

SOCIAL FUNCTIONING: SOCIAL WORK'S FOCUS OF CONCERN

Wernes Boehm

- Social work seek to enhance the social functioning of individuals, singularly and in groups by activities focused upon their social relationship which constitute interaction between individuals and their environment.

William Schwartz

- SW profession mediates the process through which the individual or society reach out to each other through mutual need for self-fulfillment.
- Symbiotic means relationship between people and their nurturing group
- the Social Worker's Field of intervention lies at the point where two forces meet: the individuals impetus towards health, growth and belonging, and organized efforts of society to integrate its parts into a productive and dynamic whole.

William Gordon

- PERSON IN HIS LIFE SITUATION

COMPLEX – a simultaneous dual focus on man and his environment. This focus has been concentrated at same times on the side of the organism as interpreted by psychological theory and at other times on the side of environment as interpreted by sociological and economic theory.

Harriet Barlett

- Social functioning is the relation between the coping activity of people and the demand from the environment.

Louise C. Johnson

- Social workers become involved when individuals are having difficulty in a relationship with other people: in growing so as to maximize their potential and in meeting the demands of the environment. He described this situation as “people coping” and “environmental demand”.

Social Role – socially recognized pattern of behaviors and activities expected from an individual occupying a certain position in society.

THREE WAYS OF SOCIAL WORKERS TO IMPROVE SOCIAL FUNCTIONING OF INDIVIDUAL

1. Change strategies directed towards the individual if personal inadequacies or sometimes pathologies make it difficult for the individual to cope with the demands of his situation or environment.
2. Change strategies directed toward the environment if it is latter that is beset with inadequacies or if the situation is such as to be beyond the coping capacities of the individual.
3. Change strategies directed towards both the individuals and the environment.

THE FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK

1. **REHABILITATIVE FUNCTION** - tries to put back the person to a normal of healthy state of social functioning. Curative aspect – seeks to remove factors which have caused the breakdown in the person's social function.
2. **PREVENTIVE FUNCTION** – early discovery, control and elimination of those conditions or situations which may have harmful effect on social functioning.
3. **DEVELOPMENTAL FUNCTION** - both to help the individual make maximum use of his own potentials and capacities as well as to further the effectiveness of available social or community Resources.

5 ELEMENTS OF ATTRIBUTES OF A PROFESSION BY ERNEST GREENWOOD

RA 4373, promulgated in 1965 – Social Work officially recognized as a profession with the passage of a law by Congress.

1. **SYSTEMATIC BODY OF THEORY** - the skills that characterize a profession flow from and are supported by a fund of knowledge that has been organized into an internally consistent system called body of theory.

3 types of knowledge used by social work:

TESTED KNOWLEDGE – established through scientific study

HYPOTHETICAL KNOWLEDGE – unproved theory, undergo transformation into tested knowledge

ASSUMPTIVE KNOWLEDGE - practice wisdom

2. **PROFESSIONAL AUTHORITY** – client- professional relationship
3. **COMMUNITY SANCTION** - professional-community relationship
4. **REGULATIVE CODE OF ETHICS** - serves to check possible abuses which can arise out of a professions exercise of authority, and its accompanying powers and privileges.
5. **PROFESSIONAL CULTURE** – interactions of social rules required by the formal and informal groups generated a social configuration unique to the profession, viz... a profession culture.

Social Values - basic and fundamental beliefs of a professional group, practically reasons for its existence.

Professional Norms – accepted standards of behavior of doing things, which guide the professional in various situations such as how to gain entry into formal and informal groups

Symbols - “meaning-laden items” including emblems, insignias, dress, history, its idioms, and vocabulary and its stereotypes of the professional.