

The Practice of Hope in Social Work

Hope matters. In social work, although hope is not a new concept, it has received less attention in research and practice. Social workers are the holders of hope for clients, communities, and society (Clark, 2012, p.3). Although there is a wide agreement on the dynamic role of hope in social work, pragmatic strategies to practice hope in social work research and practice are sparse and fragmented. Hope can be viewed as a powerful strategy for healing from social toxicity.

Literature examining hope has various definitions of hope:

One of the most prominent theories of hope was postulated by Snyder (2002), who defined hope as “the perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals, and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those pathways” (p.249). Snyder (2002) posits hope as the function of: (a) goal orientation; (b) pathways thinking; and (c) agency and that both pathways and agency are required for the future orientation of goals.

Similarly, Duncan-Andrade (2009) states that there are three kinds of hope: (1) Material Hope, which is the sense of control when given the resources to deal with forces that affect everyday lives; (2) Socratic Hope, which provides opportunities to question the unjust society; and (3) Audacious Hope, which provides opportunities to Healing from oppression and provide the capacity to transform it.

Ginwright (2015), further expands on the concept of radical healing and argues for the three types of hope that create spaces of opportunities: (1) Relational Hope— changing conditions with communities based on trust and relationship; (2) Restorative Hope— creating conditions and opportunities for communities to prosper and thrive; and (3) Political Hope— engaging in political decisions in everyday lives to articulate opportunities to flourish

Because participatory approaches promote engagement & human agency, these approaches can provide pragmatic strategies to infuse hope in social work research and practice across diverse ethnic communities.

Reading List

Callan, D.B. (1989). Hope as a clinical issue in oncology social work, *Journal of Psychosocial Oncology*, 7(3), 31-46.

Clark, E. (2017). <https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/practice/10-essentials-social-workers-must-know-about-hope/>

Clark, E.J. & Hoffler, E.F. (2014). *Hope Matters: The Power of Social Work*. Washington, DC: NASW Press

Collins, S. Hope and helping in social work. *Practice: Social Work in Action*, 27(3), DOI: 10.1080/09503153.2015.1014335

Duncan-Andrade, J.M.R. (2009). Note to Educators: Hope required when growing roses in concrete. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(2), 181-194. Available <http://crescendoedgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Duncan-Andrade-J.-2009-Hope-Required.pdf>

Ginwright, S.A. (2015a). Radically healing Black lives: A love note to justice. Available <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20151>

Ginwright, S.A. (2015). *Hope and Healing in Urban Education: How Urban Activists and Teachers are Reclaiming Matters of the Heart*. CA: Routledge

Smaldino, A. (1975). The importance of hope in the casework relationship. *Social Casework*, 328-331.

Video List

Shawn Ginwright: Dare to Disrupt <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXVnkZhyAdk>

From trauma-informed care to healing-centered engagement: a conversation with Dr. Shawn Ginwright: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzlzFcJhk30>

Shawn Ginwright: Hope & Healing at Science of Hope <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtWjBz59d0s>

Other Resources

Arizona state University, The Center for the Advanced Study and Practice of Hope: <https://thesanfordschool.asu.edu/center-for-advanced-study-practice-of-hope>