform. Hastening the client to divulge details, especially intimate information before he/she is ready would stall the helping process and hamper the case work relationship. Case Worker has to move at the client's pace and allow time to the client to develop trust in the case worker.
- *Ability to enter into feelings of people:* The feelings of the client are his/her most individualized characteristics. Recognizing uniqueness in each person implies the realization that each person's coping strategies are different and every person responds to his/her life situations in a distinct manner. For example failure in board examinations may lead one adolescent to commit suicide while another may strive to work harder next time to clear the examination. Another example may be considered of a women engaged in sex work. While one sex worker may enjoy her work due to the lure of money that she is paid, another sex worker might have feelings of guilt and shame. Thus, similar life situations may bring about different responses from different individuals. Each person is distinct and possesses own individualized reactions to situations. Individualization requires sensitivity and a response to these feelings. The principle quality of the response is warmth, and to enter into the 'feeling' experience of the client and understand client's perspective.
- *Ability to keep perspective:* The emotional involvement of the case worker should

be controlled and be directed to the larger situation. This enables the worker to keep a wholistic view of the case and progress further in the helping relationship. For example, while narrating an incident of sexual abuse, the client is likely to talk of the incident in a detailed manner, sharing intricate feelings about the traumatic experience. In such a case, the worker has to empathize with the client at her *here and now* feelings and also keep the larger picture in mind. The worker would be required to study and assess the impact of the incidents of abuse on the client's relationship on her mind, her relationships with the significant others, stress management skills etc. Having a wholistic perspective helps the case worker to keep the focus on the client in his/her entirety and analyze the interplay of psychosocial, conscious and unconscious factors affecting the client.

Demonstration of Principle of Individualization

- a) *Thoughtfulness in details*: Thoughtfulness in working out small details aids in demonstrating individualized attention to the client. For example, a case work meeting with a street and working child may require the child to leave his work for the appointment which would cost him a day's labour. Similarly scheduling an appointment with a professional who is unable to come at a particular timeslot would be insensitive. As far as possible, appointments should be best suited as per the client's convenience.
- b) *Privacy in interviews*: In many agencies, case work interviews are conducted in an open office space. This hinders the privacy of the client as he/she is not comfortable in talking openly about the problem. This is a great hindrance to the case work confidentiality. The noise may also create barrier in communication as the case worker is unable to give undivided and individualized attention to the client.
- c) *Care in keeping appointments*: As mentioned earlier, appointments have to suit both the client and the case worker. Case Worker must keep a diary and promptly keep the appointments. If at all, the meetings have to be rescheduled due to an urgent work, client must be informed in advance. A promptly kept appointment gives a feeling of reassurance and importance to the client.
- d) *Preparation for interview*: One of the best immediate preparations for individualizing the client is to review the written case records. This helps in refreshing the details of the earlier discussions and enables the case worker to plan ahead for the next meeting.
- e) *Engaging the client*: Demonstrating the principle of individualization involves engagement of the client according to his/her capacity in the case work process i.e. in the study, assessment and treatment. For example, case work with a woman who is in a disturbed marital relationship would imply encouraging her to objectively assess her situation, weighing of the probable alternatives beforehand incase she wants to be out of the marriage. She may be helped to carry out a cost benefit analysis of each of her alternatives before taking a decision. Enabling the client in selecting the treatment goals and encouraging the person to make a choice stimulates client's self confidence and demonstrates the principle of individualization.
- f) *Flexibility*: Case Worker needs to be open minded and modify the treatment goals in accordance with the client's needs, knowledge about client's life situations and problems. The ability to adjust goals and methods calls for mature judgement, objectivity and skill on the part of case worker. Flexibility is a special way of individualizing the client.

B) PRINCIPLE OF PURPOSEFUL EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS:

Emotions are an integral part of an individual's nature and their healthy development is necessary for the development of the total personality of a person. In the modern helping professions, the importance of a well ordered emotional life has been eminently recognized. Both psychology and psychiatry have studied the normal, healthy role of emotions in the personality structure. These disciplines have given social work, a body of knowledge about human growth and development which has made the helping process of social work eminently more effective.

The basic psychological needs of human beings have been identified as the need for affection, security, status, expression, achievement and independence. The degree of these needs varies from person to person. The need for expression and for sharing of experience has been singled out by social work as a pertinent dynamic in case work relationship. Purposeful expression of feelings according to Biestek is the "recognition of the client's need to express the negative feelings. The case worker listens purposefully neither discouraging nor condemning the expression of these feelings, sometimes even actively stimulating and encouraging them when they are therapeutically useful as a part of the case work service". The client's expression of feelings should have a valid purpose in the case work process.

Purposes of the *Purposeful Expression of feelings* are as follows:

- *Relieving pressure:* Giving vent to one's feelings, talking about the problem aids in catharsis which in turn enables an individual to see his/her own problem more clearly and objectively. This enables the client for positive and constructive action.
- *Assessment of problem:* The expression of feelings helps the case worker to understand the problem of the client more accurately and evaluate strengths and limitations of the client.
- *Psychological support:* Listening to a person while he/she talks about the problem in life provides immense psychological support to the client. The client feels understood and relieved from the burden of the problem.
- *Working towards negative feelings:* At times, negative feelings of the clients serve as the source of problem. Sharing these feelings helps to bring them into the forefront of attention so that they may be resolved.
- *Strengthening case work relationship:* Talking about the problems, sharing feelings strengthens the case work relationship. Encouraging the client to express his/her feelings helps in deepening the bond between the worker and client. This also brings comfort, warmth and trust in the case worker client relationship.

The client's expression of feelings in the case work process also has certain limitations.

The limitations of the Purposeful expression of feelings are as follows:

- *Agency constraints:* Functions of an agency may limit the expression of feelings to those which can be treated within the agency. For example a case worker working in an agency that deals with juvenile delinquents may not be able to work with HIV positive clients. At times the agency may not have the services of professional experts or the resources required to deal with the cases e.g. psychiatrist, speech therapist, facility for psychological testing etc. In such cases referrals may be done to specified agencies.

