

Title:	Strength-Based Approaches to Youth Work Practice
Level:	4
Credit value:	5
GLH:	30
Unique Reference Number:	M/650/4667
Sector Subject Area:	13.1 Teaching and Lecturing
Aim:	The aim of this unit is to provide learners with the skills and knowledge to be able to understand the skills underpinning strength-based Youth Work practice and its application in practice.
Assessment Type:	Assessment of this unit will be through an internally set and internally assessed portfolio of evidence.
Assessment Guidance:	<p>Assessment decisions for skills-based learning outcomes must be made during the learner's normal work activity.</p> <p>Skills-based assessment must include direct observation as the main source of evidence and must be carried out over an appropriate period of time.</p>

Learning outcomes

The learner will:

1. Be able to understand strengths-based approaches, and the application of the same in Youth Work practice.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to identify how strength-based approaches can be applied in Youth Work and evaluate different strength-based approaches.

The learner must:

- 1.1 Explore what is meant by **strength-based practice**.
- 1.2 Define Youth Work and identify how strength-based approaches align with **Youth Work principles and purpose**.
- 1.3 Evaluate several **strength-based approaches**.

2. Be able to evaluate the theory of Positive Psychology and reflect on its contribution to strengths-based approaches.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to understand how Positive Psychology theory has influenced approaches in Youth Work.

The learner must:

- 2.1 Reflect on the development of **Positive Psychology theory**.
- 2.2 Analyse the impact of Positive Psychology on **traditional approaches** in the discipline and influence.

3. Be able to understand and reflect on the importance of a strength-based relationship and the knowledge and skillset required for its practice in Youth Work.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to explore the knowledge and skillset required to establish a strength-based relationship in Youth Work practice.

The learner must:

- 3.1 Explore the **components and importance** of a strength-based relationship in Youth Work practice.
- 3.2 Describe the key knowledge and skillset needed for establishing and cultivating a **strength-based relationship** in Youth Work practice.

4. Be able to evaluate own practice and approaches, the importance of SELF, self-awareness and the purposeful 'use of self' in cultivating strength-based practice in Youth Work.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to examine self-concept and conditions of worth; the purposeful "use of self" and their impact on relationships and practice.

The learner must:

- 4.1 Explain the **purposeful use of 'Self'** in Youth Work practice.
- 4.2 **Examine self-awareness** and its importance in practice.
- 4.3 Summarise **required development actions** to improve own a) knowledge, b) skills and c) self-awareness in the development of strength-based practice.

<p>Scope of Training</p> <p>The Scope of Training identifies areas that must be covered during the delivery of this unit. This is the minimum that is expected but tutors are expected to include other areas, knowledge of which will benefit their learners, based on location, types of work available and from the tutors own professional experience.</p>	
<p>Requirements</p>	
<p>Strength-Based Practice</p>	<p>Content must include examining the development of strength-based practice, the origins and theories, knowledge and how to co-create in practice with young people. The learner’s personal lives and professional experience are reflected upon. The skills of such methods are considered, and the importance of values and ethical considerations. In strengths-based approaches, Youth Work collaborates to explore the personal abilities and their circumstances, from a positive asset-based perspective, rather than making the deficit, or “problem” the focus of the intervention. The approach gathers a holistic picture of the individual’s life; and engages and works collaboratively with others, across disciplines for the best outcomes. Definitions of the approaches will be considered and reflected upon, for example Duncan and Hubble (2000) ‘Strengths-based practice is a collaborative process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing them to work together to determine an outcome that draws on the person’s strengths and assets. As such, it concerns itself principally with the quality of the relationship that develops between those providing and being supported, as well as the elements that the person seeking support brings to the process.’</p>
<p>Youth Work Principles and Purpose</p>	<p>Teaching must consider definitions and purpose of Youth Work, how it aims to practice for the well-being of all, to respect the unique value and dignity of each human being. The discipline is based on values and principles, such as dialogue, equality, and Justice and “Democracy and the active involvement of people in</p>

	<p>the issues that affect their lives” (Jeff and Smith 2005:95-6)). The unit will consider the strength-based approach in Youth Work and informal education, defined as “the wise, respectful, and spontaneous process of cultivating learning. It works through conversation, and the exploration and enlargement of experience. Jeffs, T. and Smith, M. K. (1997, 2005, 2011). ‘What is informal education?’ The encyclopaedia of pedagogy and informal education. [https://infed.org/mobi/what-is-informal-education/]. Retrieved: 02/02/2020].</p>
Strength-Based Approaches	<p>Learners must consider how to enhance practice, they will consider strength-based language, and the need for reflective, inclusive approaches. Models and their application will be examined, such as Resilience, Post-Traumatic Growth, Adversity and Risk Factors,</p> <p>Person-centred approaches, Maslow and self-actualisation, Solution Focused Brief Therapies, Brendtro and Larson Circle of Courage and Bruce Perry.</p>
Positive Psychology Theory	<p>The unit will reflect on Seligman who, in 1998, challenged Psychiatry - stating “We became a victimology. Human beings were seen as passive foci: Stimuli came on and elicited “responses” or external “reinforcements” weakened or strengthened “responses,” or conflicts from childhood pushed the human being around.” Positive Psychology, its review of the medical model will be discussed, with reflection about the traditional approaches in psychology, the emphasis on personal weakness, and pathologising of humans which does not move closer to prevention.</p>
Traditional Approaches	<p>Learners must consider challenges to the deficit approach in practice, the myth of the “normal” in Youth Work, and how practice must see beyond traditional approaches to strive for opportunities that aim towards optimal well-being.</p>
Components and Importance	<p>Learners must explore, through personal reading and research and teaching of the content of AC3.2 below, in the non-mandatory assessment it is suggested that learners will prepare a case study</p>

	of purposeful and strengths-based approach in practice. The case study will explore the knowledge and theory arising from the chosen concept and the application of the learning to personal and professional practice.
Strength-Based Relationship	Teaching will consider the elements of relationship; rapport; working alliance; attachment; theory of change; listening and questioning and micro and macro communication skills. How to focus on psychological strengths in supporting positive change.
Purposeful Use Of 'Self'	The SELF in practice, Learners will examine theory of Self, from Person-centred practice. Self-concept and conditions of worth, the purposeful "use of self" and the impact on relationships and practice. What does this mean in Youth Work? Understanding, behavioural, emotional, psychological, physical, and spiritual self.
Examine Self-Awareness	Learners must consider and define self-awareness, reflective and reflexivity in practice. How do we improve self-awareness, techniques in practice, mindfulness, self-actualisation, and the importance of awareness in practice?
Required Development Actions	<p>Understanding and developing personal and professional boundaries, and how these support practice. The challenges and interruptions to contact, control, and defence mechanisms that impact and impede self-awareness and use of self in practice.</p> <p>Supervision and Case Management: distinctions and effectiveness in developing knowledge and understanding of strength-based approaches.</p> <p>Ethics in practice, self-care responsibility and how to develop ethical best practice training.</p> <p>Stress, anxiety, and fear: techniques, skills, and methods for dealing with difficulties and improving self-care in practice.</p>