



Student information pack





What?

How?

Why?

Nansen Highland

Induction check list	5
About Nansen Highland.....	10
Our mission, Philosophy and care statement.	11
The aims and objectives implement that:.....	11
Statement of Intent. Redcastle Station	12
Statement of Intent. Fram House.....	13
Statement of Intent. Nansen Venture	15
Statement of Intent. The Lodge	16
Learning opportunities	19
Operational Structure.....	23
Trainee's career at Nansen Highland.	24
1 Assessment	24
2 Care plan	24
3 Review.....	24
4 Departure.....	24
Keyworker responsibilities	25
1. Contact person	25
2. Reports	26
3. Key person chats	26
Working with People with Disabilities.....	26
How do we learn?.....	27
The cube of De Blok:	27
Concentration span.....	35
Inability to transfer learned skills to other unknown situations.....	37
The Cave.....	38
Practice Pyramid	41
Important numbers.....	45

Nansen Highland

Introduction

May I take the opportunity to welcome you to Nansen Highland.

Joining a new company is a daunting experience. We want all new employees to quickly feel at home within a very short period of time. We recommend this job information pack as a means of getting to know Nansen Highland and what is expected from you in your job.

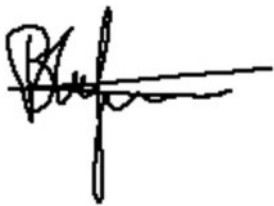
During the induction, a lot of information will be passed on to you. This information is vital to have a constructive start.

It is virtually impossible to pass on absolutely everything, but as we go along, we'll keep feeding you with the 'additional's'.

The induction period lasts normally a week. In this way, you will be able to accustom to the new surroundings, your colleagues and the trainees.

Your first 'hands-on' experience may start in the latter part of the first week.

We are pleased that you have joined Nansen Highland's team and hope that your stay with us will prove to be successful, happy and of long duration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bart Lafere', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bart Lafere
Director

Nansen Highland

Induction check list

Student Name:	
Induction by Director	
Prior to Commencement of student	
Assign locker	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assign in tray	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inform staff at Redcastle/Fram of start date of new student	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are any necessary adjustments required for disability (if relevant/appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nominate a work colleague who will be the new student's first point of call for any questions or problems in the first few weeks of placement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name of that employee:	
On Commencement of Placement	
Welcome new student and introduce to the staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduce student to the trainees	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explain the induction programme	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide student information pack	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide SSSC code of conduct	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connection with Fridtjof Nansen	<input type="checkbox"/>
History of Nansen Highland	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hierarchy	
Nansen's hierarchy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trainee's career at Nansen	
Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care plan/training plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
review	<input type="checkbox"/>
departure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning disability	
Theory on learning disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Causes of learning disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning theory	
How do we learn?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Types of learning	<input type="checkbox"/>

Nansen Highland

Cube of De Block	
Attention span	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication theory	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tools of the trade	
"YOU"	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff training:(explanation on); (First Aid, Vehicle competence test, SSSC requirements, Nansen's requirements)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Codes of Conduct	
Nansen Highland	<input type="checkbox"/>
SSSC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	
Student's 'job' description	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nansen Highland Quality Manual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whistle blowing policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICT policy (information communication technology)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other policies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business plans and budgets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency details	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting structure Nansen Highland	<input type="checkbox"/>
Director's Signature: (only on full completion)	Date:
Student's Signature: (only on full completion)	Date:

Induction by Project coordinator	
On Commencement of Placement	
Workings of office, location of equipment and files	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage of data and confidential materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Co-Keyworker responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>

Nansen Highland

Format personal files of trainees	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report writing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication procedure Redcastle	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company Handbook (issued)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company Handbook (question and answer session)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service provision, Fram House	
Aims and objectives, philosophy of care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care plans of individual residents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget systems (Fram house and trainees)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk assessments of individual residents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rota systems	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication procedure Fram House	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Safety	
Emergency evacuation procedure Fram House	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of emergency exits, re-assembly point • How to report an emergency • Fire system Fram house 	
Location first aid kit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone contact list	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage and confidential materials at Fram House	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health ad safety Redcastle	
Emergency evacuation procedure Redcastle	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of emergency exits, re-assembly point • How to report an emergency 	
Nansen Highland first aiders	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location of First Aid boxes (vehicles, RCS, workshop)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incident/accident procedures Nansen vehicles.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vehicle safety procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electrical tools procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>

Nansen Highland

Project coordinator's signature: (only on full completion)	Date:
Student's signature: (only on full completion)	Date:
On Commencement of Placement Training	
Training meetings and minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explanation of the week planning (physical document)	<input type="checkbox"/>
The week planning; how is it constructed (when, who, relation with care plan, relation with training plan, update requirements, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Update/upgrade of training units (SQA update)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training tactical plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scottish Qualification Authority	
Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) What?	<input type="checkbox"/>
SQA procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>
What units, levels do we deliver	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessments and verification procedures (who assesses, verifies, when, how, relation with SQA Glasgow, link with log sheets, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>
SQA documentation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
How to use the SQA materials in direct relation to the daily training.	<input type="checkbox"/>
How are the workbooks/units made up for the training?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who makes up the workbooks/units for the training?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non vocational training	
Non vocational training opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social, Sport and other training opportunities	
Sport groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work placements	
Work placement policy	<input type="checkbox"/>

Nansen Highland

Internal work placements	<input type="checkbox"/>
External work placements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk assessment in relation with work placements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	
Clarify the new student's expectation of their role in the training centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shadow identified staff member	<input type="checkbox"/>
File reading	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project coordinator's Signature: (only on full completion)	Date:
Student's Signature: (only on full completion)	Date:

Induction finalised:	
Director's Signature:	Date:
Student's Signature:	Date:

About Nansen Highland

Nansen Highland in Scotland is a non-governmental organisation and a company with charitable status, originally motivated by the life and work of the Norwegian humanitarian and explorer Fridtjof Nansen.

Nansen Highland is a conglomerate of organisations that deliver residential care services and day training services at various locations throughout the Highlands. Hopefully, we can add a social firm to our services in the near future.

Where does the name 'Nansen' come from?

In the early 60's, a Welsh PE teacher, Ernest Davies, and leader of the mountain rescue team in Snowdonia, was looking for a name to give to his rescue team. Amongst many names, Fridtjof Nansen was chosen due to his exploration travels in the late 1800's.

When Fridtjof Nansen retired from his explorations, he became involved in humanitarian work after the First World War and he became the first ambassador to Britain for the League of Nations, the predecessor of the United Nations.

The first Nansen centre was established in Norway by Ernest Davies and the centre operated solely to provide holidays to inner city children. The centre operated on voluntary basis only and ceased its operations in the late sixties.

Two offsprings appeared, one south of Oslo and one in Herefordshire. Our Norwegian cousins had to close due to financial difficulties in 1994.

The organisation first established its presence in 1969 in Herefordshire. Nansen International Children's Centre (NICC) provided holidays for children from the inner cities. The centre was run on a purely voluntary basis and ceased its operations 8 years later.

The organisation moved to the Highlands in 1991 under the name of The Nansen Society. Finally, The Nansen Society changed its name into Nansen Highland on 1st of April 1999 and became a Scottish charity.

The emphasis of the organisation changed over the years and holidays for inner city children are no longer its key element.

Nansen Highland now principally provides training for young adults with learning disabilities and related disabilities.

Nansen Highland

Nansen Highland is truly one of a kind organisation in the way we operate and in terms of our philosophy in the Highlands of Scotland and maybe even world wide.

Only one organisation linked with the Nansen name does humanitarian work: Nansen Child watch. This organisation does principally the same as Amnesty International, but for children.

All other Nansen organisations are linked directly or indirectly to polar explorations and oceanography.

Our mission, Philosophy and care statement.

To relieve young persons and children who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by the provision of holidays for such young persons and children, and to promote their education in, and care and concern for the countryside.

To train and assist in the training of young persons and children so to develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society, and to instruct and to assist in instructing young persons and children in the principles of discipline, loyalty and good citizenship.