- *Workload:* Workload with the case worker determines the amount of time a case worker can devote to each case. For example, if a case worker is handling fifty cases apart from regular agency work, he/she may not have enough time to encourage expression of deeper feelings which require more time in each interview.
- *Premature expression of deep feelings:* Case Worker needs to be cautious in the early interviews about client's premature expression of deeper feelings. For example, talking about intimate details of having undergone through a rape by a victim in the very first meeting may not be desirable. This may inculcate feelings of guilt and hamper the case work relationship. Case Worker has to structure the entire case work process and slowly work towards building a relationship based on trust rather than allowing ventilation of deeper feeling at a premature stage.
- *Client Engagement:* Clients may have the tendency to put the total burden of conflict resolution on the case worker. This is more common in the Indian situation where people have the tendency to talk about their problem and look up to the helper for 'readymade quick fix recipes' for problem resolution. Case Worker must ensure engagement of the client in the helping process right from the beginning to avoid undue dependence on the worker.

Demonstration of Principle of Purposeful Expression of Feelings

An essential function of the case worker is to create a permissive environment that would encourage the client to freely express his/her feelings. This includes gaining trust, confidence of the client. Most clients talk at a superficial level and do not disclose their inner feelings till they are sure of the worker's accepting and permissive attitude towards client as an individual. Secondly, the case worker's real desire to help and feeling *with* the client has to be communicated to the client at the 'feeling' level. Creation of a permissive environment is essential for purposeful expression of feelings. This may be done in the following ways:

- *Relaxed attitude:* Case Worker should be in a relaxed frame of mind, free from any preoccupations so that full attention may be devoted to the client. Ensuring privacy during interviews, having comfortable furniture in the room are some of the important steps to make the client feel comfortable and open up.
- *Preparation:* Prior to the interview, the case worker must go through the earlier case records. This would refresh the memory and prepare the worker in planning and structuring for the upcoming interview.
- *Listening:* Client's purposeful expression of feelings depends upon the quality of attention that is given by the case worker. This enables the client to feel case worker's genuine interest, sincerity, understanding and makes him/her to open up and express emotions. By asking appropriate questions, making empathic comments, nodding and showing interest through facial expressions, case worker can demonstrate active listening to the client.
- *Encouragement:* The client has to be encouraged to talk and express feelings. Thus, by asking non threatening questions, repeating important phrases or words being said by client, making comments, expressing empathy; worker can motivate the client to talk freely. Statements like 'I realize how difficult this must be for you. What happened thereafter?' 'How did you *feel* when this happened?' are open ended statements/questions that require elaborate expression of feelings by the client.

- *Pace of progress*: A sensitive awareness of the client's pace of movement in each interview towards his/her case work goals is very necessary. Client's motivation to work towards resolving the problem would reflect upon the need and desire to express feelings at any given time.
- *Being Realistic*: Case Worker should refrain from giving any unrealistic reassurances, interpreting too early or too much in the expression of feelings by the client. Case Worker must not over estimate or under estimate client's capacity to tolerate anxiety. Case Worker must allow the client to talk, express feelings and feel relieved.

The principle of Purposeful expression of feelings aids in study and diagnosis in case work. Purposeful expression of feelings helps the case worker to gain invaluable material for study and gain a realistic understanding of the client and his/her progress in totality. This helps in seeing the problem clearly and working towards its resolution. By their expression the feelings are brought out in the open for discussion and increase the client's participation and involvement to help himself/ herself.

C) PRINCIPLE OF CONTROLLED EMOTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Communication is a two way process between the communicator and the receiver with the flow of information. The content of communication comprises of the following:

- Ideas only
- Feelings only
- Ideas and feelings

When a woman seeks information at the railway reservation counter, she is only seeking information and expecting a factual response. On the other hand, when a teenage girl who had been raped discovers her pregnancy shares with her friend, *I do not know how I will face the world*, she is communicating her feelings. In such case only her feeling response would be appropriate.

In case work interviews, the content of communication is most often a combination of *thought* and *feeling* (Biestek: 1957). The nature of content depends upon – problem of the client, function of the agency, needs and feelings of the client in particular interviews, changing moods of the client within an interview and the purposes of the case worker in the ongoing processes of study, diagnosis and treatment.

The social case worker needs the skill to communicate at both the *thought* and *feeling* levels. Case Worker has to gain factual information and at the same time study client's ideas, thoughts and feelings. The element of controlled emotional involvement in a case work relationship according to Biestek, is the case worker's sensitivity to client's feelings and understanding of their meaning and a purposeful, appropriate response to the client's feelings. There are three components in demonstration of controlled emotional involvement:

- 1) Sensitivity
- 2) Understanding
- 3) Response

- 1) **Sensitivity**: Sensitivity means seeing and listening to the feelings of the client. Many times, clients are unable to express their feelings verbally or are ready to

divulge personal details. With the knowledge of human behaviour, observation and analytical skills, the case worker has to observe the minutest of the details and draw an understanding by putting them in proper perspective. Body language or the non verbal communication can be effectively used as clues and indices to identify and interpret client's feelings. For example, use of hands, arms and legs, pace, tone of speech, posture, eye contact, silence, repetitive body actions are important indicators of client's non verbalized feelings.

- 2) **Understanding:** As a professional helping person, the case worker needs to understand the meaning of the client's feelings in relation to the client's problem. The worker's own life experiences and professional practice help in introspection and analysis of the professional situations. This includes knowledge of common human needs, patterns of human reactions and defenses in times of stress. This general knowledge is then used as a framework within which this particular client, with his/her individual and unique qualities, can be better understood and helped
- 3) **Response:** Sensitivity and understanding are insufficient in themselves; they are means to the response. The case worker's response to the client on the *feeling* level is the most important psychological element in the case work relationship and is perhaps the most difficult to the case work skills. The response is not necessarily verbal. Essentially it is a response of attitude and feeling, guided by knowledge and purpose. It is primarily an internal response where the case worker consciously and purposefully identifies with the feelings of the client. It is a sharing of a warmly human professional person with fine sensitivities of another human being who needs help (Biestek: 1957)

The response of the worker should reflect the skill to probe in order to gather factual as well as feeling information from the client, while verbalizing understanding. It should convey warmth and empathy to the client.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the prerequisites for the application of the principle of individualization?
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- 2) How does a case worker demonstrate the Principle of Purposeful Expression of Feelings to the client?
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D) PRINCIPLE OF ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance is one of the commonly used term in social work profession. It is an important value in social work is that guides social workers to accept people as they are, with their strengths and limitations, potentialities and weaknesses, positive and negative

feelings. In social work, acceptance is related with 'quality of life, professional attitude, the central dynamic and a principle'. According to Biestek (1957), action of acceptance is indicated as therapeutic understanding, respecting, loving, perceiving, acknowledging, helping and receiving. The three steps in the action of acceptance are as follows:

- Perceiving
- Therapeutic understanding
- Acknowledging

The case worker must first objectively see what he/she is accepting. The worker must see the object of acceptance in relation to the causes which brought about the object in relation to what it means to the person, and in relation to the purpose of the case work process in each individual case. The case worker must acknowledge this as a pertinent reality. The qualities of acceptance are warmth, courtesy, listening, respect, concern, consistent maturity, firmness and willingness to consciously enter and share in the life experiences of another (Biestek :1957). The purpose of acceptance in case work is different from other interpersonal relationships e.g. with spouse, siblings, friends etc. Acceptance in case work process is therapeutic in nature as it aims at helping the client to deal with problems and needs.

Distinction between Acceptance and Approval

An important standpoint in case work is the distinction between acceptance and approval. Acceptance does not mean concurrence with or approval of client's behaviour. To illustrate, let us take an example of a man who has committed a murder and now seeking help from a case worker. In this case, following the principle of acceptance would not imply that the worker's approval of the crime committed by the client. The worker would objectively study the client and assess the probable reasons that led the man to commit such a crime. Case Worker would accept the client as an individual possessing all his dignity and worth as an individual. However, the worker would disapprove of the murder committed by the client. The worker would not verbally praise or condemn the act and show empathic interest in getting to know the client and his life situations better. By acceptance one does not mean that the worker becomes partial in the face of the deviant behaviour that has added on to misery and deviance in society. It may be remembered that the client would not really be helped if his/her anti social behaviour (murder in this case) is apparently appreciated by the worker. The objective of acceptance is not the *good* but the *real*. Its objective as mentioned earlier is therapeutic i.e. to aid the worker to understand the client better and making the helping process more effective. The purpose is to free the client from using defense mechanisms and enabling him/her see the reality and realistically deal with the problem. Thus, principle of acceptance as defined by Biestek (1957) is as follows:

"Principle of acceptance is a principle where the case worker perceives and deals with the client as he/she really is, including strengths and weaknesses, congenial and uncongenial qualities, positive and negative feelings, constructive and deconstructive attitudes and behaviour, maintaining all the while a sense of the client's innate dignity and personal worth".

Understanding the Client Better

Let us try to understand the client's perspective. The client comes to the agency with some problem or maladjustment which he/she has been unable to cope with. Thus on one side, there is a sense of failure to resolve one's problem and having to seek outside

help. At the same time, there is also a sense of own pride and dignity which make the client feel ambivalent. The strength of the desire to change and readiness to effect change is varying in each individual. This ambivalence extends to the case worker as the client realizes that some weaknesses have to be shared since he/she is seeking outside support. This makes the client fear disapproval from the worker and feel insecure. To deal with this insecurity, the client makes use of defense mechanisms that help the client to hide the anxieties and inner feelings from one's self and from the worker.

In such a situation, by making the client feel accepted, showing interest and genuine concern, the worker helps the client in reducing the anxiety and lowering the defense mechanisms. The principle of acceptance aids the case work process as the client begins to express feelings and open up to the case worker. However, the client constantly checks the reactions of the worker to his/her disclosure of feelings especially negative feelings.

Demonstration of Principle of Acceptance

- Giving the client focussed response, directed to the needs of the client rather than worker's own needs;
- Realizing client's potential for self help and exercising professional responsibility for the promotion of the growth of the client;
- Giving responses that contain the elements of both *thoughts* and *feelings*; and
- Providing agency specific help to the client.

Limitations of Principle of Acceptance

- Inadequate knowledge of human behaviour;
- Counter transference;
- Case Worker being judgemental about the client's situation;
- Case Worker's personal biases and prejudices;
- Unrealistic assurances by the worker;
- Confusion between acceptance and approval;
- Lack of respect for the client.

E) PRINCIPLE OF NON JUDGEMENTAL ATTITUDE

One of the most talked about principles of case work that is also a difficult one to practice is the Principle of non judgemental attitude. According to Biestek (1957), Principle of non judgemental attitude is defined as "Quality for case work relationship, it is based on a conviction that the case work function excludes assigning guilt or innocence or degree of client responsibility for causations of the problem or needs, but does include making evaluating judgements about the attitudes, standards or actions of the client: the attitude which involves both thought and feeling elements, is transmitted to the client".

Case Work is a helping process where judgment would imply blaming the client and making him/her responsible for causing problems in his/her life. Let us take an example of a woman who has approached a child guidance clinic to seek help for her daughter who is showing symptoms of depression. Being judgemental in this case would imply

blaming the mother for her daughter's condition. Similarly, passing a judgment on a HIV positive person would mean blaming the client for his/her physical condition and for contracting HIV. As mentioned earlier, wholistic understanding of the client and his/her life situations is necessary in the case work relationship. However, this does not give the case worker an authority to make judgements about the clients.

Understanding Client's Perspective

Seeking outside support for conflict resolution is not an easy task. The necessity to seek help from an agency can in itself produce a host of painful feelings. One of these feelings is the fear of being judged. In the initial interviews, the client looks at the case worker as one of the members of the larger society which is often judgmental with fixed standards of Do's and Don'ts. The client fears of being labeled by the case worker, keeping in mind the preset standards of right and wrong. As a result of these feelings, the client adapts by using defense mechanisms and is hesitant to express inner thoughts and feelings. In such a scenario, demonstration of a non judgemental attitude helps the client 'feel' assured of the case worker's disinterest in making any kind of judgement, in praising or condemning the client. As the relationship gradually strengthens, the client grows in faith in the worker and begins to discuss needs and problems, develops objective analysis necessary for constructive change.

Evaluation of Attitudes, Standards and Actions of Client

There is a clear cut difference between being non judgmental towards the client and judging client's *behaviour* which may be moral/ immoral. While the case worker refrains from judging the guilt or innocence of the client; he/she objectively evaluates the attitudes, standards and actions of the client. In order to understand this, let us take the case of a woman who is in a live-in relationship and seeking help to deal with problems with her lover. While dealing with such a case, the worker has no right to give the client a moral lecture on the grounds of her live in relationship, which is still not readily accepted in large parts of India. However, the worker has to probe into her life situation and make inquiries in order to make evaluations of her behaviour. The purpose in this case would be to understand the client and this would aid in the treatment process.

