

The importance of developing self-awareness

Self-awareness is crucial in order to work successfully in youth welfare services. A lot of the work happens through personal interaction between RYCWs and YPs. It can, therefore, have a detrimental effect on the education of the YPs. The stability of a RYCW's personality will be a decisive factor in the relationship with a YP. Disadvantaged young people tend to take advantage, sometimes unintentionally, of others by manipulating the RYCW's feelings. We can develop strategies to reduce our vulnerability.

On an institutional level, it is important to recognise that RYCWs need to develop self-awareness. This is necessary, because it has a positive effect on professional and personal development and it helps in preventing burnouts.

What can we do in order to become more aware of our own strengths and weaknesses? First of all, we need to realise that self-awareness can be achieved on several levels:

- On a superficial level, it means being conscious about one's own abilities. This involves being conscious about our knowledge, interests, our ability to handle stress and failure etc.
- On a deeper level, it refers to our previous experiences. How do they influence our current, feelings, intentions and behaviour?
- The third level deals with the social level of self-awareness. How can we comply with the expectations imposed by our social roles?

Source:

Szivák Judit (2010): A reflektív gondolkodás fejlesztése, Magyar Tehetségsegítő Szervezetek Szövetsége, 2010.

Further reading

Gibbs G. (1988): Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods. Oxford Further Education Unit, Oxford Polytechnic

<https://thoughtsmostlyaboutlearning.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/learning-by-doing-graham-gibbs.pdf>