

SOCIAL WORKERS DAY 2010



Redefining Passion

Sudha Nair
Department of Social Work
National University of Singapore
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Passion

- What is it?
 - Having a strong belief in something (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary).
- Have we lost it? Why do we need to redefine it?

New Tele-visit Site at We-CARE (Admiralty)




We-CARE@Admiralty is a programme initiated by Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, MP for Sembawang GRC (Admiralty) to provide a supporting environment for families of residents who are serving time. Under this programme, residents can benefit from the following services:

- Financial Assistance
- Childcare Subsidies
- Social Help
- Counselling Services
- Tele-visit Services




- Daisy Vaithilingam – MINDS
- TB allowances for all TB sufferers irrespective of nationality.




- Ho Lai Peng - MSW, on her work with HIV AIDS




- Jolovan Wham and his work with Migrant Workers



- A willingness to **advocate** for what they believed in despite all the odds.

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

- Passion vs pragmatism
- Commitment
- Caring
- Counselling vs social work




Research, Policy and Practice

- Is it seen as 3 distinct roles,
 - Researchers at the University
 - Policy at government
 - Practice in the field
- How does Practice feed into research and policy.
- Practice- based evidence. What is the practioners role?
- Why are we not doing more of it? (Is this not our role)





- Can we do policy without doing practice?
“Social workers right to open theirmouths on Social Policy is based on what the social workers have learnt from interpersonal practice”



*The Late Professor Herman Stein.
 Dean, Mandel School of Applied
 Social Sciences (Social Work)
 Case Western Reserve University
 President of the Council on Social
 Work Education. 1966-1969
 President, International
 Association
 of the Schools of Social Work,
 1968-1976*

What you want to research on should be based on what is happening?

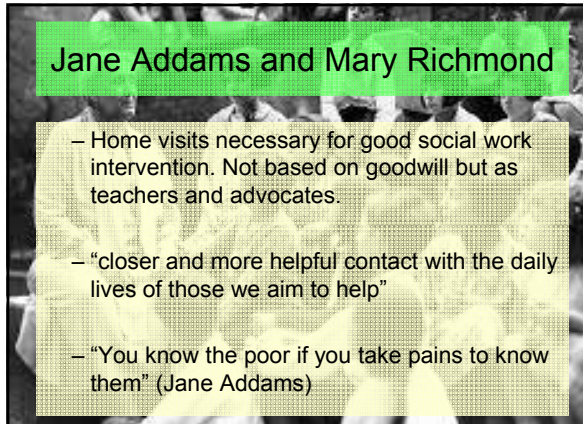
Jane Addams and Mary Richmond

- The architects of Social Work –
 - No suffering too small
 - Observed the issues, walked the talk, recognised that things that we now complain about, are so important and made it a part of the social work curriculum
 - Home visits by the “friendly visitor”
 - Recordings
 - A theoretical base
 - Long term work


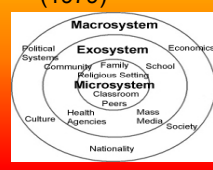
Jane Addams and Mary Richmond

- Home visits necessary for good social work intervention. Not based on goodwill but as teachers and advocates.
- “closer and more helpful contact with the daily lives of those we aim to help”
- “You know the poor if you take pains to know them” (Jane Addams)



– The importance of functioning from a theoretical base (not merely articulating it)

Mary Richmond (1899) Uri Bronfenbrenner (1979)

- She warned against well meant but unintelligent interferences that would weaken neighbourliness and mutual dependence through marshalling appropriate social resources to assist families in need – P.I.E. and community based.

- Her belief in the thoroughness of assessment in intervention



- Recordings
 - Documentation
 - Ethics – re-victimisation (retelling stories)
- Long term work

My Reflections as a Practitioner

- Am I a responsible or accountable practitioner (how often have I not done my recordings, not contacted my clients, and justify my behaviour under heavy caseload?)
- Do I function from a theoretical perspective or do I use theory only when I am asked to present a case or do a social report. Is this fair to my assessment?
- Have I reached a stage where I believe I have "arrived" and convince myself that I am a creative, compassionate, social worker who is always there for my client, and therefore feel little need to continually upgrade myself, because I am "senior" enough to know.
- Why I wonder, are young social workers giving up on the profession before even going in? Who is giving them the message about long working hours poor salaries, burn out? Are we our own worst enemies?



- What is my role as an advocate? Have I done enough not only to advocate for my client on a client basis but also to advocate for causes (case advocacy) and educate others about my role as an agent of change?.
- Have I practiced the principle of NO harm?
- Have we become the "unfaithful angels" that Harry Specht talked about? Are we moving away from traditional social work practices to "eyeball – eyeball" counselling and modern day therapies and convince ourselves that this is social work?
- How do I get our young social workers to see that contributions to research and policy comes with grounded and quality interpersonal practice?

If Jane Addams and Mary Richmond were listening right now.....



.....I wonder what they would say?