There are strong and valid reasons for practicing a non judgmental attitude. The worker being a social worker is a member of the larger society and his/her function is to help the client (and not condemn) within the law and basic values of society. If the case worker is oblivious towards delinquent and immoral behaviour/attitude of the client, the client would not feel understood and may underrate the worker's ability to provide professional help. Moreover, the case worker has every right to have his/her own social, moral and spiritual values. The worker must, however, ensure that his/her personal values, beliefs, opinions and code of ethics are not imposed on the client in any way. The worker has no right to judge the client by personal standards.

Demonstration of Principle of Non Judgemental Attitude

- Encouraging the client to open up and express own thoughts and feelings
- Being respectful and attentive to the client throughout the case work relationship
- Being aware of personal biases and prejudices and not letting them influence the case work relationship. E.g. the worker might have been socialized to develop a dislike for certain castes/castes/categories like alcoholics, differently abled, sex workers, scheduled castes/tribes etc. While in a case work relationship with such

clients, worker must ensure not to let personal dislike interfere in the helping process. The worker must recognize and control personal biases and develop capacity to see people objectively and not subjectively.

- Treat the client as a unique person. Worker should refrain from making references to people who have faced similar problems
- Understanding negative feelings of the client towards the worker should be related with the use of defense mechanisms.

Check Your Progress IV

1) How does a case worker demonstrate the Principle of Non Judgemental Attitude?

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2) What are the limitations of Principle of Acceptance?

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F) PRINCIPLE OF SELF DETERMINATION

One of the firmest convictions of social work profession is that a person has an innate ability for self determination. A conscious willful violation of the client’s freedom by a case worker is considered unprofessional as it transgresses the client’s natural right and impairs the case work treatment. The principle of self determination is defined by Biestek (1957) as follows:

“The principle of self determination is the practical recognition of the right and need of clients to freedom in making their own choices and decisions in the case work process. Case Workers have a corresponding duty to respect that right, recognize that need, stimulate and help to activate that potential for self direction by helping the client to see and use the available and appropriate resources of the community and of his/her own personality. The client’s right to self determination is however, limited by the client’s capacity for positive and constructive decision making, by the framework of civil and moral law, and by the function of the agency”.

Client as a human being has the responsibility of living his/her life in such a manner that he/she is able to work towards achieving life’s goals. The client also has the right to decide the course of action to achieve. However, the client seeks professional help from social case worker to know the various alternatives and objectively evaluate each alternative. Following are the ways by which principle of self determination can be demonstrated:

- a) *Communicating the problem:* The case worker’s acceptance of the client and the diagnosis after the study phase has to be communicated to the client. The case worker has to enable the client work through the emotional disturbance and clearly see the problem

- b) *Enabling identification of resources*: Case Worker must help the client identify available resources that may be used for problem resolution. Case Worker and the client work together to carry out cost benefit analysis of the alternatives available to the client. The role of the worker is to delicately balance activity as well as passivity. The passivity consists of doing things for and to the client, thus helping the client to express fully and freely. The case worker is however active in observing and evaluating the words, actions and emotions of the client, analyzing client's strengths as well as limitations, enriching outer and inner resources of the client and stimulating the client towards his/her activity (Biestek).
- c) *Activating client's resources*: Worker has to help the client to get free from stress, fears and provide support to grow through the worker client relationship. The ultimate goal is to capacitate the client to be self-reliant.
- d) *Facilitative relationship environment*: Case Worker has to create a relationship environment in order to enable the client grow and work out the problems. With active listening, the case worker facilitates client participation in deeper realization of own problems, identify resources to work out own problems.

In application of the principle of Self-Determination, the case worker however must not assume the principle responsibility for problem resolution for the client. The client must be helped to take an active role while case worker's role is more of a facilitator and supporter. Case Worker should not in any way manipulate or persuade the client in choosing the course of action or in decision making.

Limitations of Principle of Self-Determination

- *Client's capacity for positive and constructive decision making*: Each client's physical and mental capacity to take personal decisions varies. For example, a mentally retarded child would not be able to take decisions related to career/vocational activity to be taken up. Similarly, persons suffering from mental illnesses (schizophrenia, cases of acute depression or those having suicidal or homicidal tendencies) may not be emotionally stable to take objective independent decisions. In such cases, the case worker would have to assume a lead role in order to protect the client from taking inappropriate decisions.
- *Limitations related to civil law*: Authority and law are realities of an organized society. The general purpose of law is to prevent individuals from abusing or misusing liberty and to protect the society from such an abuse. While Principle of self-determination encourages the client to take his/her own decisions, case worker has to help the client accept and adjust to the limitations of personal freedom arising from law and authority.
- *Limitation related to moral law*: The natural right to make choices and decisions about one's own life does not extend to moral evil; a person might have the physical power to make such a choice but he/she has no real right to do so (Biestek: 1957). Commonly accepted moral laws may relate to inappropriate behaviours such as stealing, kidnapping, murder etc. In India, the moral laws widen due to the existence of multiple religions where each religion prescribes its own moral behaviour- food habits, marriage, divorce, adoption etc. The case worker has to accept the conscience of the client and help the client make choices and decisions that are within the boundaries of that conscience.
- *Limitation related to agency function*: Each agency has its own ethos, goals, functions, eligibility criteria, networks and areas of concern/action. The client has a duty to respect this and is obliged to remain within the framework of the agency function.

G) PRINCIPLE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality in social work can be considered from two standpoints- as an item in the professional code of ethics and as an element of the case work relationship. The principle of confidentiality is very complex and difficult to apply to concrete case work situations. Biestek (1957) has given its following definition of the principle of confidentiality:

“Confidentiality is the preservation of secret information concerning the client which is disclosed in the professional relationship. Confidentiality is based upon a basic right of the client; it is an ethical obligation of the case worker and is necessary for effective case work service. The client’s right however, is not absolute. Moreover, the client’s secret is often shared with other professional persons within the agency; the obligation then binds all equally”.

