Why Care for the Stranger

Name of student

Institutional affiliation

# **Why Care for the Stranger**

## **Introduction**

There are thousands of people in different countries, who are strangers each day. Often people find themselves as strangers wherever they go either on their daily basis activities or normal visits. Most of the people such as refugees find themselves in needy areas where they end up to, due to various problems they face in their communities or their country in general. If such people are not taken care of, they end up living a miserable life without their likeness (Reed, 2010). Therefore, strangers should be taken care of depending on the situation in which they are in. In this case, social workers have an important role to play in ensuring that every individual enjoys their human rights regardless of where they are. They also have a role to play in trying to equalize people within the society. Through the application of the ethical principles of social workers and their responsibility to the broader society, social workers play a vital role in the current society to unite the various classes of the society. These social workers work through the governance of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNUDHR). The social workers or any other individual is allowed to attend to a needy stranger according to the articles composed in the UNUDHR (Amrith, 2017). This shows the extent to which the UNUDHR support the caring for strangers among other people.

The National Association of Social Workers which is commonly abbreviated as NASW is the greatest organization worldwide that is composed of professional social workers. NASW provides service to the social workers in approximately 55 chapters in the United States among other nations such as the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Guam among many more. The organization was developed in the year 1955 with the help of seven predecessor organizations of social workers' merger, with the aim of carrying out three major responsibilities (Engel, & Schutt, 2013). These responsibilities include strengthening and unifying the profession, promoting the development of the practices of social workers and advancing some social policies. Through these practices, the social workers will be able to take care of any person including the strangers. Therefore, the NASW is greatly in need of equalizing people and letting strangers enjoy their rights through the help of the social workers as stated in UNUDHR articles. In this case, the article 1 of UNUDHR states that every human being is born free and is equal to others in dignity and rights and therefore each person should treat the other in brotherhood spirit.

# **Individual responsibility and one individual program**

## **Necessities for Social Work Skills**

Social work is a varied and very demanding profession that often requires a practitioner to put on several hats such as being a therapist, adviser, clinician and an administrator among others, every day. Through several such roles that might appear to demand a limitless range of expertise and knowledge, a social worker having adequate skills in the social work functions well in several situations (Doel, & Nelson, 2016). Social working is a critical profession that needs much attention of caring about people regardless of their geographical background especially strangers. For a social worker to carry out his roles perfectly, he must possess the following qualities. These qualities greatly show that a stranger should be given care.

### **Be an active Listener**

The worker needs to carefully give an ear to the person they serve. Careful listening ability, pertinent question asking and retaining the information that is verbally transmitted is very important to the social working counseling aspect. This is the first step that the worker uses to win over the client. This establishes trust, opens doors and discovers important information regarding people who seek the assistance in the understanding of their circumstances.

### **Ability to be Empathetic**

A social worker needs this quality so as to have the feeling and find a way to help the client out of their situations. Empathy is the ability to identify or vicariously to experience the situation of another person especially a stranger (Soerens, & Hwang, 2010). Empathizing is both an emotional and an intellectual process that enables the worker to understand and assist other people to solve their problems easily. Many of the social workers look natural empathetic of which the Empathetic skill is the primary reason as to why people join the profession. This ensures the social worker to feel what the client is feeling.

### **Have some good knowledge on Social Perspectives (Social communication)**

Apart from receiving verbal information and processing it, a social worker has to be sensitive to social cues, body language, cultural and implication behavioral patterns. The careful listening should be coupled with a keen observation of the client. As some clients may be stating clearly about their work and requirements towards obtaining solutions in a focused way, others find it more difficult in expressing themselves verbally. This calls for each and every social worker to be in possession of the ability to ‘read between the lines' for an effective interpretation of feelings and thoughts that are held within their clients (MacFarquhar, 2015).

### **Ability to set clear boundaries**

A social worker needs to be able to know how far they can go. He/she has to maintain the capacity to set and accept the limits of the things that need to be accomplished during a given time. The condition of the social working profession may be very consuming especially for the person who might be sensing that their work is never complete. The establishment of boundaries, as well as setting milestones, can assist a person to set the expectations are easily acceptable.

### **Be fully aware of themselves**

This professional always gets feedback regarding their achievements from various people whom he/she interacts with. These may include supervisors, clients among other sources, though no substitutes for self-awareness. The ability to evaluate the working and performance of a person is regarded as an invaluable skill. This points out on any weakness that the worker may be having.

# **Collective responsibility and one program**

Apart from working individually, social workers also need to work with their colleagues. There needs to be a common ground of operations for every practicing social worker in the market. The social workers have a collective social responsibility to fulfil to the community. Each of them has a moral duty to perform to the respective communities of operation.