The aims and objectives implement that:

The service user is recognised and treated as a fully respected individual. We encourage the service user through education, employment and consultation to become a full member of the society in the best possible way.

The conglomerate.

Nansen Highland has incorporated various services. Each of our services has their own statement of intent and/or mission statements.

Nansen Highland

Redcastle Station,
Muir of Ord



'The Station' is the first of the services that was established in 1991. Originally, it catered for about 4 trainees with emotional and social difficulties and gradually transformed into a service geared to learning disabilities and autism to a capacity of 15, of which 14 places are block funded.

Statement of Intent. Redcastle Station

The 'statement of intent' explains in detail the aims and the objectives of Nansen Highland and how it will be delivered.

The day training service caters for 14 trainees per day.

The care plans are individually constructed with the trainees and orientated to their personal needs.

The day service offers various units recognised by SQA. The full list can be found on Nansen Highland's webpage www.nansenhigland.co.uk.

The training consists of 3 main parts: vocational, non-vocational skills and social skills.

Overall aim: to develop the interpersonal, social skills, academic potential, vocational and non-vocational skills to enable the trainee to move on to other or further education and or jobs with or without support.

To this aim, 6 full time staff are employed supplemented on occasions by one residential care staff member/relief workers.

Nansen Highland



Fram House,
Beaulieu.

Fram House, named after the explorer's ship, is our residential care home, owned by Nansen Highland. The service caters for 5 residents. All rooms are en-suite and one bedroom is allocated as a double occupancy room for a couple.

Statement of Intent. Fram House

The 'statement of intent' explains in detail the aims and the objectives of Nansen Highland and how it will be delivered.

Description of Care service

The residential unit is geared to deliver training to young adults with learning disabilities. The unit is not geared to deliver any nursing care. The training can be broken down into the following disciplines:

Domestic training

This training consists primarily of: how to use a washing machine, how to select the clothing for the specific programmes, how to clean a house/bedroom/bathroom, how to iron, how to cook, etc

Independence training

This training consists primarily of: how to do personal shopping, how to do food shopping within a budget, how to budget, etc

Free time management

Nansen Highland

This training consists primarily of: how to organise the free time, how to plan and read bus timetables, how to budget for free time activities, etc

Social interaction training

This training consists primarily of: how to engage in socially acceptable behaviour, etc.

Operation of Care Service

The residential unit is closely linked with the day training service. Residential trainees join the day training unit during the day to advance their training plan. At 16.00, the residential trainees return from the day training unit to the residential unit.

The trainees can choose, accordingly the care plan, when they would like to visit their parental home or other people.

Overall aim: to develop the interpersonal, social, domestic skills, free time management and etc. to enable the resident to move on to other accommodation with support ranging from full support to no support. To this aim, 3 full time residential support workers are employed and day staff/relief workers cover holiday/sickness cover in the residential care centre.

Nansen Highland



The Venture
Drumnadrochit

The Venture became part of Nansen Highland in 2009. Previously known as 'The Bridg'it Venture, it caters for 6 trainees. The training is largely orientated around the equestrian skills, but is not restricted to that.

Statement of Intent. Nansen Venture

The 'statement of intent' explains in detail the aims and the objectives of Nansen Highland and how it will be delivered.

The day training service caters for 6 trainees per day.

The care plans are individually constructed with the trainees and orientated to their personal needs.

The day service offers various units recognised by SQA. The full list can be found on Nansen Highland's webpage www.nansenhigland.co.uk.

The training consists of 3 main parts: vocational, non-vocational skills and social skills.

Overall aim: to develop the interpersonal, social skills, academic potential, vocational and non-vocational skills to enable the trainee to move on to other or further education and or jobs with or without support.

To this aim, 3 full time staff are employed supplemented on occasions by one residential care staff member/relief workers.

Nansen Highland



The Lodge
Drumnadrochit

The lodge provides residential care for 6 residents. The current building will be replaced in the near future with a purpose build residential care home. The new build will have en-suite rooms and one room available for a couple.

Statement of Intent. The Lodge

The 'statement of intent' explains in detail the aims and the objectives of Nansen Highland and how it will be delivered.

Description of Care service

The residential unit is geared to deliver training to young adults with learning disabilities and related disabilities. The unit is not geared to deliver any nursing care.

The training can be broken down into the following disciplines:

Domestic training

This training consists primarily of: how to use a washing machine, how to select the clothing for the specific programmes, how to clean a house/bedroom/bathroom, how to iron, how to cook, etc

Independence training

This training consists primarily of: how to do personal shopping, how to do food shopping within a budget, how to budget, etc

Free time management

This training consists primarily of: how to organise the free time, how to plan and read bus timetables, how to budget for free time activities, etc

Nansen Highland

Social interaction training

This training consists primarily of: how to engage in socially acceptable behaviour, etc.

Operation of Care Service

The residential unit is closely linked with the day training service.

Residential trainees join the day training unit during the day to advance their training plan. At approx 16-17.00, the residential trainees return from the day training unit to the residential unit.

The trainees can choose, accordingly the care plan, when they would like to visit their parental home or other people.

Overall aim: to develop the interpersonal, social, domestic skills, free time management and etc. to enable the resident to move on to other accommodation with support ranging from full support to no support. To this aim, 3 full time residential support workers are employed and day staff/relief workers cover holiday/sickness cover in the residential care centre.

Our core values:

We aim to work positively with others in developing our own services and in complimenting the services provided by others.

In doing so we are guided by a set of core values. We expect to:

- be open and honest.
- recognise the worth of all individuals
- establish relationships based on trust
- act on the basis of individual needs
- be accountable for actions

Nansen is committed to the code laid down by the Scottish Social Services Council, which is included in this pack. More details can be found on their website: www.sssc.uk.com.

Nansen Highland

Our aims:

- provide a range of quality services which support and empower people to enhance their lives
- improve professional knowledge and skills
- operate an efficient and effective organisation

In working with people, we adhere to the principles of the National Care Standards for Support Services.

Dignity

- The service user has the right to:
- be treated with dignity and respect at all times; and
- enjoy a full range of social relationships

Privacy

The service user has the right to:

- have their privacy and property respected, and to receive the time, the space and the facilities they need and want; and
- be free from intrusion as long as it is safe for the service user and everyone else.

Choice

- The service user has the right to:
- make informed choices, while recognising the rights of other people to do the same;
- know about the range of choices; and
- get help to fully understand all the options and choose the one that is right for them.

Safety

- The service user has the right to:
- feel safe and secure in all aspect of life, including health and wellbeing;
- enjoy safety but not be overprotected; and
- be free from exploitation and abuse

Nansen Highland

Realising potential

- The service user has the right to:
- achieve all they can;
- make full use of the resources that are available to them and
- make the most of their life.

Equality and diversity

- The service user has the right to:
- live an independent life, rich in purpose, meaning and personal fulfilment;
- be valued for their ethnic background, language, culture and faith;
- be treated equally and to live in an environment which is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination; and
- be able to complain effectively without fear of victimisation

Our range of services and activities includes:

- Day training centre; Redcastle Station, Muir of Ord
- Residential care centre; Fram House, Beauly
- Day training centre; Nansen Venture, Drumnadrochit
- Residential care centre; The Lodge, Drumnadrochit

Learning opportunities

Nansen Highland has an independent qualified practice teacher. He will conduct the practice placement requirements including the teaching. An extra staff member will be identified at the beginning of the placement to act as a backup for the practice teacher.

The placement will offer you plenty of learning opportunities, regardless of the course you're on!

You will be able to engage in group work, one-to-one work, keyworkership, etc. depending on the timing of the placement, you will be involved in review meetings, work with families, presentations on staff training days, and pick up on extra training opportunities.