Client when approaches an agency with a problem is aware of the necessity to verbalize and reveal pertinent facts, inner feelings and fears about his/her life to the case worker. Without expressing these, the client can not expect help in conflict resolution. This information may be very personal, might be related with immoral or socially undesirable behaviour of the client and may hamper ‘social image’ of the client, if disclosed to people. Therefore, there is a need to practice the principle of confidentiality by the case worker.

Ethical obligations of case worker

Confidential information can be defined as a fact or a condition, or the knowledge thereof pertaining to a person’s private life which is normally hidden from the eyes of others. Biestek (1957) has given three classes of confidential information:

- a) The Natural Secret
 - b) The Promised Secret
 - c) The Entrusted Secret
- a) The *Natural* secret is the information which, if revealed would defame, injure or unjustly sadden the person. E.g. information related to having undergone through sexual abuse, incest, having marital discord, premarital/ extra marital relationships, failure in examination etc. The obligation to preserve natural secrets binds everyone, regardless of the nature of the relationship.
 - b) The *Promised* secret is one in which the confidant gives an assurance, a promise, after she/he has learnt the secret information that case worker would not divulge it. The subject matter may include the defamatory facts about the client’s personal life which he/she does not want to be revealed.
 - c) The *Entrusted* secret is information which is communicated to a confidant with the previous explicit or implicit understanding that the matter will not be revealed. The subject matter may or may not include a natural secret.

In case work relationship confidentiality includes all three types of secrets. There is always a presumption that the case worker would be ethically bound to keep the confidence of the client. However, since the case worker works within an agency set up, the personal information shared by the client does not confine to the individual worker but remains within the agency. The agency would not be able to provide services unless the information is shared by the case worker with colleagues/teammates. The information also gets recorded in the case files of the client. However, all the persons in the agency are bound to guard the confidentiality of the client.

Limitations of Principle of Confidentiality

- *Conflict within the client:* An apparent conflict may exist between the client's right to preserve own secret and another of his/her rights and duties. The solution of this conflict requires evaluation of the rights without any exaggeration. The presumption should always be that the right to confidentiality remains dormant until clear evidence to the contrary appears.
- *Conflict with the rights of another individual:* At times, preservation of the client's secret may harm the rights of an innocent person. E.g. client may confess about motives to kidnap someone. In this case, if the case worker decides to stick to the principle of confidentiality, it would mean putting an innocent person's life in danger and causing unnecessary misery. Case Worker thus has to evaluate objectively and take a decision.
- *Conflict with the rights of the social worker:* Occasionally by keeping the client's secret, the worker may forfeit own personal rights, which may be more important than the client. The worker can not be expected to surrender own rights in the performance of professional duty.
- *Conflict with the rights of the social agency:* Every agency has got its own set of goals, programmes, target groups and services. Incase an extreme situation arises where by keeping the client's secret, a right of the agency would be violated and the agency would be forced to operate contrary to its function; the agency would not be bound to preserve client's secret.
- *Conflict with the rights of the society as a whole:* Each person has the right to maintain peace, harmony, promoting common good and welfare of people. The general principle is that the obligation of the entrusted secret ceases when the preservation of the secret would constitute a real and serious damage to the common good.

Check Your Progress V

- 1) Define the principle of right to self determination?

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- 2) Bring out the limitations of principle of confidentiality.

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3.7 LET US SUM UP

The relationship between the case worker and the client is of utmost importance.

The case worker and the client are fundamentally equal as human beings. In a case

work relationship however, case worker takes on the role of a professional helper while client is the person who needs help. Case Worker client relationship also differs from other professional relationships such as doctor-patient, psychiatrist-client.

Case Work relationship goes much beyond merely a friendly relationship between the case worker and the client. Clients bring into the case work relationship their feelings, attitudes and behaviour which they have experienced with others. By exhibiting an open, 'warm' attitude, case worker is able to convey to the client his/her openness and concern to understand the client's problem, client's attitudes and sharing of experiences. Through empathy, case worker is able to convey to the client his/her understanding of client's problem with accuracy and 'oneness'.

By feeling case worker's empathy, the client feels understood and important. Authority is an essential element of case worker client relationship. The degree of emotional satisfaction which the client gets from such a relationship is far beyond the realistic limits of the case worker-client relationship.

There are seven principles of the case work relationship:

- Principle of Individualization
- Principle of Purposeful expression of feelings
- Principle of Controlled emotional involvement
- Principle of Acceptance
- Principle of Non Judgmental attitude
- Principle of Client's right to Self Determination
- Principle of Confidentiality

Principles of case work are principles of action, based upon a fundamental which influences, guides and directs. The principles are also referred to as qualities or elements as they are present in every good case work relationship and are the constitutive parts of the relationship (Biestek). Every principle has certain pre-requisites and can be demonstrated by the case worker so as to reach the desired goal of problem solving.

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UNIT 4 SOCIAL CASE WORK PROCESS

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Phases of Social Case Work Process
- 4.3 Social Investigation (Study)
- 4.4 Social Diagnosis (Assessment)
- 4.5 Intervention (Treatment)
- 4.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.7 Further Readings and References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Understand the different phases social case work process and the relationship among them;
- The application of social study, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation process in social case work practice;
- Understand the meaning and dimensions of problems and visualize the individual needs and the problem of individuals and families;
- Development of knowledge that a social worker must understand while providing service to a client; and
- Understand the process of social case work and relate to the role of a social worker in social case work process.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Social case work is the method of social work which focuses both on the person and his/her environment and helps to improve the balance between the person's coping efforts and the environmental demands. It is a method in which help is provided by social case worker to the individuals to cope more effectively with their problems in social functioning. Sometimes due to certain factors internal or external, individuals are not able to solve their problems or fail to avail existing resources, in such a situation social case worker by using various methods, techniques and skills of social case work practice tries to help the client in solving his/her psycho-social problems.

4.2 PHASES OF SOCIAL CASE WORK

According Mary Richmond (1917) there are three phases of social case work practice: social investigation or psycho-social study, diagnosis and treatment or management. In contemporary social case work practice these three phases have been divided into five divisions namely

- social investigation or study,

- assessment,
- intervention,
- termination and
- evaluation.

