Reflexivity Exercises

Critical reflexive ethnography and video reflexive ethnography

Critical reflexive ethnography (Dillon et al., 2025) and video-reflexive ethnography (Olson et al., 2022) are research methodologies where research participants (clinicians) are observed during clinical encounters. Critical reflexive ethnography involves an ethnographer taking field notes during the clinical encounter, whereas video reflexive ethnography involves clinical encounters being videoed in practice. Participants are then invited to reflect on and co-interpret on observations and video-recordings through reflexive activities. This could be done through guiding students (and clinical educators) through a structured analysis of clinical interactions or reflexive dialogues (like what we did with the vignette today), specifically foregrounding emotions and attending to the often-overlooked relational and dispositional elements within clinical practice.

Empathy and compassion in clinical practice

Empathy and compassion are important emotions in delivering relational care and attending to the human aspects of care. However, supporting students to do this can be difficult. Homophily or shared social location shapes who we are practised in interacting with, whose emotions we catch, or whose emotions will seem foreign to us or require concerted effortful labour to match feeling expectations (Cottingham, 2022). Feeling across divides and with people from different class or race, or who have different life experiences to you, can be challenging especially when you may not understand the emotional and physical challenges they face in day to day life and often sticky trajectories in life. It requires empathy and bearing witness to suffering.

References

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