Assessment methods

Nansen Highland

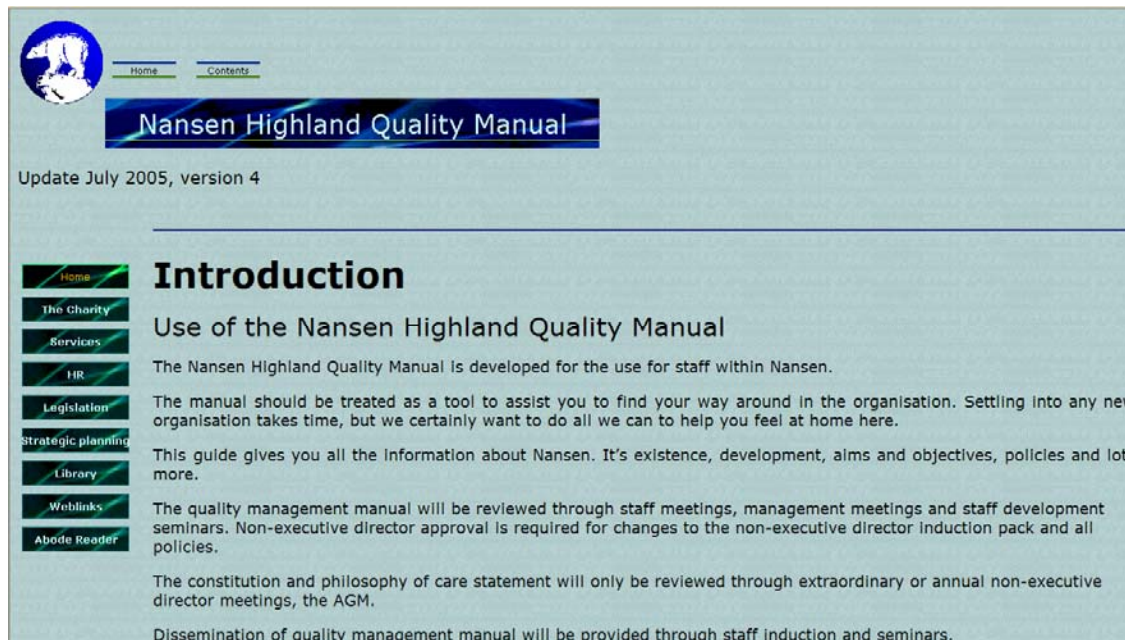
The assessment is continuous in nature as the practice teacher is on site.

The following are to be taken into account in the assessment:

- Your practice
- Your communication with service users, families and colleagues
- Your reflective journal
- Colleagues' and service users' questionnaire
- Any other work determined during the placement.

Key policies in the organisation

We have developed a Nansen Highland Quality Manual in a CD-rom format. This is available on request. Also, the Nansen staff computers are equipped with this manual. Do check the version of the update.



The screenshot shows a web page for the 'Nansen Highland Quality Manual'. At the top left is a circular logo with a white animal head on a blue background. To its right are links for 'Home' and 'Contents'. Below the logo is a blue banner with the text 'Nansen Highland Quality Manual'. Underneath the banner, it says 'Update July 2005, version 4'. On the left side, there is a vertical menu with buttons for 'Home', 'The Charity', 'Services', 'HR', 'Legislation', 'Strategic planning', 'Library', 'Weblinks', and 'Abode Reader'. The main content area is titled 'Introduction' and contains the following text:

Introduction

Use of the Nansen Highland Quality Manual

The Nansen Highland Quality Manual is developed for the use for staff within Nansen.

The manual should be treated as a tool to assist you to find your way around in the organisation. Settling into any new organisation takes time, but we certainly want to do all we can to help you feel at home here.

This guide gives you all the information about Nansen. It's existence, development, aims and objectives, policies and lots more.

The quality management manual will be reviewed through staff meetings, management meetings and staff development seminars. Non-executive director approval is required for changes to the non-executive director induction pack and all policies.

The constitution and philosophy of care statement will only be reviewed through extraordinary or annual non-executive director meetings, the AGM.

Dissemination of quality management manual will be provided through staff induction and seminars.

Placement problem management

The placement problem management will be followed as per the educational establishment's placement handbook.

Where we work

Nansen Highland

Nansen Highland offers currently 4 services (January 2009).

As the centres are linked, it is possible to work on all premises. Service development is paramount. It is important to be able to respond to the market demands and therefore service development is always considered.

Staff will be allocated a location as advertised, but it is possible to be deployed at any of the services Nansen Highland is responsible for. When employed in management, the flexibility of inter-location deployment will be paramount.

Code of conduct

The emphasis of this code is different of what many people may expect. It is not a `black and white` guide on what to do in such and such circumstances like the Highway Code. Neither is it a sorcerer's book with the remedies to be experimented with on vulnerable young adults. The times of the wet-finger-therapy or the Samaritans therapy are luckily in the past. Or ... is it not?

The emphasis of this code is not on `them` but on YOU.

The job you have entered, or about to enter is not just a job. You are part of a team that helps to build and to consolidate the fragile cornerstones of their personality, their vision and perception of their surrounding world to the best of their abilities.

We cannot afford to take things for granted how trivial they may seem. It is precisely here where we as professionals will earn our Brownie points.

To be able to implement to the fullest of your ability the essence of care, you need to develop the skills to reflect constantly upon yourself and explore the way you ARE.

The following characteristics are essential:

Nansen Highland

Constant reflection

As staff member, you need to question critically the reality and you need to seek for answers concerning the equations on welfare.

This way, the aid given is not undermined by routine but becomes a responsible and conscious act.

Self-respect and self-confidence

To engage yourself actively for the well being of others, you have to believe in your own abilities. You need to be a person with the necessary and vital self-respect and self-confidence

As staff member, we approach the trainees as a person in development. We focus on the whole personality and on all the aspects of the complex situation of the person and their environment.

More fundamentally than the equation of what can you do or what are you skilled in, is how ARE you within various situations. Your BEING is the core of the most important tool used: YOURSELF.

Get to know yourself, get to know your strong abilities and your limitations.

Our responsibilities

The starting point for our intervention is person centred.

No methodical plan or action plan can dismiss the necessity to seek your own way of handling things. It is only the organisation's philosophy or methodical plan that steers your actions, but equally important the person-centred needs assessment of the trainee.

As staff members, we are 'experts' in daily life.

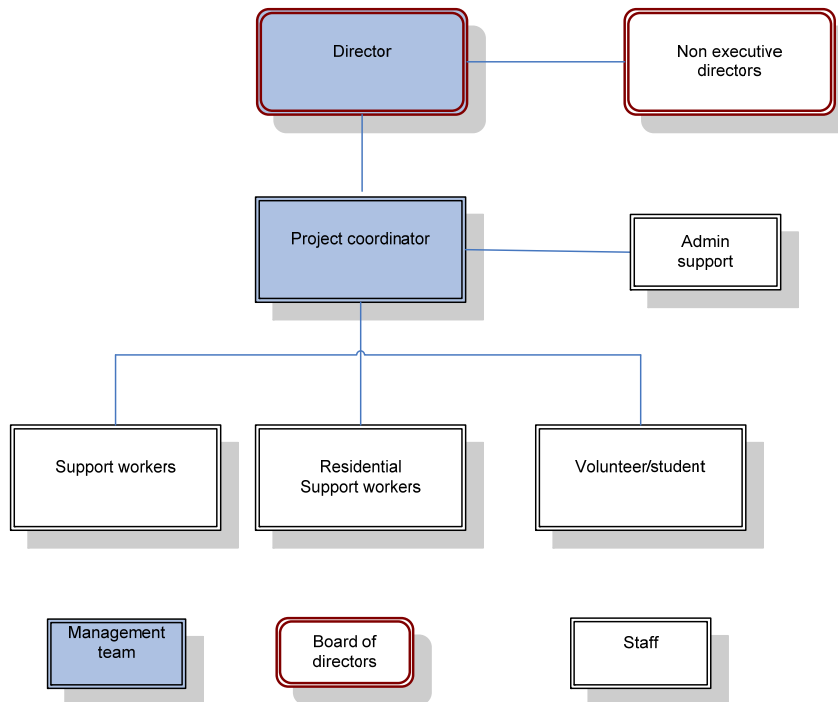
There are not many professions demanding such an all round profile as the one expected from us. The quality of the work of us is in the quality of life we have together. Therefore, the way you are in daily situations, is a dialogue. It is more than just doing what you have to do. You have

Nansen Highland

to be aware of how you function within your interactions. This inevitably brings lots of responsibilities, which you might not have been aware of!