Social Investigation or study is a systematic study of the client and his/her circumstances in context to his/ her problem. In Social study, according to Mary Richmond, the case worker must secure all and every fact that taken together, through logical and inferential reasoning, it would reveal the client's personality and the situation for appropriate intervention (treatment). **Assessment** is the attempt to arrive at an exact definition, as far as possible, of the social situation and personality of a given client. It is a search for the cause of the problem which brings the client to the worker for the help. It aims at finding answers to three major questions: What is the problem? How has it arisen? What can be done to solve it? **Social case work intervention** is to alleviate the client's distress and restore, maintain or enhancing social functioning of an individual in need of help. It is to enhance the client's comfort, satisfaction and self realization. This may require enhancing the adaptive skills of the ego and functioning of the person-situation system. **Termination** means ending the process that begun when client agreed to undergo social case work interventive process. The termination process is being decided by worker and client with each others consent. Termination is the stage when the worker has the confidence in the client's ability to cope with present and arising situations. **Evaluation** is the process in which one tries to find out effectiveness and success of the process. It is the activity which ascertains that whether social case work process has achieved the desired goals in a case. In social case work practice evaluation provides the crucial feedback to case worker and the client regarding whether the intervention programme is succeeding as desired

The phases of case work process are interlinked with each other. Fern Lowry (1936) described this process as similar in form to a rope at woven of multiple strands when one cuts the rope at any point, all the component strands are exposed. These phase are interwoven and performed in a sequence.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Briefly discuss the different phases of social case work process?

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4.3 SOCIAL INVESTIGATION (STUDY)

Social investigation is a psycho social process. It is the initial phase in which the worker gains his first understanding of the kind of help his clients needs. He/she must learn what the client sees his problem as, what he/she thinks can be done about it, what he himself/ herself tried to do about it, and what are the reasons the client has identified for his present difficulty. It transcends much beyond assessment of an individual client or family.

The intra psychic forces are inseparably linked with social forces. To understand the individual psycho-social entity, it is important to analyze the relationship of client with others. The worker continuously tries to arrive at his own understanding of what the client's problem is, what factors contribute to it causatively, and what assets in the client's situation can enable the client to improve his situation and help the worker facilitate this improvement through the case work intervention process.

The term social investigation is also used by some experts as social- evidence, seeking social inquiry, intake and orientation or beginning process. Social investigation is the foundation upon which the various helping processes, actions and intervention technique are built. For every social work activity, whether it is at individual level or family level or community and society level the social investigation is indispensable. Social investigations help to find out the social realities of the clients and their families, to identify the problem area and to formulate intervention, rehabilitation and aftercare strategies.

a) According to Perlman **elements of the social case work study in the beginning phase are:**

1. The nature of the presenting problem,
2. The significance of this problem,
3. The cause/s, onset and precipitants of the problem,
4. The efforts made to cope with problem solving,
5. The nature of the of the solution or ends sought from the case work agency,
6. The actual nature of this agency and its problem solving means in relation to the client and his problem.

b) **Method**

Perlman has suggested four methods for operating in the beginning phase:

1. Relating to the client
2. Helping the client to talk about his/her troubles
3. Focusing and partializing
4. Helping the client to engage with the agency.

Both content and method in the beginning phase assists all the processes.

c) **Tools and technique in case study process**

1. Interview
2. Objective Observation
3. Examination of records and documents
4. Collection of information from collateral sources
5. Collection of information from family members
6. Special examination or test

The process of social investigation is initiated and carried out through the process of interview. Professional skill in this area requires not only theoretical knowledge about the psychology of human behaviour but also considerable case work practice in which

the worker's technique is repeatedly analysed. The interview is used for securing the information about the client as well as his problems including his social relationships. Through the interview, the case worker attempts to instruct and guide both the clients and others who play significant role in his life and attempts to manipulate the environment for the benefit of the client.

Observation is always coupled with interviewing. It makes possible to correct behaviour of the client as it occurs. It yields clues to the pathological patterns of communication, pathogenic relation and defective role playing and polarization of power and authority among the family members who are of etiological significance.

d) Various aspects related to social case work study

It is very important to collect sufficient factual information regarding client so that the worker can understand the current situation and what needs to be done in future. How his/her problem started or what was the cause of beginning and increase of the problem. In the past how client has managed his problem and who are the concerned person related to the problem. It is important to study how environment is affecting the client or how he /she is affecting the environment. Clear and effective diagnosis can only be achieved when the worker studies the client and the family's socio-economic, psychological and cultural factors in context to their inter-personal relationships. In a nutshell the important aspects related to social case work study are:

1. Current problem and beginning of the problem (when, how and where problem started, intervention taken and current status i.e. management of the problem)
2. Facts related to client (birth, weaning, food habits, mobility, toilet training, measure experiences and incident, aggressiveness, fear, school progress, learning problems and responses. Traumatic experiences, accident, handicaps, family profile, cultural and economic status, important family relations, married life, means of recreations, interest and skills).

e) Skills of social case worker

1. Skill in observation and analyzing situation
2. Skill of listening
3. Skill in talking
4. Skill in giving direction during interview
5. Skill in conducting interviews according various objectives

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

- 1) What do you mean by social investigation in social case work process and discuss its importance?

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- 2) What are the different kinds of tools and techniques used in social investigation during social case work process?

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4.4 SOCIAL DIAGNOSIS (ASSESSMENT)

It is the assessment phase of case work which gives realistic basis for differentiation – individualized knowledge about the person in their social context. Social diagnosis (assessment) is the attempt to arrive at an exact definition as far as possible of the social situation and personality of a given client. It is a search for the cause of the problem which brings the client to the worker for help. It is an effort to deduce from the material available, seen against the background of what the worker knows of human behaviour and social realities, what the client’s problem is, what factors contribute in alleviating the problem, what changes can be brought to occur which will reduce or eradicate his/her problem and what steps the case worker can take to forward these objectives.

Hence, diagnosis is defined as:

1. an explanation formulated in the light of known facts (both tangible facts and psychological facts)
 2. an explanation made in the knowledge of other possible explanations and
 3. subject to change or revision whenever subsequent material warrants a different explanation
- a) **The content of social diagnosis** (assessment) in case work process falls into the triangular pattern. It consists of:
1. The nature of the problem brought and the goals sought by the client, in relationship to;
 2. The nature of the person who bears the problem (his social and psychological situation and functioning) and who seeks (or needs) help with his problem, in relation to;
 3. The nature and purpose of the agency and the kind of help it can offer and/or make available.
- b) **Types of diagnosis**

Perlman has described three types of diagnosis that is carried on in social case work process. These are:

- dynamic diagnosis,
- clinical diagnosis,
- etiological diagnosis.

