**The University of Texas at Arlington**

**School of Social Work**

**SOCW 5304-001: Generalist Micro-Practice**

**Instructor**: Bruce L. Bower, MSW, LCSW

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**Office hours**: Tuesdays from1400 to 1700h., and Wednesdays from 0900 to 1200h. Other times are by appointment only.

**Course Number**: SOCW5304, section 001; **Course ID:** 83715; **Title:** Social Work Generalist Micro Practice.

**Time and place**: UTA School of Social Work Complex, Building A, Room 219; Mondays from 1900h. to 2150h., August 26, 2013 to December 02, 2013.

**Council on Social Work Educational Policy, Section 4.5 Social Work Practice:**

Social work practice is anchored in the purposes of the social work profession and focuses on strengths, capacities, and resources of client systems in relation to their broader environments, Students learn practice content that encompasses knowledge and skills to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This content includes engaging clients in an appropriate working relationship, identifying issues, problems, needs, resources, and asset; collecting and assessing information; and planning for service delivery. It includes using communication skills, supervision, and consultation. Practice content also includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing empirically based interventions designed to achieve client goals; applying empirically based interventions designed to achieve client goals; applying empirical knowledge and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

**UTA-School of Social Work Definition of Evidence-Informed Practice:**

Evidence-informed practice (EIP) is a guiding principle for the UTA-SSW. This approach is guided by the philosophy espoused by Gambrill (2006) and others who discuss evidence-based practice (EBP). Though many definitions of EIP/EBP saturate the literature, we offer two definitions that most closely define our understanding of the concept and serve to explicate our vision of EIP for the UTA-SSW:

The use of the best available scientific knowledge derived from randomized, controlled outcome studies, and meta-analyses of existing outcome studies, as one basis for guiding professional interventions and effective therapies, combined with professional ethical standards, clinical judgment, and practice wisdom (Barker, 2003, p. 149).

…..the integration of the best research evidence with our clinical expertise and our patient’s unique values and circumstances (Strauss, et al., 2005).

**UTA-School of Social Work Definition of Empowerment:**

The UTA SSW vision statement states that the “School’s vision is to promote social and economic justice in a diverse environment.”  Empowerment connects with the vision statement because, as Rees (1991) has pointed out, the very objective of empowerment is social justice.  Empowerment is a seminal vehicle by which social justice can be realized.  It could well be argued that true social justice cannot be realized without empowerment. Empowerment, anchored with a generalist base, directs social workers to address root causes at all levels and in all contexts, not simply “symptoms”.  This is not a static process but an ongoing, dynamic process, a process leading to a greater degree of social justice and equality.

In social work practice, the process of helping individuals, families, groups, and communities increase their personal, interpersonal, socioeconomic, and political strength and develop influence toward improving their circumstances (Barker, 2003, p. 249).

**Graduate Catalog Description:**

This foundation level course introduces graduate students to both theory and methods for social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups. It emphasizes a generalist perspective, beginning interviewing and relationship skills, problem assessment, goal setting, and contracting. Special attention is given to the common roles assumed by social workers (e.g. facilitator, broker, advocate). Required of all except advanced standing students.

**Detailed course description:**

Generalist Micro Practice is a Direct Practice, one of the six major content areas in the School of Social Work. All social work graduates will be expected to employ the skills and techniques of social work generalist practice in their professional activities regardless of their area of concentration. Content presented in Direct Practice courses reflects a liberal arts foundation through the infusion of biologic, economic, historical, socio-political, anthropological, and philosophical considerations. Instruction clearly represents a generalist perspective to the delivery of direct social services to clients of all sizes in a complex social-environment. Knowledge of factors influential on the context of service delivery is included in direct practice instruction. Direct Practice courses are arranged on a two year schedule and reflect two levels of content: generalist and advanced. While all students are required to master both micro and macro practice skills in the first year, second year courses are designed for students who elect to concentrate their education either in administration and community practice or in direct practice in mental health or with families and children.

**Educational Objectives**:

SOCW5304 addresses the following MSSW educational objectives:

1 Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.

2. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients’ age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.

3. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.

4. Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues.

5. Apply the knowledge and skills of the generalist perspective with systems of all sizes.

6. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.

7. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.

**Student Learning Objectives**:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to demonstrate the following knowledge areas:

* Demonstrate the foundation skills needed for generalist practice, e.g. collaboration, interviewing, assessment and planning change, evaluation of change objectives.
* Demonstrate an understanding of the various roles a generalist social worker assumes, e.g. broker, enabler, mediator, educator, evaluator, case manager/coordinator, and advocate.
* Describe the major components of referral, contracting, and documentation in generalist practice.
* Discuss the relevance diversity of race, gender, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious orientation, and disabilities to generalist social work practice.
* Acquire a beginning familiarity with the association between generalist practice and the community within organizational, economic and social justice, and socio-political environments.
* Conceptually and operationally distinguish a range of interventions derived from various change methods. This includes the ability to develop and enhance learning skills, to define concepts in operational terms, to translate them into measurable units of social work interventions and practice skills.

**Please Note:** The course instructor reserves the option to modify the course syllabus throughout the course by adding guest speakers, audio-visual media, instructional technology, or supplemental materials and/or modify assignments or make substitutions, as long as course objectives are met and the overall grading criteria are maintained.

**Requirements:**

Students are expected to participate actively in the teaching/learning process by asking questions, participating in discussions and actively voicing their views and opinions. Methods to be used include lectures, presentation, class exercises, videotaped role plays and live interview demonstrations (when possible/available), and exchange of ideas.

**Textbooks:**

**Required:**

Hepworth, D.H., Rooney, R.H., Dewberry Rooney, G., and Strom-Gottfried, K. (2013). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (9th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Collins, D., Jordan, C., and Coleman, H. (2013). *An introduction to family social work* (4th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

**Highly Recommended Supplemental Text:**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* ( 6th Ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Green, W. and Levy Simon, B. (Eds.). (2012). *The Columbia guide to social work writing*. New York: Columbia University Press.

**Course Outline:**

**Date Topics Covered Required Readings**

Aug. 26 Introductions Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.1, 2

-Instructor

-Students

-The course/syllabus

Sept. 02 **[Labor Day – no classes]** Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.3, 4

On Blackboard…

Social Work values and ethics

Core competencies of Social Work (EPAS)

Sept. 09 **[Quiz #1]**

Introduction to direct practice Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.4, 5

-Communication skills

Sept. 16 **[First journal article critique due]**

Skills with individuals Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.6,7

Sept. 23 **[Quiz #2]**

Skills with families and couples Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.10

Collins, *et al.*, ch.7, 13

Sept. 30 **[Personal Epistemology Due]**

Skills with groups Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.11

Oct. 07 **[Quiz #3]**

Phases of direct practice – Phase I Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.8

-Exploration Collins, *et al.*, ch.7

Oct. 14 **[Second journal article critique due]**

Phase I (cont’d) – Assessment Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.9

Collins, *et al.*, ch.8, 9

Oct. 21 **[Quiz #4]**

Phase I (cont’d) – Planning/contracting Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.12

Collins, *et al.*, ch.10

Oct. 28 Phase II – Planning and intervention Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.13, 14

Nov. 04 **[Quiz #5]**

Phase II (cont’d) – Planning and Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.15

Intervention with families Collins, *et al.*, ch.11, 12

Nov. 11 **[Third journal article critique due]**

Phase II (cont’d) – Planning and Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.16

Intervention with groups

Nov. 18 **[Quiz #6]**

Phase II (cont’d) – Assessing for goal Hepworth, *et al.*, ch.17, 18

Attainment

Nov. 25 **[Biopsychosocial Assessment due]**

Phase III – Evaluation and termination Hepworth*, et al.*, ch.19

(individuals)

Dec. 2 **[Quiz #7]**

Phase III – Evaluation and termination Collins *et al.*, ch.14

(families)

**Assignments and Grading:**

It is expected that you attend class and participate in class discussions. Each class missed is a significant loss of instruction. Three absences will not be penalized; however, each class beyond the three will result in a 5% drop in your final grade for each class missed.