The essence of professionalism is *care-full* action.

Operational Structure



Trainee's career at Nansen Highland.

1 Assessment

When a person applies to join Nansen, they go through some assessments. Either educational psychologists, social workers or other health workers do the pre-Nansen assessments. In some of the cases, the prospective trainee has 'failed' in the organisation they are in.

Nansen Highland could be for many a last resort as suitable resources are limited.

2 Care plan

The care plan reflects what will be done in the foreseeable future to enhance in the long run the abilities of the trainees.

This is a very important moment as it determines in many cases the path they will follow in the future for a long time.

As most of the training is basic training as a jump board for future education or work experience, etc, we need to be very careful in these decision making processes.

Taking the variety of the needs the trainees have into account, we require to be able to keep the care plan as challenging as possible. This could be done by keeping the level stable and slowly increase the level of difficulty, varying the teaching/working methods and keeping the methods aligned.

3 Review

Reviews are organised to establish the progress and to lay down the path for the near future. These are frightening experiences and should be treated with utmost respect.

Reviews are attended by the keyworker and either the director or the project coordinator.

4 Departure

The trainee moves on to other ventures. This can be a place of work, further education, etc.

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Throughout these various stages, young people whose ability is mostly limited to cope with these feelings experience various emotions.

Read through the text again and try to answer the following questions in each of the stages.

Let's try to be empathic and answer them looking at the situation through the eyes of a trainee.

How do you feel about being in the spotlight? (review meetings)

How do you feel about being assessed? (staff reviews)

What associations do 'assessments' trigger in your mind?

'People make a care plan about me' How would you feel about other people telling you what's best for you?

'I have to succeed so I get a good review' what levels of anxieties are included within this thought?

How do trainees with limited ability cope with all these feelings/emotions/anxieties, etc

What is our role as member of staff in connection with the backing up of the coping mechanisms for all these various emotions?

'Leaving party' Where do I progress from here? What will the future entail? Where will I live? Will I succeed?

The list is probably endless....

Some of these questions will be asked out loud. Most of them won't. We, as staff members, need to be aware of these underlying feelings amongst the trainees. Their self-confidence and self-esteem is mostly very low. Every comment we make, whether it is a joke or not, needs to be carefully considered. Negative feedback needs to be carefully considered on how we bring it up. We are simply not allowed to fall into the human trap of 'blowing our top'. By definition, a blazing argument/row should not occur.

Keyworker responsibilities

The role of the keyworker exists of various parts.

1. Contact person

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The first and foremost important role of the keyworker is the contact function. The contact consists on various levels:

the one the trainee has between Nansen and any other outside services involved and with the parents/carers concerning the care plan.

The keyworker is also the first port of call in the grievance procedure within Nansen. The keyworker works in close liaison with the director concerning these issues.

2. Reports

The keyworker is responsible for writing the reports on the progress (past) of the trainee and on the planned care plan (future).

These reports are to be done every month and every six months, a comprehensive review report is constructed.

The initial care plan has to be finalised within the first week of attendance.

3. Key person chats

This time is primarily used as quality time between the trainee and the keyworker. Various items can be discussed like: progress at the day training centre/residential centre, home situation, relationships, etc.

The emphasis throughout is to highlight the positives in all the approached subjects. When negatives are worked on, start with the most urgent one and leave the rest on the back burner.

This method generally works well and the negatives aren't over accentuated. The positives need to be!

'Key time' is offered on a weekly basis to the trainees of which you are keyworker.

Working with People with Disabilities.

How do we learn?

The whole learning process we all underwent and still undergo is actually a very complicated matter.

The learning process exists of various stages and on various levels. These levels are explained hereafter.

Most of all, we need to realise that we all learn by repetition and by making mistakes. Without this, we will not learn.

To help and visualise the various stages and levels of learning and integration of behaviour, I have included in this paper the cube of De Blok. De Blok is an educationalist who has researched this area extensively. I will apply the structure to the learning process of people with learning disabilities.

The cube of De Blok:

1. The various stages exist of:
 - 1.1 Concrete thinking
 - 1.2 Schematically thinking
 - 1.3 Abstract thinking

2. The various levels exist of:
 - 2.1 Gaining of knowledge
 - 2.2 Gain insight
 - 2.3 Practise on the new skill
 - 2.4 Integrate the skill in (new) behaviour

3. The various levels of needs:
 - 3.1 Primary needs
 - 3.2 Secondary needs
 - 3.3 Tertiary needs

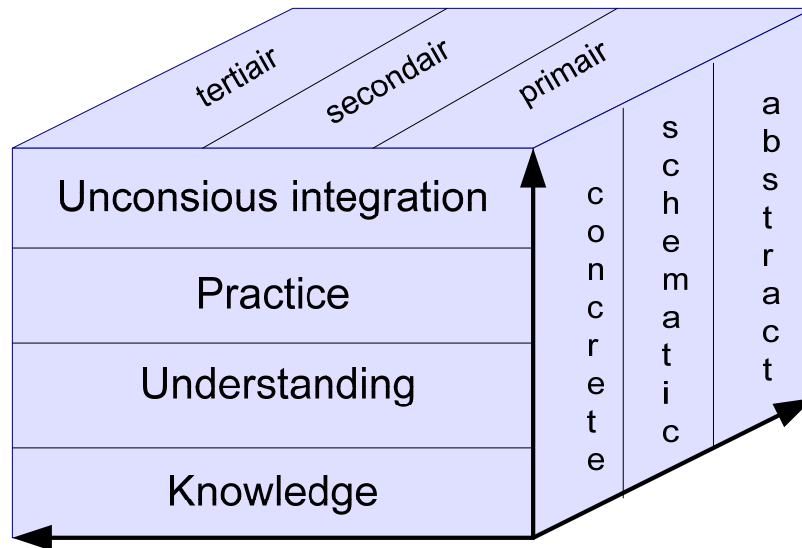


Fig.1 The cube of De Blok.

The cube is developed having 3 orientations.

The first explores the levels of thinking.

The second explores the depth of knowledge gained.

The third explores the needs we have in general and the correlation between them.

Levels of thinking

1.1 Concrete thinking

This is the first level, but probably one of the most important levels of the thought process. This level is the basis on which the other levels depend. When this level is not enough developed, the other levels will not have the necessary foundations. As an example throughout the levels, I will use the addition of 6 and 3.

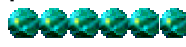

On this level, the addition will be done concretely. Physical items such as i.e. apples, marbles, and abacus beans will represent the numbers 6 and 3. Then, the 6 and 3 beans will be added or counted up to the figure of nine. This exercise explains what the function of adding really means. Likewise, the other basic mathematical functions can be - and should be - explained via this way.

Nansen Highland

Most importantly, all the problem solving skills, which we develop and have developed during, our education (of some sort) is based on this level. All mathematical principles for example, can be explained this way, just as most of all the problems, which we face.

1.2 Schematically thinking

Schematically thinking is the representation of the concrete thinking process on paper, black board, etc. It cuts out the physical element.

 is the representation of the six beans and  is the representation of the 3. We cannot physical touch the beans anymore, but we still can "see" them and the result is calculable.

Other forms of schematical representation of messages are basically all the signs we know. Here are some of them:

1 means: one item;



: means: female toilets

and do we know the meaning of the following signs?



and

2

1.3 Abstract thinking

Abstract thinking is the mental translation of the either concrete and/or schematical thinking. We do not represent the reality in any way anymore and it is all done 'in the head'. The abstract representation of our 'beans' problem would be the 'spoken' version. There is no touch with reality anymore and the answer is obtained purely via mental arithmetic.

When things are getting really somehow difficult, we make the problem easier by changing the level we use and try to cope with it that way.

