Social Work FIELD JOURNAL

You are expected to complete a journal entry for every week you attend your field placement. The length of each entry is not as important as the quality of content. All Field Instructors have been informed about this assignment and it is expected that you will do your journal writing during your field time.

Format: Don't worry about spelling or grammar. Be aware of confidentiality issues. Do not write a client's real name or any details that would reveal his or her identity. Focus more on your experience with the client/client system.

Content: There are two areas to be covered. 1) Integration of field work to school work; and 2) self awareness/exploration. Both of these areas do not need to be covered each week.

INTEGRATION OF COURSE WORK
Write about how the week’s field experiences related to any material reviewed in your Social Work classes and reading. Be scholarly about this and think in terms of the following:

- Professional ethics/values & diversity
- Agency policy
- Multi-level assessments
- Resiliency in your client system
- Interpersonal relationship skills (reflection of feeling, paraphrasing, clarification, etc.)
- Recording case notes/documentation, leadership in your agency
- Community mental health or chronic illness/disability
- Individual sessions or groups

Example: This week I had an ethical dilemma when I overheard one of my clients telling her friend how she "beat" her kid the night before. I wanted to pretend I hadn't heard her but she was talking loud enough for all the other clients to hear. I know she was given program information on the limits of confidentiality - specifically that the agency would follow up on any reports of child abuse. I reported the incident to my Field Instructor and we planned an intervention strategy that involved me "gently confronting" the client. After initial anger and lots of rationalization, the client eventually called CPS herself. While she cooperated with me, the client now seems distrustful of me. I need more help on how to work on our future relationship. There are so many issues involved in this one incident: my fear of "snitching" on the client and "getting her in trouble"; my legal obligation to report suspected abuse; and my Field Instructor's "reframe" that we use this as an opportunity to educate the client and ultimately increase her parenting awareness/skills.

SELF-AWARENESS AND EXPLORATION
Write about yourself in relation to your field experience that week. Explore your strengths and vulnerabilities with clients and co-workers. Write about countertransference, or about your personal fears/biases as they relate to working with others. In a way that is safe for you, address any personal concerns you have about your ability to work with certain issues or populations.