## **Duties of Social Workers**

So as to carry out their roles perfectly, the social workers are given various duties according to their expertise in different departments. These enable them to perform their roles well without any selection of a stranger or a familiar person. This shows the degree to which the NASW is trying to take care of the strangers. This role is according to the Article 2 of the UNUDHR that asserts that every individual is entitled to all freedoms and rights regardless of their gender, race, religion, color, social or national origin, political and language among other aspects (Darraj, 2010). As social workers assist people in solving and coping with their challenges in their everyday activities, those who work in the clinical department also diagnose as well as treating emotional, behavioral and mental issues to everyone including strangers. In this case, they assist in a wide range of conditions where some include adopting children who have no parents. Apart from the roles mentioned above of clinical and social workers, they also identify individuals and communities that are in need of assistance (Canda, & Furman, 2010). In this duty, they do not choose who to help; instead, they identify anybody regardless of the gender, age, race, religions among other various human aspects.

Similarly, the social workers assess the needs, supports, strengths, and situations of the clients with the aim of determining their goals. In this regard, if the person to whom the needs are being assessed is a stranger, he will be treated as any other person who is familiar to them. Thirdly, the professionals also assist clients in adjusting to challenges and changes in their lives such as unemployment, divorce or illness. When the workers come across a person with such challenges, they ensure that they treat them with a lot of care and makes sure that they have changed the situation that the person was in, regardless of whether the person is a stranger or not.

The social professionals also, research and advocate the community resources especially the childcare, food stamps and healthcare with the aim of assisting and improving the wellbeing of clients. Advocacy is a significant social work aspect. The social workers raise awareness on behalf or with their clients on national, state and local levels (Geiser, 2013).

Besides, the workers have the responsibility of responding to the crisis conditions such as mental health and child abuse emergencies. In this case, most of the people who are attended to, are mostly strangers and this does not prevent the professional from carrying out their duty. In respect to this role, the clinical social workers offer couples, family, group and individual therapy as they serve their clients in the development of strategies for changing or coping with hard situations. If the condition of the client is worse, they refer him to other services or resources, such as, to the professionals of mental health or other support groups (Lazenby, 2018). These clinical social workers have the ability to develop treatment plans with doctors among other health professionals and can adjust the treatment plans when necessary depending on the progress of the client. The clinical social officers can work in various specialties.

They also make follow up to clients to make sure that their conditions have been looked into and improved according to their grievances. Besides, the take the role of maintaining records and case files. Moreover, the professionals take part in developing and evaluation of services and programs, making sure that the needs of the basic client are met. This role is carried out by a group of social workers that is regarded as Bachelor's Social Workers abbreviated as BSW. This group work in community organizations and with policymakers in developing or improving programs, policies, services, and social conditions. This focusing on a specific work is known as macro social work (Beckett, & Maynard, 2012). Lastly, the social workers offer the psychotherapy services to the people who are in need of them.

## **Classification of Social Workers**

Due to a large number of social workers in a given locality, they are classified according to their expertise or their level of education so as to handle their clients with professionalism. In this case, every worker is given a role where he performs best. The classification eliminates any biases as the workers can receive any person at any time regardless of whether he is a stranger or not. This shows much care for the strangers as they are treated equally with other people (Comer, 2014). This classification is based on the Article 6 of the UNUDHR that states that every human being has the recognition right of being anywhere as guided by the law.

### **Children and Family Social Workers**

These specialists are responsible for protecting children and helping families that are in need of help. They assist the families in various ways such as childcare services, applying for benefits and housing. In cases where children are in danger such as child abuse and neglect, they normally intervene to offer protection (McFarren, & Johnson, 2017). Some workers also offer assistance in arranging adoptions, locating foster families, or working for the families to reunite.

### **School Social Workers**

These professionals work with parents, teachers and school administrators with the aim of developing strategies and plans for improving the academic performance of students as well as social development (Geller, 2012). Students together with their family members are taken to these social workers whenever they have some challenges such as bullying, aggressive behaviors or frequent absenteeism from schools.

### **Healthcare Social Workers**

These workers assist patients in understanding their diagnosis information and making the required adjustments to their healthcare, housing, and lifestyles. For instance, they can assist people in making transitions from hospitals to their communities and homes (Sandu, & Frunză, 2017). Besides, they give information regarding services such as support groups or home healthcare in helping patients to manage their diseases or illness. These social workers assist doctors among other healthcare professionals in understanding the impacts that illnesses and diseases may pose to the emotional and mental health of patients. Some also specialize in hospice, geriatric, medical or palliative social work.

# **Implications to the society for engagement in social work**

Social work activities have not been without success. Milestones have been made in the society because of the vigorous and enormous amount of energy put in by the social workers. These among others may include:

## **Enhanced awareness on Substance abuse and mental health social workers**

These specialists help clients who have addictions and mental illness. They give information regarding services like 12-step programs and support groups to enable clients with coping with their health conditions. Most of the clinical social specialists play this role.