Dynamic diagnosis

Dynamic diagnosis gives an understanding of the current problem of the client and the forces currently operating within the client, within the social environment and between his environment. It gives the answers of the question- what is the trouble? What psychological, physical and social factors are contributing to it? What solution is sought? What are the means available within the client, his/her environment? What are organized services and resources by which problem may be affected? The nature of such diagnosis is changeable because it is the beginning phase of social case work practice.

Clinical diagnosis

In clinical diagnosis, the case worker attempts to classify the client by nature of his sickness / problem. He identifies certain forms and qualities of client's personality and malfunctioning in his behaviour. The clinical diagnosis describes both the nature of the problem and its relation to the client and the helping means and goals. Such type of diagnosis is useful only when it becomes apparent that a disorder of personality accompanies the social disorder, creating and complicating it.

Etiological diagnosis

Etiological diagnosis is concerned with the explanation of the beginning of the life history of the problem of the client, basically the problem that lies in the client's personality make up or functioning. The history of his development as a problem encountering, problem-solving human being may provide the case worker with an understanding of what his client suffers from and what is the extent of his coping ability likely to be. Etiological diagnosis is more useful in explaining or rigid reactions. When in spite of fact that the client's present problem are in the centre of attention, the client's response are not in accordance with, the past history and its appraisal in the light of client's current capacities, goals and problems are used for the intervention. This type of diagnosis contributes to understanding the nature of the problem to be dealt with, the person who has the problem, and the ways and means that can be anticipated as helpful.

c) Steps in diagnosis (Assessment)

The following steps are taken while diagnosing a problem

1. The worker begins to focus on problematic behaviours. He begins with the survey of both functional and dysfunctional behaviours in his environment. He clarifies various complains and problems in terms of excesses and deficits. He evaluates the client's personal strengths as well as of his environment.
2. He targets the specified behaviours. This involves an attempt of breaking down complex behaviours into their component parts.
3. Baseline data are collected to specify those events that appear to be currently controlling the problematic behaviours.
4. The collected information is summarized in an attempt to anticipate any major problem in intervention and as a way of beginning to establish objective for intervention.
5. Selecting priorities for intervention is the final step of the diagnosis. Concentration on one problem at one time makes intervention process more manageable and allows both client and worker to channel their energies into one area. It is the best way of handling and proper use of available resources.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

- 1) Define the term diagnosis (assessment) and discuss its types.

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- 2) Discuss the various steps in diagnosis.

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4.5 INTERVENTION (TREATMENT)

The objective of social case work intervention is to alleviate the client's distress and restoring, maintaining or enhancing the social functioning of an individual in need of help. It is to enhance the client's comfort, satisfaction and self realization. This may require enhancing adaptive skills of the ego and functioning of the person-situation system. According to Hamilton, treatment is the sum total of all activities and services directed towards helping an individual with a problem. The focus is on the relieving of the immediate problem and, if feasible, modifies any basic difficulties which precipitated it.

Social case work process begins with the initial contact with the client. The process of intervention passes through many phases. i.e. (i) initial phase, (ii) motivation and role induction, (iii) primary contract, (iv) diagnosis and assessment, (v) establishing intervention goals, (vi) developing intervention plan, (vii) preparation for actual intervention, (viii) intervention in practice, (ix) monitoring and evaluating the effects of intervention, and (x) planning of follow-up and termination of the therapeutic relationship.

Application of Intervention Methods

In order to achieve the goals set by the worker, conventionally the following methods of social intervention have been mentioned:

- a. Direct
- b. Environmental Modification
- c. Administration of Practical Service

(a) **Direct method** of intervention deals with the different ways that are used by the worker to promote a specific kind of behaviour on the part of the client. Pearlman sees direct intervention as the provision of a systematic but flexible way in which the client can work over his/her problem, his/her relation to it and possible solutions. Here case worker exerts his/her influence directly on the client. Direct intervention techniques are

used where the client needs direction because of his/her ignorance, anxiety, and weaknesses of his/her ego strengths. The degree of influence, the case worker is able to exert, may depend on the relationship between himself/herself and the client.

Direct intervention is given through counselling, therapeutic interviewing, clarification and interpretation leading to an insight. Supportive intervention for the direct benefit of the client is provided through guidance, externalization of interests, re-assurance, suggestion, persuasion and advice.

Counselling is a personal help directed toward the solution of a problem which a person finds that he/she cannot solve himself/herself and on which he/she, therefore, seeks the help of a skilled person whose knowledge, experience and general orientation can be brought into play in an attempt to solve the problem. It is a psychological help in which information and clarification are used for making the client aware of the problem. It is always used for a particular purpose like marriage counselling, occupational counselling, family counselling, school counselling, etc.

Therapeutic interviewing is used where intra- psychic conflict is present in the environment or neuroses or behavior disorders are acted out. The purpose of such interviewing is that of psychotherapy which aims at personality, competence and self-actualization, competence and self-actualization. For the analysis of the unconscious, social case worker applies the techniques of free association, dream interpretation, analysis of resistance and transference. For behaviour modification, social case worker makes use of the techniques of positive enforcement, negative enforcement, positive punishment, negative punishment, systematic desensitization and covert desensitization. Sometimes faulty interaction play basic role in developing maladaptive behavior. For the improvement of interpersonal relations and correct communication social case worker practices marital and family therapy techniques and transactional analysis.

It is a process through which **clarification** about the client himself/herself, his/her environment and the public with whom he/she is associated is made. Social case worker is in need of understanding the person, his/her environment and his/her social network. Clarification may consist of information given to the client so that he/she becomes capable of understanding himself/herself, his/her environment and his/her social network, which he/she does not possess and without which he/she cannot see clearly what steps he/she ought to take.

Sometimes conflicting feelings and strong emotions lead the individual to distort reality so seriously or react to it so inappropriately that understanding is impossible without deeper perception. Social case worker interprets the factors of the problem, related facts, attitudes of client and unconscious feelings in relation to the reality situation. He/she helps the client to an awareness of his/her strong projection of his inner needs and his/her subjective responses upon the outer world. Insight development is always accompanied by some degree of clarification and psychological support.