Think about it, when we are faced with a difficult problem, how many times do we go back to the schematical representation (or even

Nansen Highland

concrete) of the problem on a piece of paper, so we can focus better on the lay-out of the problem and on the possible solutions of it?

It is very important that these levels of thinking are not rushed. Every single level needs to be carefully and thoroughly explored before we go to the next. If not, the danger of senseless is high. It is comparable with verbalism. Verbalism is the misuse of words (or concepts) because their meaning is not fully 'filled in'. Many people use words (concepts) of which they think they know the meaning of it, but in reality they do not and use words (concepts) often wrongly. This often is observable with young children how are getting the grips of language.

When working with people with learning difficulties, the first level of thinking is very important. In addition, very often, this is the level which is most used. The abstract level is the most difficult one to achieve. Therefore, we need to concentrate on the first two. To verify whether the content of the messages, which we give, has come across successfully, we let the message be repeated by the subject.

This brings us to an additional attention point: the process of communication.

Level of behavioural integration

To illustrate the level of behavioural integration, I will use the skill to drive a car. Again, these levels are applicable to every aspect of our behaviour. Many different theories exist about this.

2.1 Gaining of knowledge

Before we can do anything, we need to know of its existence. We need to know how a car works before we can do anything. We need to know the rules and the do's and don'ts.

2.2 Gain insight

Preferably, with some of the rules we need to gain the insight of them. Why and how are they made like that? If and when we do not grasp the mental arithmetic behind the various rules, we will not get very far.

2.3 Practise on the new skill

Let us suppose that we do understand the fundamental thinking behind the skill of driving a car. We need to go out on the road and experience the driving. This will only increase the insight we gained previously. It will adjust our behaviour due to the practising. For example: we know that we need to turn the wheel to the left when we approach a left hand bent, but the degree of turning, well you only find that out by actually doing it.

2.4 Integrate the skill in (new) behaviour

After vigorously practising the driving skill, we start driving without actually thinking about all the various sequences it takes to drive a car. When we have reached this stage, we can safely say that we fully integrated the new skill and we have accomplished to obtain new behaviour.

Level 2.1 and 2.2 closely interlinks with the levels of thinking and with the correct filling in of the concepts. If we want to integrate successfully a new skill, we need to make sure that the previous steps are met with success.

Level of needs

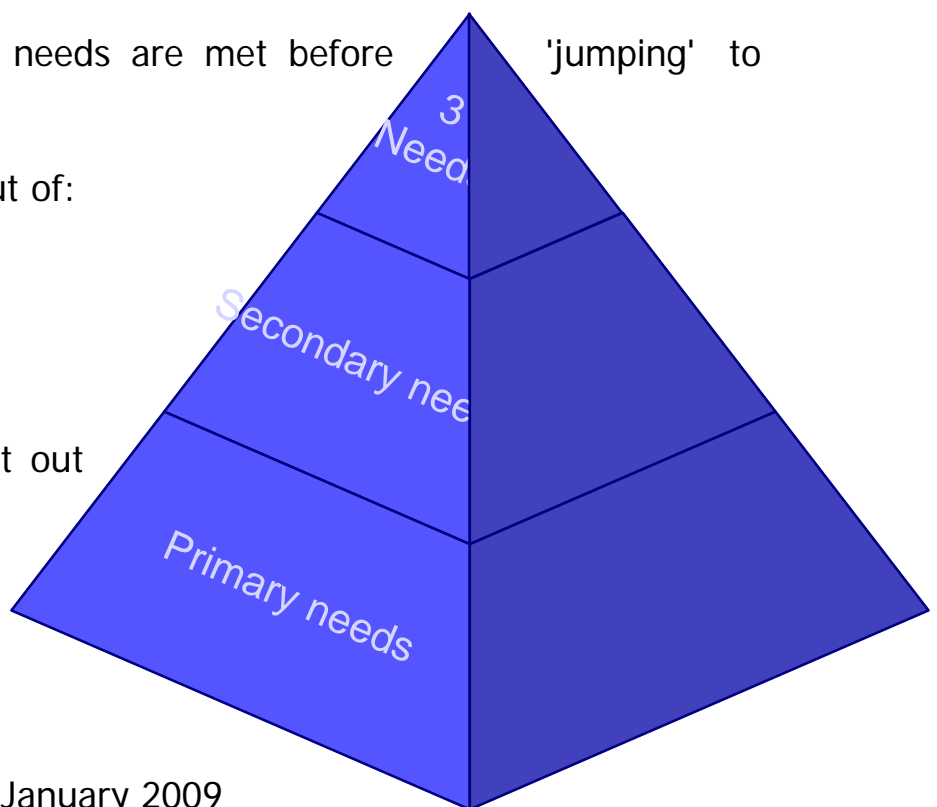
It is of essence that the needs are met before 'jumping' to the next level.

The primary needs exist out of:

- food
- shelter
- warmth (physical)
- etc.

The secondary needs exist out of:

- love
- care
- relationship
- trust



Nansen Highland

- warmth
- etc.

The tertiary needs exist out of:

- spiritual sense
- sense of life
- believe
- etc.

The principle of this pyramid of needs is very simple: do not run before you can walk. Applied to the educational and social task we are faced with daily, make sure the primary needs are met before you tackle secondary needs, and so on.

How does the communication process work?

This process is - again - very complicated. More so than it seems at first.

The schematical representation is as follows:

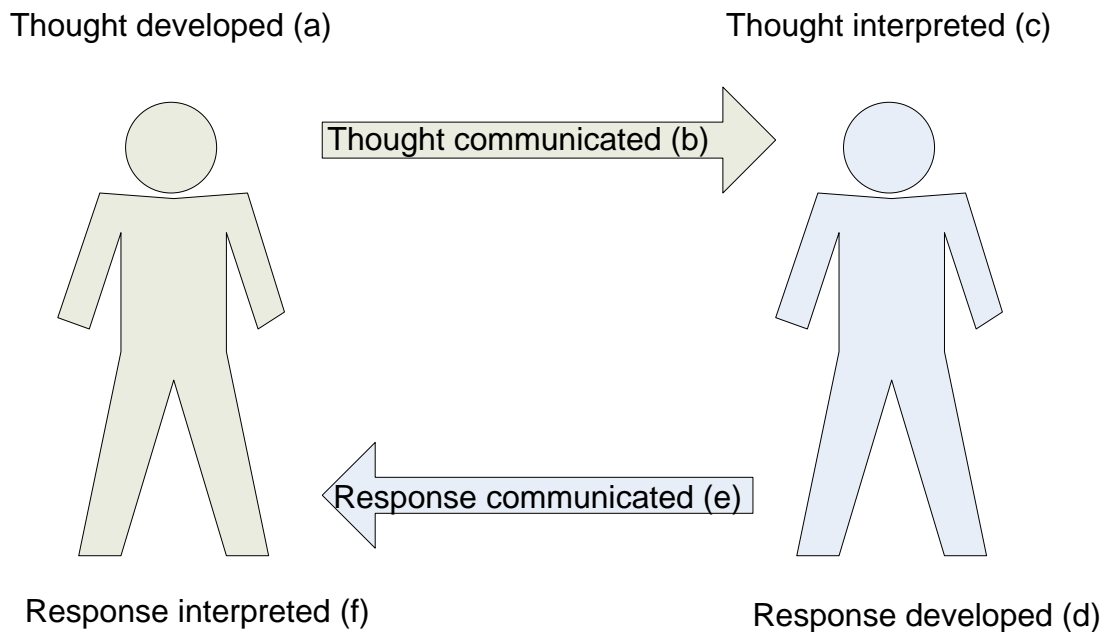


Fig. 2

As you can see, many crucial moments within the communication process have the potential to contribute to an unsuccessful communication. The translation process (a) and (c) rely completely on the ability to decode correctly the spoken/written language. Various elements within the communication process (b,e) can contribute to failure. For example: surrounding noise, body language, timing of the day, state of mind, etc.

Feedback from subject B to A (d, e, f) might disclose errors within the communication process, which are or are not due to either subject.

Thirdly, what are learning difficulties and learning disabilities?