**Personal Epistemology Paper (30%)**

Write an 8 - 10 page (double spaced) paper in which you explore your personal epistemology as a social worker. Epistemology is the branch of [philosophy](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/philosophy) concerned with the nature and origin of knowledge. Epistemology asks the question “How do we know what we know?” “In this paper, you will answer the following questions in your own words (No text book definitions or citations) I want to know what you think in your own words:

* What is social work (come up with your own definition)?
* What does a social worker do?
* What is therapy?
* Do you believe in therapy? Why or why not? Where does this belief come from? In other words, how did you come to believe this? - How does your background (e.g., professional, familial, current relationships, ethnic-racial, religious, age, gender, socio-political perspectives) shape your answers to these questions?
* What are your basic assumptions about people (Are people good or bad)? How do people come to be good, bad or somewhere in between? Where does this belief come from? In other words, how did you come to believe this? - How does your background (e.g., professional, familial, current relationships, ethnic-racial, religious, age, gender, socio-political perspectives) shape your answers to these questions?
* What is the development and origin of “problems”? (How do people come to experience certain problems such as domestic violence, poverty, sexism, depression, etc.)? - How does your background (e.g., professional, familial, current relationships, ethnic-racial, religious, age, gender, socio-political perspectives) shape your answers to these questions?
* Why do some people seek help while others do not seek help?
* What causes people to change? What helps or forces people to change? Why do some people change while other people don’t change?
* When did you first become aware of race and whether or not race mattered? - How does your background (e.g., professional, familial, current relationships, ethnic-racial, religious, age, gender, socio-political perspectives) shape your answer to this question?
* When did your first become aware of your gender and whether or not it mattered? - How does your background (e.g., professional, familial, current relationships, ethnic-racial, religious, age, gender, socio-political perspectives) shape your answer to this question?
* How do you handle conflict/disagreements? - How does your background (e.g., professional, familial, current relationships, ethnic-racial, religious, age, gender, socio-political perspectives) shape your answer to this question?
* What is your primary communication style (open and direct, beat around the bush)? How does your background (e.g., professional, familial, current relationships, ethnic-racial, religious, age, gender, socio-political perspectives) shape your answer to this question?
* Do you believe in God? How do you anticipate this belief affecting your work with clients who have similar and different beliefs?
* What groups of clients or issues do you anticipating struggling with in your clinical practice? Why do you think this is?
* How will you work toward making any identified changes? Please come up with concrete things you can do if you were faced with a clients with these characteristics. Note: I would try harder, I will not let it affect me, and I would ignore it are not good answers.
* What do you think will be your strengths as a social worker?
* What areas do you need to improve or work on as a budding social worker?

GRADING: Comments will be structured not in terms of answering these questions “correctly” but rather in terms of the depth, clarity, level of critical exploration, and the logical analysis (e.g., internal consistency or explanations assigned of any incongruent logic) in which students approach and examine these issues. Papers are due early in the semester to give students an early assessment of their written work in terms of a grade and give them an idea of how I grade papers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED: The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to think concretely and explicitly about the world views (i.e., formal/informal theories and mythologies) they endorse and the ways in which these are informed by their familial background, socio-cultural experiences, and/or personal beliefs and values.

**Biopsychosocial Assessment (30%):**

Students will complete a biopsychosocial of an individual of their choosing. A biopsychosocial history is a comprehensive assessment of an individual. The assessment does not have a specific length, but should not exceed 10 double-spaced pages. It is expected that you will complete the assessment fully and in a professional manner. This includes paragraph form (no bullet points), complete descriptions, and using formal writing (without contractions, slang, etc.). This assignment will also have a reflective component in which you will evaluate how well you were able to engage the client and use the interviewing skills studied in class. I will post additional information about this assignment on Blackboard by the end of September.

GRADING: This will be based on completeness of the information gathered, clarity of writing, and applicability of the intervention(s) recommended.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE ADDRESSED: The purpose of this assignment is for students to begin the process of conceptualizing the initial assessment process in terms of, (a) knowing what information is required in a biopsychosocial assessment; (b) the process of actually interviewing someone with the view to gathering said information; and (c) organizing that information in a way that allows for making recommendations about interventions.