Psychological support is useful in decreasing tension and guilt, increasing self-confidence, encouraging healthy functioning or a way of functioning that maintains the client's equilibrium and in helping him/her to build up compensatory strengths and satisfaction. The case worker accepts him/her and his/her feelings, and shows keen interest in him/her. He/she clarifies the problem and encourages him to take his/her own decision. Social case worker helps him/her to strengthen his/her client's ego through the techniques of guidance, reassurance, suggestion, persuasion and psychological support.

(b) **Environmental modification** means to bring change in the social as well as physical conditions of the client so that he/she may be relieved from excessive stresses and strains. The case worker suggests what steps may or may not help the client to cope better with his/her problems. He/she plans with him/her his/her emotional, professional and recreational activities. He/she gives appropriate advice to members of his/her environment and modifies their attitude favorably. Though interview is used in this method the main emphasis is laid to change in his/her conditions. When social resources and systematized social conditions are used as main sources for the solution of the problem, it becomes social intervention. Home services, camps, group experience activities, training and employment for livelihood and other activities of adjustment are such type of programmes. The purpose of such activities is always to minimize the tension in the client.

Social case worker organizes such type of activities through which the client's experiences help in the personality growth and adjustment in the society. Though practical services are also made available but the focus is always on change in conditions. Attempts are also made to change and modify the attitude of parents, teachers, spouse, employer, friends and relatives in accordance with the needs of the client. In general environmental modification (manipulation) is undertaken by the case worker only when environmental pressure upon the client are beyond the latter's control but can be modified by the case worker.

(c) **Administration of practical service** involves those which are extended to the client for help to choose and use the social resource afforded by the community. According to Hamilton administration of practical services is the oldest and best known case work method of intervention. Porter Lee was the first social worker who emphasized and classified such resources. Administration of practical services means to help the client in such a way that he could select and use the resources available in the community. Social case worker helps the client for adequate knowledge of available resources through the techniques of discussion, information, clarification and direction. The use of services is essential to solve any kind of problem and if the problem is of social nature, then it becomes more essential for the worker to help the client in this direction. These services take the form of intervention as they satisfy his/her needs and give satisfaction. The client knows the type of services. It is the job of case worker to take the client to the resources. Money, medical care, nursery schools, scholarships, foster homes, legal aid, recreational facilities, etc. are such type of services that any person may need in order to resolve a given problem in his/her daily living.

Termination and Follow-up

Termination means ending the process that begun when client agreed to undergo social case work intervention process. The termination process is being decided by worker and client with each others consent. Termination is the stage when the worker has the confidence in the client's ability to cope with the present and future situations. It is neither wise nor necessary for the termination to be an abrupt one. Termination should be done in a phased manner so that dependency on worker can be minimized. The frequency and amount of contacts should be gradually decreased. Particularly, the follow-up should be planned on a progressively diminishing basis, first, perhaps after two weeks, then a month, then three months, six months and a year following the termination of the formal programme.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the process in which the worker tries to find out the effectiveness and

success of the process. It is the activity which ascertains whether the social case work process has achieved the desired goals, in a case. In social case work practice evaluation provides the crucial feedback to the case worker and the client regarding whether the intervention programme is succeeding as desired, whether established goals have been achieved, whether modifications in the programme are necessary and whether the client is being helped in the real sense. Social case worker evaluates the content of the programme and its effectiveness inner strength gained by the client and the success of himself/herself in helping the client.

Recording

Recording is the process in which all the facts gathered are recorded along with success or failures in the social case work process. It is humanly impossible to retain in mind all the information related to a client. Record writing is important for formulating the social assessment and plan of action in each and every case. Recording is done regularly as the case moves based on this chronologically linked material. Summaries may be prepared periodically.

Role of Social Worker

The Social Worker, in each phase, has to be an expert who is able to understand human behaviour and life situations. The social worker should have proper research orientation so that he /she is able to study and collect relevant data regarding the client. He/ she should have understanding of nature, motivations, strengths, weaknesses and dynamics of the role expectations as they influence the individuals. The social worker should have knowledge of the society- its values, traditions, customs, taboos, problems, priorities etc and while working with individuals. The social worker must himself/herself be clear as to what, realistically, the role's requirements are, and he/she work accordingly. The social worker should have knowledge of available services and resources . While dealing with the client the social worker has to perform various roles such as care giver, enabler, therapist, guide, counsellor consultant, mobilizer, an evaluator, as an advocate, and a referral agent.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What do you understand by intervention (treatment) and discuss its various methods?

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- 2) Briefly discuss the role of the social worker in intervention process (treatment)

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4.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have studied the various phases of case work process. Case Work is one of the primary methods of social work which aims to help individuals to solve their problems and enhance social functioning. The various phase of case work are study, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation which are interlinked with each other and they are similar in form to a rope, woven of multiple strands. When one cuts the rope at any point, all the component strands are exposed.

In the study phase the case worker establishes professional and purpose full relationship using skills of case worker. In study phase he/she tries to study the client and his/her circumstances in context to his/ her problem. In the study process the case worker must secure all and every fact that taken together, through logical and inferential reasoning, would reveal the client's personality and the situation. The methods used for collecting information's in this phase include interviews, observation, study of available records and collateral contacts.

Assessment is the phase in which we try to understand the problem and its causative factors. It is an attempt to arrive at as an exact definition as possible of the social situation and personality of a given client. It is a search for the cause of the problem which brings the client to the worker for the help. It aims at finding answers to three major questions: What is the problem? How has it arisen? What can be done to solve it?

Intervention is the phase in which it is decided what kind of help will be best for alleviating the client's distress and restoring, maintaining or enhancing social functioning. In order to achieve the goals set by the worker, conventionally the following methods of social intervention are used i.e. direct intervention, environmental modification and administration of practical services.

Termination means ending the process that begun when the client agreed to undergo social case work intervention process. Termination is the stage when the worker has confidence in the client's ability to cope with present and arising situations.

Evaluation is the phase where we try to know what the outcomes of the efforts are. It is the activity which ascertains whether social case work process has achieved the desired goals in a case.

Recording is the process in which all the facts gathered are recorded, events and success or failures related to case work process are being listed for the purpose of measurements of results, administrative, teaching and supervision and research.

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