



DEVELOPING TOGETHER

SOCIAL WORK TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

CRITICAL INCIDENT PROMPTS FOR PRACTICE EDUCATORS

Here are some suggestions for prompts for Practice Educators to use when discussing a critical incident with students.

Think of an "incident" from the placement experience. The incident or event can be a simple, every day situation which made the student think about what they did and why.

Such as:

- Something you were doing for the first time.
- Meeting a person or a group of people for the first time.
- An occasion where you felt that your intervention really made a difference.
- Something that went unusually well.
- An incident where there was some sort of "breakdown", i.e. where things did not go as planned.
- An incident that you think captures the essence of anti racist and anti discriminatory social work practice.
- An incident that was particularly demanding.
- An incident that made you question your own practice.

Prompts for a PE to enable analysis by the student

The incident

Using these headings to briefly outline the incident/event/situation- try not to go into too much background detail - just give enough to put it in context.

- What led up to it
- Who was involved
- Brief but specific details of what happened
- What you wanted to accomplish in dealing with the situation
- Why the incident seems important or "interesting" to you

General reflection questions

- What you were thinking about as it was taking place
- What you were feeling during and after the incident
- What did you find most demanding
- What has changed as a result of your intervention?
- How can you measure this?
- Have things changed in the way you intended?



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- Has anything happened that you didn't intend?
- What did you do or say which influenced the way things happened?
- What did any other person do or say which influenced the way things happened?
- Were there any "key" or "pivotal" moments?
- What would have happened if you had made different decisions about what to do or say?
- What knowledge and skills did you use in this situation? Would any other knowledge or skills have been useful?

Feedback

- What feedback have you had from others? This may be verbal feedback or what their actions are suggesting to you.

Comparing practice against theory, legislation or standards

- Are there any standards relevant to this piece of work? What do the standards require? Did you comply with the standards, exceed them, fall short of them? (e.g. GSCC code of practice / departmental standards /)
- What theoretical basis helped you to understand the issues and informed your work? How closely did you follow a particular theory?
- What legislation or policy is relevant to the piece of work? How far did the legislation / policy dictate or influence your actions?

Power, values and Anti-oppressive practice

- What do you think is the service user's perspective on the situation?
- What leads you to think this?
- Who had power in the situation?
- Where did it come from?
- Were you able to take any steps to share power you had with the service user? How did you go about this?
- Did you identify any structural issues, which caused discrimination or disadvantage to the service user?
- How did you address this? Did your practice contribute to any oppression, or address the oppression.
- How did your own values, beliefs and cultural identity influence the way you perceived this situation?
- Were your own values or beliefs challenged in any way? How has this affected you?

Moving forward



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- What 'gaps' have you identified in your understanding of the issues raised and what can you do about them
- What you have learnt about social work from considering the incidents
- How can you develop your practice and that of the service within your work setting?