Many people use both terms as substitutes. There is a huge difference between the two.

Learning difficulties is a collection term. It consists out of many. One of the subdivisions is the group of learning disabilities.

Learning difficulties

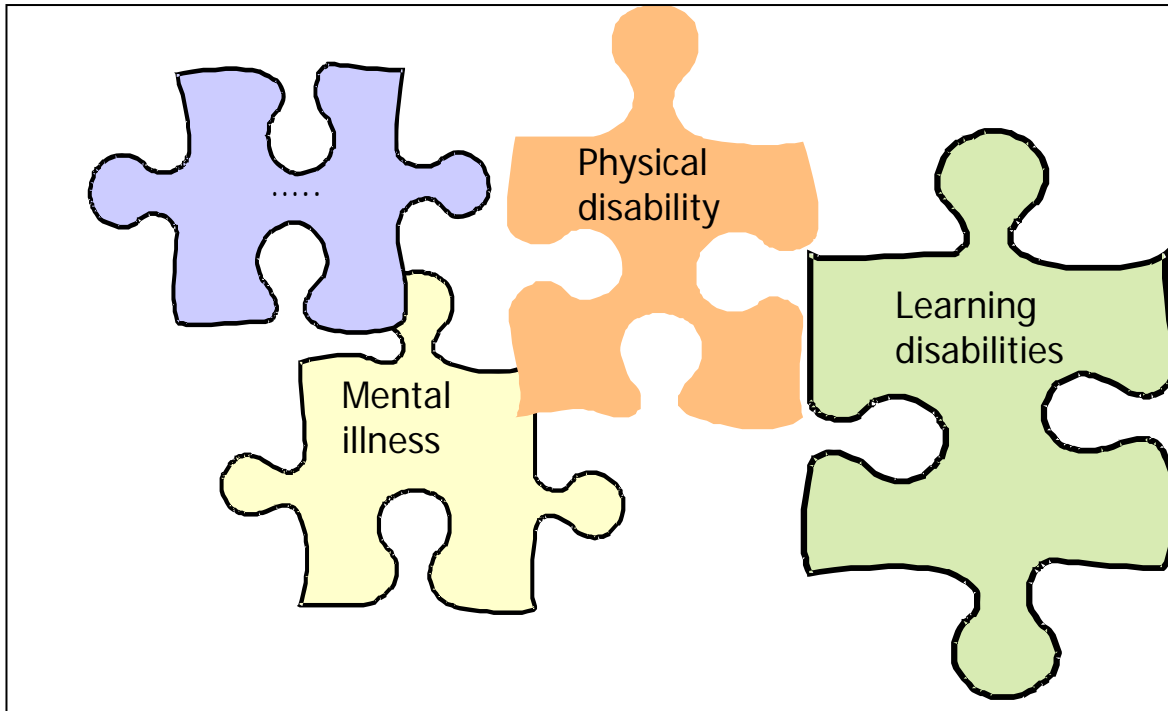


Fig. 4

'Learning disabilities' is the new terminology for the old 'mental handicap', which in its term is the replacement term for 'mental retardment'.

When we carefully analyse the linguistic meaning of these three terms, we each time end up with slightly different definitions.

Some definitions according the encyclopaedia

Handicap, a limitation that a disability may impose on a person; a disabled person is not necessarily handicapped¹

Disability. In medicine, a patient's inability to perform an activity because of some physical or mental disorder is called disability. Disabilities can range from relatively minor to crippling. They may also be temporary (such as a broken leg) or permanent, correctable or not, congenital (meaning present at birth) or acquired. A disabled person is

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Nansen Highland

not necessarily handicapped, however. A handicap is a limitation that a disability may impose on a disabled person.²

Learning difficulty: the learning process experiences difficulties due to whatever unspecified factor. Accordingly this definition, many obstructions may be classified under this. For example: the need of glasses to read, etc.

Mental handicap: the mental abilities are limited due to whatever reason.

Retardment: the learning process is delayed. Many people regard this as the most accurate description of the phenomenon as the learning curve is indeed still there, but only delayed and still accessible with enough repetition and motivation.

Some of the typical characteristics of the learning curve of people with learning disabilities are:

Concentration span

The average concentration span of an adult with no disabilities has been calculated on 30 seconds non-stop. The time of concentration is therefore extremely short and of course varies accordingly the subject.

Distraction

The concentration span and distraction goes somehow hand in hand. People with learning disabilities are extremely vulnerable to distraction. At the other hand, the ability to 'get back to work' is hampered by the inability to dissolve the boredom factor quickly.

Concentration, distraction and boredom can be visualised in the following curve:

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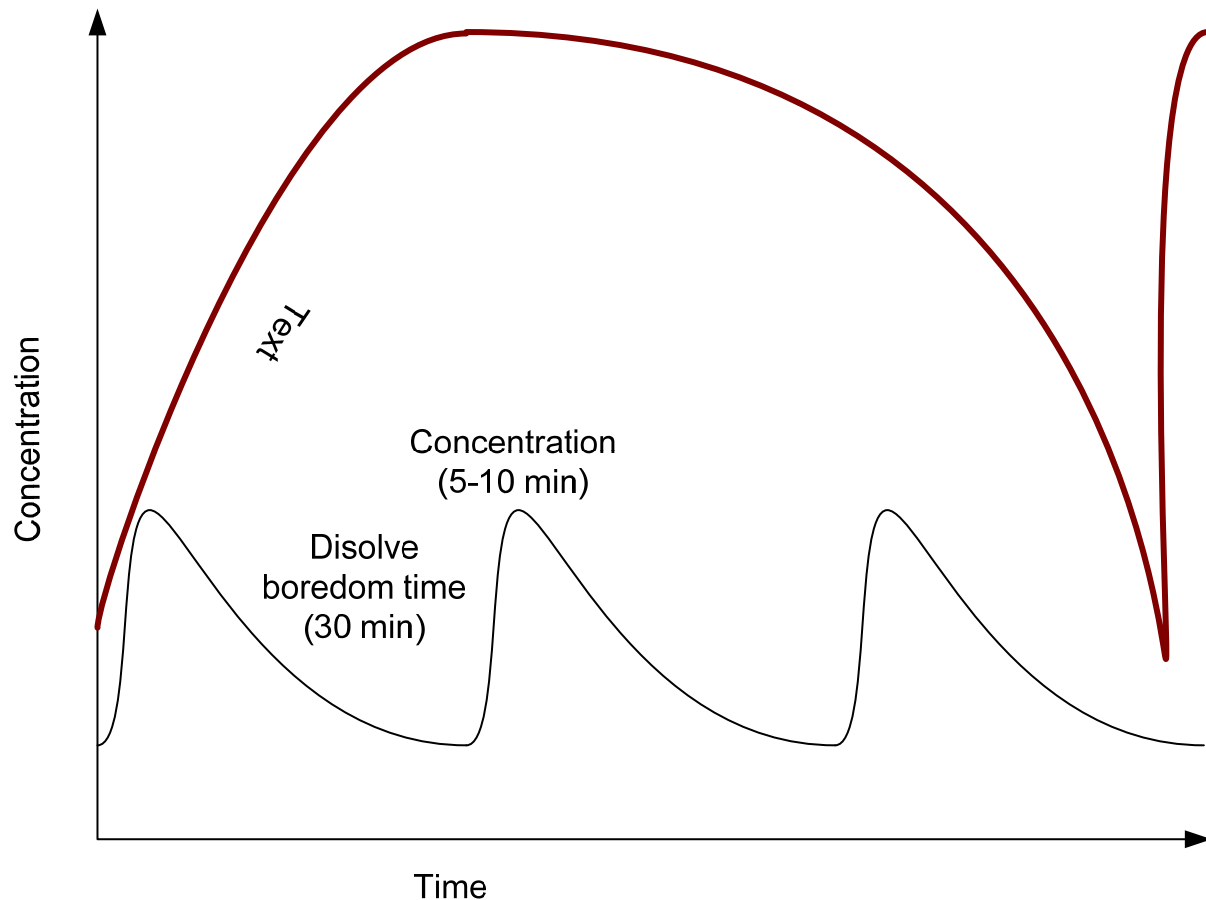


Fig 5.

