

BOOK REVIEW

Roy Samuriwo, Ben Hannigan, Stephen Pattison & Andrew Todd. (2018). *Values in Health and Social Care: An Introductory Workbook*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. ISBN 978 1 78592 063 9

Margot Lindsay RGN BA MPhil MCLIP PhD

Associate Staff, Division of Psychiatry, University College London, London, UK

Correspondence address

Dr. Margot Lindsay, Division of Psychiatry, University College London, Maple House, 149 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 7NF, UK. E-mail: rejumev@ucl.ac.uk

Accepted for publication: 20 February 2018

Introduction

Each of the six chapters within this important resource is divided into an introduction, aims and learning outcomes with learning activities for the reader to complete. These are followed by feedback reflecting the responses of people who have tested the activity to complement the reader's own thinking. The authors address the reader by explaining that "This is a workbook designed to help you to learn about and reflect in depth on your experience in the light of concepts and your experience in the light of concepts and ideas."

That means that each chapter has a series of activities to work through and respond to, writing down personal thoughts. The authors address the reader in the second person which makes it very personal and engaging. Each activity is followed by comments from those who have already tried out the activities. Suggestions are provided on how to make the best of this book by considering: (a) The importance of values in health and social care, (b) The purpose of this workbook, (c) Who is this book for? (d) The shape of the book, (e) How to use this book - creating your own learning experience, (f) Getting started and (g) Additional resources, in the form of a glossary and further reading, are also provided.

This workbook includes 'activity exercises' to help the reader to think about various aspects of his or her experience while advancing towards professional education and responsibility. It introduces the reader to some new and perhaps previously unfamiliar words and terms. For example, 'Andragogy'. This is defined as the method and practice of teaching adult learners. I did not know that I have enacted values which can be identified and recognised in the ways that people/institutions act and behave. Espoused values are those that people consciously adopt and believe in. One premise of the workbook is that it can be interesting to consider the stereotypes of one's

own and other groups and professions. However, it is important, as the workbook emphasises, not to stop there in identifying and understanding the character, ethos and identity that different groups bring to health and social care. Often, the distinctive characteristics of groups have been formed over many years by a multitude of different factors: social, historical, economic and scientific *etc.* General and adult, nurses, for example, have a different institutional evolution and history from mental health nurses and they work in different contexts and with people with different needs.

Individual chapters

Chapter 1, "Surfacing personal values: identifying yourself", speaks to the reader, inviting him/her to become more consciously aware of who and what he or she is. The aim and learning outcomes is to help the reader to begin mapping and navigating their personal values world in order improve self-understanding.

An activity in Chapter 1 is categorising values. In the discussion on identifying personal values, there is an explanation on distinguishing different types of values. The aim is to enable the reader to classify values, beginning with those values the reader has already identified as his or her own. It requires reflection and to have a discussion with another person. After the adjoining exercise there is a discussion about how people's values have been shaped. Other activities focus on understanding where values come from, how values can differ and change and valuing in everyday life. The reader is encouraged to analyse their own experiences and enacted values by writing notes on visiting a healthcare facility, thinking about their experiences there and talking to someone who has recently used a healthcare facility. There is then a

discussion about useful values in health and social care from the perspective of the person using the services.

In Chapter 2, “Being a person who uses services”, values are viewed from the vantage point of those on the receiving end of health and social care. The authors provide the opportunity to consider and articulate the perspective of people using services and to distinguish the values evident in health and social care services from different levels. The chapter concludes by inviting the reader to consider what sorts of values people who use health and social care might want to see enacted in services and what acts might help to realise and manifest these how they are enacted in practice.

Chapter 3, “Being a learner”, invites the reader to examine the values of professional education and training and to appraise the ethos, character and values of their own profession.

Chapter 4 on “Becoming a Professional” encourages practitioners to reflect on their professional code to consider “What do I want to be?” The chapter invites the reader to examine and understand how the values of their chosen health or social care profession influence the value that they embrace, adopt and manifest as a learner or practitioner and help them to evaluate how values relate to action as they become enacted in practice. When becoming a professional one of the activities in this chapter is to help people to locate enacted and embodied values in professional practice, not just in theoretical codes and documents that set out ideals. It also proposes thinking about the relationship between personal and professional values and institutional rules.

Chapter 5 “Becoming a member of the team/organisation” explores the significance of values within and across teams and professions. The activities in this chapter consider personal stereotypes of other professions in order to become conscious of expectations at the start of working in teams. This includes activities for understanding the character, ethos and identity of health and social care professions and groups.

Chapter 6 focuses on “Becoming a leader/influencer/shaper/” which encourages the reader to think about leadership from a values perspective. The activity includes identifying attitudes to leadership and influence and styles of leadership and value influencing. There is also an activity on values in conflict and individual responsibility.

Discussion

Activity 7.1 says that its aim is in “Making Values Matter”, helping the reader to summarise learning and to think about how this might work out in practice in the future. The authors suggest looking back on the answer to this activity in a few years’ time and, indeed, on all the activities in the book, to see what has happened. By doing so readers might be able to see how much their values and practice have shifted, or remained constant. People often feel that their values are concrete and solid, that they will never change, but they are not always right in this assumption. Values, identity, people and organisations are in a constant state of change and flux. The only constant in

life is change and we will come across many things in life that we cannot change or that are beyond our control. However, we do have control over how we respond and act in life’s ‘ups and downs’ as well as how our actions relate to our values, the values of our profession, the values of our Society and the values of the people to whom we are delivering care.

The evolution of values is, the workbook contends, inevitable. Values are relational and contextual in their adoption and enactment. For this reason, changes in values with the passage of time are to be expected - and recognising this can make personal and professional life more interesting. The authors are clear that while people think that their fundamental values are unchanging and can never change, this can be an illusion. For example, over the last few decades, many UK healthcare professionals have had to embrace market ideas and values that they found alien to care, or to change their belief that elderly people are passive objects to be looked after rather than being encouraged to be independent and to exercise real choice.

The challenge, as the workbook stresses, is to continue to monitor our espoused and enacted values and to keep on relating these to our life, our context, our organisation and our professional work. This kind of awareness may complicate life and it may even be difficult or painful at times. But we do, have a real choice here. Indeed, we can immerse ourselves in an unproblematic, silent identity whose content remains implicit and ill-understood. Or we can continue to reflect on the significance of values and identity as we meet new situations and challenges. If the latter, then this will make our life and those of our colleagues and friends richer and critically creative.

Conclusion

The workbook contains a plethora of illuminating case studies, guides to practical activity in the field and, very usefully, downloadable resources. In essence, the workbook can be described as a beginner’s guide to understanding how values are crystallized within differing professional contexts across the whole spectrum of health and social care services.

This very thoughtful workbook provides an excellent explanation of the meaning and importance of values in health and social care. It should be essential to all teaching on this subject. Students could initially photocopy the relevant activity discussions to develop their understanding of this very important subject. Perhaps a key characteristic of the workbook is its deconstruction of personal, professional and organisational values, a deconstruction achieved in a critical but entirely accessible way. Overall, it is accessible, engaging and highly readable. For sure, this workbook can be recommended as essential reading for all health and social care professionals - both those established and those in training.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.