**Journal Article Critiques (20%):**

Spaced throughout the semester you will read and critique **three (3)** journal articles that are directly related to the content of this course. In your write-up you will need to address the following areas:

* title, author, date, and source
* a brief summary of the study
* discuss the strengths and limitations
* discuss your interpretation of the findings or conclusions
* discuss how you would apply the findings of this research to your work with clients
* discuss how and to what extent this research addresses issues of diversity and oppression (if at all)

GRADING: This will be based on the relevance of the articles chosen, evidence of critical thinking, and an effort to apply the research to practice.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE ADDRESSED: The purpose of this assignment is threefold: (a) to provide an opportunity to begin the development of critical thinking skills; (b) to develop an increased awareness of the evidence base that provides direction to direct practice in Social Work; and (c) to begin to develop the ability to bring research and practice closer together.

**Quizzes (20%):**

There will be seven (7) quizzes throughout the semester, roughly one ever two weeks, dealing with factual material covered in the previous two weeks. They will be composed of multiple-choice, and true/false questions. Six of the seven quizzes will be counted, with the lowest seventh dropped.

GRADING: This is an objective grading process; either you will know the material or you won’t.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE ADDRESSED: This is the factual component of the course.

The grade breakdown is as follows:

Quizzes: 20

Article critiques 20

Biopsychosocial 30

Personal Epistemology 30

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Total 100

Final grades will be according to the UTA Graduate School guidelines:

4.0 (90-100) A

3.0 (80-89) B

2.0 (70-79) C

1.0 (60-69) D

0.0 (0-59) F

Students are expected to keep track of their own performance throughout the course and seek guidance from available resources (including the instructor), if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

**Grade Grievances:**

Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current Graduate School catalog. If you do have a concern about your grade, please see me as soon as possible.

**Attendance Policy and Classroom Protocol:**

I expect you to attend all classes and participate in discussions. As noted above, missing any classes creates a significant gap in the overall course. In addition to decreasing grades when more than three class sessions are missed, I will not provide make-up material for missed classes.

Disruptions in the class learning environment and of other class participants will not be tolerated and will result in the disrupting student being required to leave the classroom and not return. No further scores will be entered on that student’s record, which will result in a failing grade for that student. Please be aware of and adhere to the following: Students are expected to be on time, attend all classes, and stay until the completion of the class session.

Students are to complete all reading assignments *prior* to the class in which that material is being covered, and be prepared to participate in class discussions (a significant part of this class). All written assignments are due at the time and date specified elsewhere in this syllabus. Assignments turned in after the due date will not be accepted. Assignments are to be complete at the time of submission. No papers or assignments may be resubmitted once a grade is given. All graduate students in the UTA School of Social Work are expected to know and ascribe to the NASW Code of Ethics upon admission to the School, and are responsible for adhering to standards of professional conduct with colleagues and faculty, as well as others in the SSW graduate program.

All electronic devices, such as laptop computers, cell phones, and music players are to be turned off as a courtesy to the instructor and fellow students. The one exception is the use of laptop computers and hand-held recorders for the purpose of taking notes. To preserve academic integrity, ***USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMAILING, NET-SURFING, GAME-PLAYING, OR ANY OTHER USE DURING CLASS TIME IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.***

**Electronic Communication:**

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means of communicating with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact University-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, graduation, and so on. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>

**Student Feedback Survey:**

At the end of each term, students who are enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory should complete a Student Feedback survey (SFS). You will be sent directions for accessing this survey through MavMail approximately ten days before the end of the term. Your responses are anonymously entered into the SFS database and combined with other students enrolled in this course. Our request for information from you is mandated by state law, and you are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>

**Final Review Week:**

Usually a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:**

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located across the hall from this room. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

**Drop Policy:**

**Adding or dropping a course:**

Graduate students who wish to change a schedule by either dropping or adding a course must first consult with their graduate advisor. Regulations pertaining to adding or dropping courses are described in the Graduate School catalog and summarized below.

(1) A student may not add a course after the end of late registration.