Motivation

I think it is needless to say that motivation is paramount to learning. What is the point learning something if it does not make any sense? Therefore, we need to explain them why they do things and do not do things just for the sake of it.

Repetition

Because of the learning disability, repetition is very important. It is very important that whatever is taught is consistent and repeated in the same way. If not, confusion will prevent a positive learning process and frustration, boredom and low self-esteem due to failure will set in.

Concrete thinking

This level of thinking is the most used by people with learning disabilities. Closely interlinked is the concept of 'tunnel vision'. As the term almost describes, it is the inability to take into account the (influences of the) surroundings/environment. This knowledge of the existence of this concept is very important in assessing any situation in particular to danger assessment.

Inability to transfer learned skills to other unknown situations

A taught skill will be integrated in behaviour as long as the environment will not change. It is very difficult to transfer learned behaviour from a known situation into a new unknown one.

For example. Somebody is taught how to use a cooker. The dials of the cooker are situated on the front of the cooker at waist height. When the cooker needs to be replaced, a new similar one is bought. The person who learned how to use the first model is unable to use the new model due to the fact that the dials are situated on eye level now. This despite the fact that the panel is of exactly the same design. The learning process will be quicker though, but still the skill needs to be reinforced within this new situation.

When we take the three faces of the cube into account (level of thinking, level of behavioural involvement and level of needs) at the same time; this highlights the extreme care we need to take in the approach of these vulnerable people and in the approach of the social and academic education.

The Cave

"Next;" I said, "compare our natural state of enlightenment and lack of it to the following kind of case. Imagine men in an underground cave-chamber with its entrance open to the daylight and extending the width of the cave. In it they have been since childhood, chained leg and neck so that they have to remain where they are and only look straight in front of them and cannot turn their heads round because of the chains. Behind them at some distance higher up imagine a fire burning, and in between the fire and the prisoners, on higher ground, a road with a screen-wall built along it, like the screens put up in front of men giving puppet shows, above which display the puppets".

"I am imagining that", he said.

"Imagine also people carrying along behind this wall all kinds of objects which overlap it, including statues of men and other animals made of stone and wood and all sorts of materials, and imagine that, as one would expect, some of the bearers are talking, others silent".

"You are painting a strange picture, " he said, 'with strange prisoners.'" 'They are like us, ' I replied. 'For in the first place do you think that these prisoners will have seen anything of themselves or of each other except the shadows thrown by the fire onto the wall of their cave?'

"How could they, " he said, " if all their lives they are forced to keep their heads still?" "And what about the objects that are being carried past? Doesn't the same apply?" "Of course.' "Well then, if they are able to walk to each other, don't you think they will take the view that what they see are the real things?" " Inevitably.' "And what if there is an echo from the wall of the prison? Whenever one of those going past speaks, do you think they will take the voice to come from anywhere except the passing shadow?" "No indeed,' he said. "Then,' I continued,' these men will in every way take what is true to be nothing other than the shadows of man-made objects.' 'That is quite inevitable,' he replied. "Now consider,' I said, " what the release from their chains and the cure of their ignorance will be like if the following happens to them. Imagine one of them is unchained and forced at once to stand up and move his head and walk and look up to-wards the light, and finds doing all these things agony, and being dazzled is unable to see properly the objects whose shadows he saw before. What do you think he will say if one tells him that he has up to now seen mere rubbish, but now is rather nearer to reality and, being turned toward more real things, can see more accurately? In particular what will he say if one points out each of the passing objects and makes him say what each one is? Don't you think he will be at a loss, and think the things he saw before are more real than the things now pointed out to him?'

"Definitely" he said.

"So if one makes him look at the light itself it will hurt his eyes, and he will turn back and take refuge in the things he can see properly and think these in fact clearer than the things he is being shown?"

"Yes" he said.

"And," I continued, "if one drags him from there by force up the rough inclined ascent and does not leave go until one has dragged him out into the sunlight, won't this be painful, and won't he resent being dragged along? And when he gets to the light won't his eyes be dazzled and not able to see a single one of the things we now say are real?"

"Certainly not at once" he said.

"I think he will indeed need to get used to it before he can perceive the things up above the cave. At first it will be easiest for him to see the shadows properly, and then reflections of

Nansen Highland

men and of other objects in water, and only after that the objects themselves. And then it will be easier for him to gaze at the heavenly bodies and the sky at night, and look at the light of the stars and the moon, and the light of the sun by day".

"Of course."

"The last thing, I imagine, that he will be able to see properly will be the sun, not a reflection of it in water or any other medium but the sun itself in its own place, and observe what it is like."

"Inevitably," he said.

"Then after that he will come to the conclusion that it is the sun that is responsible for seasons and years and controls everything in the visible world, and is in one way or another the cause of all those they were looking at."

"Clearly" he replied "after those experiences he would arrive at these conclusions". "Well now, if he is reminded of his previous dwelling and what passed of wisdom there, and of his fellow prisoners, don't you think he will count himself happy in the change and feel pity for them?"

"Most certainly"

"And if there were any honours and commendations given by the prisoners to one another, and prizes for the man who saw most clearly what was passing, and who best remembered what usually came before, after and along with it, and was most able to foretell from this what would come next, do you think he will hanker these prizes and envy the most honoured and powerful of the prisoners? Or he will feel, as Homer puts it, that he would much prefer "to be a slave attached to the land of a tenant farmer", or anything rather than have those beliefs and live like that?"

"Yes" , he replied, "I think he would welcome any fate rather than that life."

"But consider what would happen," I continued. "Suppose he was to go back down and sit in his old place, wouldn't his eyes be blinded by the darkness, coming in suddenly from the sunlight?"

"Definitely", he replied.

"And if he has to compete in giving judgement about those shadows with people who have always been prisoners while he is still blinded and before his eyes get used to the dark, and if that took some time, won't he make a fool of himself? And won't they that say that by going up above he has ruined his eye-sight and that it is not worth even attempting to go up there? And if anyone tries to release them and lead them up, if they can in some way get their hands on him and kill him, won't they do so?"

"They certainly will," he said.

"And now, my dear Glaucon I continued," the whole of this analogy must be linked up with what we said earlier. The world that appears to us through sight corresponds to the prison dwelling, and the light of the fire there to the power of the sun. And if you take the upward ascent and the observation of objects up above to be the mind's journey into the realm of what can be understood you will not be wrong about my views, which are what you are anxious to hear. God knows whether this is really true, but as far as I can make out the thing which is seen last and with difficulty in the realm of things known is the idea of goodness. But when it is seen the conclusion is inevitable that it is the cause of all that is right and beautiful in everything, producing in the visible realm light and the source of light and in the realm of things that can be understood being itself the source that brings truth and understanding. And one must see it if one is going to act wisely either in private affairs or in public. I agree with you, he replied, as far as I am able to follow. Come then I said and agree with me on this too. Don't be surprised that those who reach these heights are

Nansen Highland

unwilling to go in for human affairs and that their minds passionately want to spend the whole time up above for this I suppose is what we should expect if things are according to our analogy. Yes we should he said well then do you think it at all strange, I asked that anyone coming to troubled human affairs from observing things divine should disgrace himself and appear utterly ridiculous while he is still blinded and before he has sufficiently used to the darkness around him, he is forced in the law courts or indeed elsewhere to dispute about the shadows of justice, or the images that throw those shadows, and compete with others about how on earth these things are conceived of by men who have never seen justice itself?"

"Not in the least strange," he replied.

"Anyone with sense will in fact remember,' I said, 'that they are two kinds of temporary blindness from two different causes: from coming out of the light into the dark, and out of the dark into the light. Realising that the same applies to the mind, when he sees one confused and unable to perceive anything properly, he will not laugh without thinking, but will consider whether it is coming from a brighter kind of life and is blinded by unaccustomed darkness or is coming greater ignorance to a brighter life and is dazzled by the brilliance. And the first, I take it, he would count happy in its state and mode of life, and would feel sorry for the second, and if he did want to laugh at it this would be less ridiculous than laughing at the mind coming down of the light.'