## **Promotion of the ethical Principles of Social Workers**

Social work is normally guided by the six ethical principles. The principles depend on the service core social work values, worth, and dignity of an individual, social justice, human relationships significance, competence and integrity (Reamer, 2013). The principles are set in ideals that every social worker has to aspire.

### **Core Value: Service**

Ethical Principle: The main objective of social workers is to offer assistance to individuals who are needy as well as addressing social challenges. Social professionals offer services to individual beyond their self-interest. In this case, they draw on their skills, values, and knowledge to help individuals who are in need as well as addressing social problems (Sandu, & Frunză, 2017). The professionals are encouraged on volunteering some of their portions of professional skills without expecting any financial return. This is regarded to as pro bono service.

### **Core value: Social Justice**

Ethical principle: Every social worker challenges social justice. Every social worker pursues social change especially on behalf or with oppressed and vulnerable people. The social change efforts of the social workers are focused mainly on poverty issues, discrimination, and unemployment among other examples of social injustice. These activities aid in promoting the acknowledge about and the sensitivity to oppressed, ethnic and cultural diversity. They strive to make sure that there is the accessibility of the required services, information, and resources; opportunity equality; as well as the meaningful participation of making decisions for all individuals.

### **Core Value: Worth and dignity of a person**

Ethical Principle: Social workers have respect to the worth and inherent dignity of a person. The professionals treat every person with respect and much care, regardless of their cultural, individual differences or ethnic diversity. They also promote self-determination and social responsibility of the clients. They also seek to strengthen the opportunity and the capacity of the client to address their requirements (Cournoyer, 2017). They are also cognizant of their double-responsibility to individuals as well as the whole society. Besides, they resolve disputes between the interests of the clients and the interest of the whole society social-responsible manner that is constant with the ethical principles and standards and values the work.

### **Core Value: Significance of Relationships of People**

Ethical Principle: Workers understand the core significance of the human relationship. The specialists recognize that relationship among individuals is a vital vehicle for change. They engage in partnership with people in the process of helping (Cournoyer, 2017). They also seek to encourage relationships among individuals with a purpose of promoting restoring, maintaining and enhancing the wellness of communities, organizations, social groups, families, and individuals.

### **Core Value: Integrity**

Ethical Principle: The professionals have a trustworthy behavioral manner. They are constantly aware of the missions and ethical principles, values, practices as well as ethical standards of the profession (Cournoyer, 2017). They act responsibly and honestly in the promotion of ethical practices in a section of the organization of their affiliation.

### **Core Value: Competence**

Ethical Principle: the practices of social workers are within their competence area as they enhance and develop their professional expertise. Social workers are always in a consistence strive of increasing their professional skills and knowledge as they use them in their practices. They, therefore, have to aspire for the contribution of their professional knowledge base.

## **Ethical Responsibilities of the Social Workers of the Broader Society**

### **Social Welfare**

Social workers are supposed to be promoting the general social welfare from the local level to the global level, people's development, their environment and their communities as well (Dolgoff, 2014). They should be advocating for suitable living conditions that fulfill the basic human needs and are supposed to be promoting social, political, cultural and economic values as well as the institutions that seem compatible with social justice realization.

### **Public Participation**

The workers should be facilitating informed participation from the public to shape the institutions and social policies.

### **Public Emergencies**

The professionals should be providing suitable professional services in response to the public emergencies to the best of their ability.

### **Social and Political Action**

The social professionals are supposed to be engaging in political or social actions that are seeking to make sure that every individual has the same access to employment opportunities, resources, as well as the services that they need in meeting their basic human requirements and full development. The workers are also supposed to be aware of the political and social arena effects on practices that advocate for variation in legislation and policy for the improvement of social situations in meeting the human basic needs and promotion of social justice (Glicken, 2010).

The workers should also be acting for the expansion of choices and opportunities of every individual through special regards for the disadvantaged, vulnerable, exploited and oppressed people (Potts, & Mandleco, 2012).

Besides, the specialists should also improve the situations that support social and cultural diversity in not only the United States but also the other countries. They should promote practices and policies that show respect of variation, encourage the resources and cultural knowledge expansion and promotion of policies that are capable of safeguarding the rights and confirm social justice and equity to all people (Glicken, 2010).

Moreover, they should also be acting for the prevention and elimination of exploitation of, discrimination against and domination of class, group or any person based on their physical or mental ability, race, national origin, ethnicity, immigration status, marital status, gender identity, religion or political belief.

# Conclusion

Caring for a stranger is a very important thing as anybody can be a stranger anytime when he moves out of his usual locality. In this regard, social workers among other people have been given the responsibility of caring for a stranger according to various core values, ethical principles, responsibility to the broader society and the articles stated of the UNUDHR. Therefore, a stranger should be given care that he or she demands.

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