(2) A student dropping a graduate course after the Census Date but on or before the end of July 18th, 2013 may, with the agreement of the instructor, receive a grade of W, but only if passing the course with a grade of C or better. A grade of W will not be given if the student does not have at least a C average. In such instances the student will receive a grade of F if he or she withdraws from the class.

(3) A student desiring to drop all courses in which he or she is enrolled is reminded that such action constitutes a withdrawal (resignation) from the University. The student must indicate the intention to withdraw and drop all courses by filing a resignation form in the Office of the Registrar or by web at [www.uta.edu/registrar](http://www.uta.edu/registrar) .

(4) In most cases, a student may not drop a graduate course or withdraw (resign) from the University after October 30, 2013 (see your advisor for details). Under extreme circumstances, the Dean of Graduate Studies may consider a petition to withdraw after the deadline, but in no case may a graduate student selectively drop a course after the deadline and remain enrolled in any other course. Students should use the Special Petition to Withdraw for this purpose. See the section titled withdrawal (Resignation) From the University for additional information concerning withdrawal.

If you choose to drop a class, you have the responsibility to complete the paperwork with the advisor according to the UTA academic calendar. For the semester semester, the last day to drop classes is October 30, 2013. Failure to submit correct paperwork could result in a failing grade. **No "Incomplete" grades will be given for this class.**

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equally opportunity legislation, reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of federal legislation entitled, *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility rests primarily with informing faculty of their need for accommodations and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) . Also, you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in room 102 of University Hall or call them at 817-2723364. If you require an accommodation based on disability, I would like to meet with you in the privacy of my office during the first week of the semester, to make sure you are appropriately accommodated. I would also like to encourage you to contact Penny Acrey, LMSW ( [pacrey@uta.edu](mailto:pacrey@uta.edu) ), director of OSD, as needed to help explain the intricacies of the ADA and the resources available to you.

**Academic Integrity:**

It is the philosophy of the University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is an unacceptable mode of conduct, and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office for Community Standards (formerly known as the Office of Student Conduct) and disciplined in accordance with UTA regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University (*Regents Rule §2.2*).

All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the University of Texas at Arlington Honor Code:

***I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.***

***I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.***

**Student Support Services Available:**

The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-7232 for more information and appropriate referrals. For writing assistance, contact Chris Kilgore at [ChrisKilgore@uta.edu](mailto:ChrisKilgore@uta.edu)

**Librarian:**

The Social sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office isin the Social Work Electronic Library (SWEL) located in Building A, Suite 111 of the UTA Social Work Complex at 211 S. Cooper Street, Arlington, Texas. He may also be contacted via email: [dillard@uta.edu](mailto:dillard@uta.edu) or by cell phone: 817-675-8962, or through the SWEL phone at817-272-7518. His SWEL office hours are usually 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Thursday. The SWEL web page is linked to the School of Social Work main page and through the Central Library main page. The SWEL library contains a number of computer work stations and printing facilities and resource guides for conducting research.

**Selected Reading List:**

Below is a listing of some relevant books and articles for this course. It is not intended to be an exhaustive (or exhaust*ing*) list, but it is somewhat representative of the material discussed in class. It can certainly be used as a place to begin when looking for additional reading and information about direct practice and related topics. Enjoy!

Baldwin, M. (Ed.). (2013). *The use of self in therapy.* (3rd Ed.). New York: Routledge.

Hammond, D.C., Hepworth, D.H., and Smith, V.G. (1977/2002). *Improving therapeutic communication*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Nichols, M.P. (2009). *The lost art of listening*. (2nd Ed.). New York: Guilford.

Rowan, J., and Jacobs, M. (2002). *The therapist’s use of self.* Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.

Safran, J.D., and Muran, J.C. (2000). *Negotiating the therapeutic alliance: A relational treatment guide.* New York: Guilford.

Wachtel, P.L. (1993). *Therapeutic communication: Knowing what to say when.* New York: Guilford.

Wampold, B.E. (2001). *The great psychotherapy debate: Models, methods, and findings.* New York: Routledge.

Wosket, V, (1999). *The therapeutic use of self: Counseling practice, research and supervision.* London: Routledge.