"That seems reasonable enough,' he said.

"And if all that is true, this is the way we must think about them,' I continued, "that education is not the sort of thing that some professionals maintain it to be. They say, I think, that they can put into the mind knowledge that was not there before, as if they could put sight into blind eyes.'

"Yes, they say that,' he agreed.

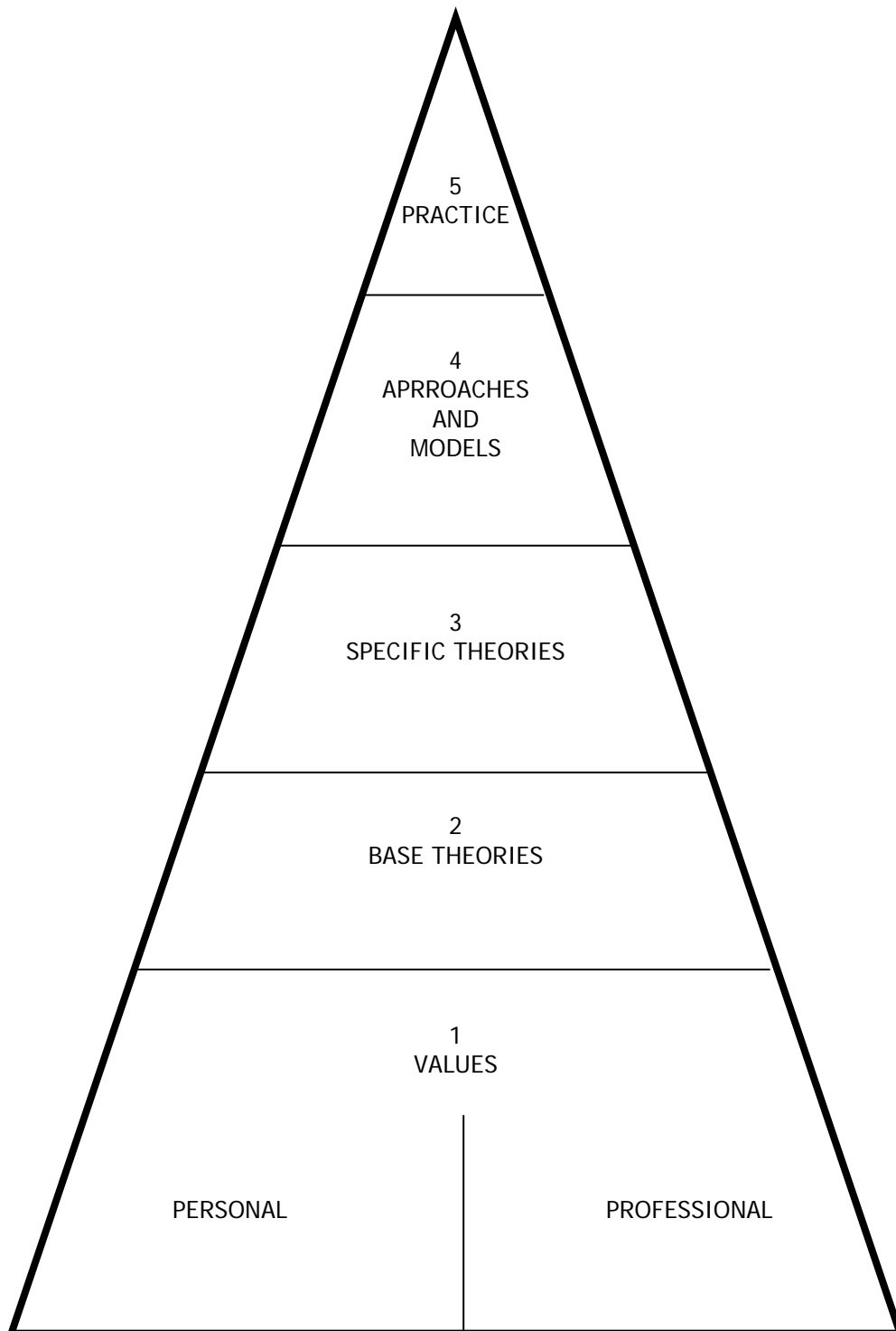
"But our present argument shows that, just as if the eyes could only turn towards the light and away from the dark if the whole body did, so this power which exists in the mind of each individual and is the means by which he learns must be dragged, with the whole mind, away from the changing world until it can bear to look at reality and at the brightest thing in reality, which we maintain is goodness. Is that right?'

"Yes'.

"Then,' I said, "there will be an art of turning the man in the right direction in the easiest and most effective way. This is the art not of putting sight into him, but, giving that he has sight though not facing in the right direction nor looking where he should, of remedying this.'

"Yes, that seems reasonable,' he replied.

Practice Pyramid



VALUES

1. What values are operating in this case for?
 - Myself
 - Personal professional
 - Client
 - Client's family and friends
 - Agency
 - Other professionals
 - Public opinion
2. What resources am I using for my professional value base?
3. What agency philosophy and principles are being applied in this case?
4. How are my professional values demonstrated in my work in this case?
5. Where are the conflicts?
Can they be resolved?

BASE THEORIES

Base theories are those which help us to describe and predict patterns of development and behaviour considered to be within the parameters of normality for human beings as a species.

1. Which base theories do you think would be useful to help you understand what is being thought, felt and acted out by
 - The client/group
 - Family and friend
 - Other professionals
 - Yourself as private person
 As professional
 - The community

2. Which base theories do you think will be useful to help you assess the needs of
 - The client/group
 - Family and friend
 - Other professionals
 - Yourself as private person
As professional
 - The community
3. What factors influence your choice of base theory?
Refer back to work done on VALUES?
4. What sources are you using in your choice of base theory?

SPECIFIC THEORIES

Specific theories are those, which help us, explain and describe what has happened when human beings demonstrate development and behaviour, which is considered, outwit the parameters of normality. They also help us to think of ways in which to redress, alleviate and compensate for any pain and suffering caused when development and behaviour is considered outwit accepted norms.

1. Which specific theories do you think would be useful to help you understand what is being thought, felt and acted out by
 - The client/group
 - Family and friend
 - Other professionals
 - Yourself as private person
As professional
 - The community
2. Which specific theories do you think will be useful to help you assess the needs of
 - The client/group
 - Family and friend
 - Other professionals
 - Yourself as private person
As professional

- The community
- Refer back to work done on Base Theories. Is there a clash?
3. Which specific theories do you think will be useful to you in planning for effective intervention in redressing, alleviating or compensating for pain and suffering in this situation?
 4. What factors influence your choice of base theory?
Refer back to work done on VALUES? Is there a clash?
 5. What sources are you using in your choice of specific theory?

APPROACHES AND MODELS

Approaches and models are concerned with the process and method of intervention.

An approach means the way in which you conduct yourself when working with a client or group taking into account the base theories and specific theories you have used in assessing the need and planning the intervention.

Can you give an example of an approach?
Are there other definitions of an approach?

A model is similar to an approach and is build up on base and specific theories in the same way. However it is more tightly structured. In other words the model focuses the work by instructing the participants and dictating the time span.

Can you give an example of a model?
Are there other definitions of a model?

1. What method have you chosen to use in this situation?
Does it clash with methods being used by others involved?
2. On which base and specific theories have you based your method of intervention?
3. Does the method you have chosen fit with the value base you are using?

4. What sources are you using in your choice of approach/model?

PERSONAL PRACTICE

Now that, on the basis of the information you have collected, you have decided on both the theoretical perspectives and the approach or model you are going to use, you need to consider how you personally are going to carry out a piece of practice. No two workers operate in the same fashion and you need to know how to develop your personal style seeking to compensate for your weaknesses and promote your strengths.

1. What preparation have you made for a piece of practice in this situation?
2. How do you intend evaluating the usefulness of this piece of practice?
3. Does your practice link with your base values?
4. On what sources do you base your personal style?

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