Professional Identity Formation 2.0:
What Identity Do We Want Learner to Attain?

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Objectives

By the end of the session, to be able to:

1. Define “professional identity formation”
2. Critique distinction between “acting” and ”being” professional
3. Describe how to cultivate motivation and action in professional identity formation
Key questions

• Why the focus on professional identify formation?

• Is it more important to “be” than to “act” professional?

• How could we better cultivate professional identity formation?
Why the focus on professional identity formation (PIF)?

“The integration of personal values, morals, and attributes with the norms of the profession.”

Wilson *Teach Learn Med* 2013
Virtue-based professionalism

Behavior-based professionalism

Professional identify formation

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Figure 1 Miller’s original pyramid. Reprinted with permission from Miller GE. The assessment of clinical skills/competence/performance. Acad Med. 1990;65(9 suppl):s63–s67.
Figure 2 The amended version of Miller’s pyramid with the addition of “Is” and an outline of what is to be assessed at each level. Sources: Adapted with permission from Miller GE. The assessment of clinical skills/competence/performance. Acad Med. 1990;65(9 suppl):s63–s67. Quotation from Merton, 1957.22
Cultivating PIF

• Role modeling and mentors

• Reflection on experience

• Socialization – communities of practice
Figure 2 The amended version of Miller’s pyramid with the addition of “Is” and an outline of what is to be assessed at each level. Sources: Adapted with permission from Miller GE. The assessment of clinical skills/competence/performance. Acad Med. 1990;65(9 suppl):s63–s67. Quotation from Merton, 1957.\textsuperscript{22}
Is it more important to “be” than to “act” professional?

Acting professional
  • Superficial
  • In-authentic

Being professional
  • Deep, internalized
  • Authentic
Defending “acting”

• Acting can shift attitudes
  • “It is easier to act your way into a new way of thinking than think your way into a new way of acting”
    
    Jerry Sternin, *Power of Positive Deviance*

• Different depths of acting
  • Mimic – “imitate”
  • Emulate – “act like”
  • Embody – “act as if”
Virtuous action: action *and* motivation

• “...properly motivated, a virtuous person will [also] experience appropriate feelings”

• “…judgements of agents' praisworthiness or blameworthiness are significantly tied to agents’ motives, which serve as signs of their character.”

Beauchamp & Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 2001
Surgery – culture regarding error

- Technical error
- Judgement error
- Normative error
How could we better cultivate professional identity formation?
Our definition

“The integration of personal values, morals, and attributes with the norms of the profession.”

Wilson *Teach Learn Med* 2013

- Role modeling and mentors
- Reflection on experience
- Socialization – communities of practice
“Method” acting

• The actor puts himself/herself in the mindset of the character, finding things in common in order to give a more genuine portrayal of the character.
Classic examples

  • Practice piano 4 hours per day
  • Gave up apartment, moved to Europe with just 2 bags and a keyboard
  • Starvation diet to lose 30 lbs

  • Went into role 7 months before filming and stayed in character 24 hours/day
Key ingredients of “method” acting

- Carefully study/observe the real character
- Imagine/research their actual motivations
- Draw on (or create) your own experiences in order to make the motivations your own
- Act as that character would act thru those motivations
PIF

• Role models
• Socialization in communities of practice
• Reflection and reflective capacity

Method acting

• Carefully study/observe the real character
• Imagine/research their actual motivations
• Draw on (or create) your own experiences in order to make the motivations your own
• Act as that character would act thru those motivations
What implications does this have for PIF?
Implications for PIF

• Role models -> exemplars
  • Must purposefully select exemplars

• Reflect -> study
  • Explore the motivation of exemplars
  • Call on/create experience to internalize

• Clarify the goal:
  • Purposeful creation of character, inspired by exemplars, with deep understanding and internalizing of motivation, as a reliable guide to authentic action
Implications for PIF

Cultivate personal identity and values

- Literature
- Art
- Ethics
- Personal creed

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The Four Agreements
by Don Miguel Ruiz

1. BE IMPECCABLE WITH YOUR WORD
   a. Speak with integrity.
   b. Say only what you mean.
   c. Avoid using the Word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others.
   d. Use the power of your Word in the direction of truth and love.

2. DON’T TAKE ANYTHING PERSONALLY
   a. Nothing others do is because of you.
   b. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream.
   c. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won’t be the victim of needless suffering.

3. DON’T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS
   a. Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want.
   b. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama.
   c. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.

4. ALWAYS DO YOUR BEST
   a. Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick.
   b. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse, and regret.
Objectives

Are you able to:

1. Define “professional identity formation?”

2. Critique distinction between “acting” and “being” professional?

3. Describe how to cultivate motivation and action in professional identity formation?
Thank you!