Emotional Intelligence and Professional Education: The Use of Narrative Journaling

James Smith
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James Smith, Washburn University, Kansas, USA

Abstract: Emotional intelligence (EI) or the ability to understand one’s own emotional state and the emotional state of others is hypothesized as critical for appropriately and effectively connecting with others. It has also been linked to academic and professional practice success and competence. Research suggests social work students do enter their professional education program with an “average” level of EI. To be effective and demonstrate competence, professional education programs whose focus requires interacting with people with compassionate and empathic understanding, i.e. medicine, counseling, psychology, psychiatry even education itself, must first increase student emotional competence for connectedness to others. A narrative journaling component in curricula may increase academic and practice competence and effectiveness. Research suggests a strong relationship between EI and academic performance suggesting the potential for enhancing social emotional learning (SEL) in graduate classrooms. Literature suggests cognitive and emotional development are inseparable and emphasizing one over the other leads to diminished learning and job performance. Literature notes corporate executives view graduate education as too theoretical and lacking consideration for the emotional development of students. Using the process of narrative journaling for a cohort of social work students to express and explore their affective reaction(s) to social work course content and issues; receive feedback that facilitates self-reflection and self-exploration is important to education, practice and work competency and effectiveness. Narrative journals can be the educational tool to increase and assess student growth in and strengthening of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. The aim is to develop a SEL component for infusion into social work and other professional learning curriculum. It is hypothesis students will manifest EI above their pretest mean at post-test with the intervention of narrative journaling. Implications for professional education and practice strategies, techniques, skills, and for overall social and professional competence will be presented.

Keywords: Emotion, Behavior, Emotional Intelligence, Academic Performance, Practice Effectiveness, Professional Competence, Journaling, Narrative Journals

Introduction

Research suggests emotional intelligence (EI) is important to human learning, interaction, human service, health care delivery and effectiveness. However few professional programs address the emotional needs, skills, and competencies of its students for developing intrapersonal and interpersonal self-efficacy. To foster a framework of harmonious human professional learning educational institutions must address the dynamics of emotions in the process of self-reflection for self and other awareness and human connectedness. A narrative journaling component in professional curricula, particularly in social work education may be one way for increased self and other awareness for, academic and professional practice competency.
Literature Review

Feeling and thinking are the major process by which human beings live within the physical and social environment. It is through these processes that as “sentient” beings we create or construct the external social structure and processes to actualize our felt needs and desires. At the same time it is through thinking and feeling we seek to find and give meaning to human existence. Thinking and feeling are interdependent, inseparable to the lived experiences of people.

Cove & Love (1996) state that cognitive and emotional developments are inseparable, “A growing literature base reinforces the fact that cognitive, social, and emotional processes are inextricably linked” (p. 2). Thinking and emotions are an integral and significant aspect of human nature and critical for social communication and verbal expression, as well as for influencing motivation, memory, attention, concentration, imagination, and creativity (Kusche & Greenberg, 1998). Bernard (2006) citing Bloom suggest the “affective or motivational” disposition of learners, includes non-cognitive and non-academic characteristics such as the academic self-concept of students as well as their attitudes toward particular subjects in school and towards school itself, accounts for 25 percent of the variance in achievement studies reviewed (p. 104). Therefore social work education cannot afford to focus on one to the exclusion of the other. Thinking, cognition and reason must be cultivated along with feeling, emotion and passion for the education of the whole person.

The Nature of Emotions

Emotions communicate the intimate individual meaning of what is happening in our lives. Emotions are about “something”; they have a focus, an intentional object. Emotions involve the object and how it fits into an individual’s life circumstances and how the object is interpreted by the person (Ahmed, 2004). Emotions embody not just a way of seeing an object and one’s self in relation to that object but one’s belief about that object and one’s self.

The primary function of emotion is to provide an individual with information and to mobilize that individual to deal with interpersonal encounters (Ekman in Mayne & Bonanno, 2001) and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges (Gross, 1998). Emotions operate to help individuals work out the problems of social living in the context of human interaction. Emotions are the crucial manifestations that represent the definition and negotiation of social relationships for the self in society and ones social standing in the world (Lutz & White in Mayne & Bonanno). West (1993) notes discernment is about human connection, about having empathy. “Empathy is the capacity to get in contact with the anxieties and frustrations of others. To attempt to put yourself in others’ shoes, we must attempt to get into their skin… The moment of human connection means never losing sight of the humanity of others. Always attempting to remain in connected with the humanity of others” (p. 5).

Emotions provide information to use in thinking and making evaluative judgments and decisions (Clore, 1994; Kusche & Greenberg, 1998, Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999). All judgments are implicitly judgments of value (West, 1993). Emotions concern the value, importance and meaning the individual sees in the object, “Emotionality as a claim about a subject or a collective is clearly dependent on relations of power, which endow ‘others’ with meaning and value… Hardness is not the absence of emotion, but a different emotional orientation towards others” (Ahmed, p. 4). Ahmed argues emotions are reducible to sensations...
insofar as objects cause them. Objectification of race or gender, gives it causal properties, suggesting, according to Ahmed, individuals do not have feelings for the object because of the nature of the object, but feelings take the shape of the contact we have and had with the object(s), we do not love or hate because objects are good or bad but because they seem “beneficial” or “harmful”, again a value judgement.

Emotions indicate how humans interprets his/her inner self and the external social world, his/her place in it, and how harms, threats, and challenges are coped with. Through the emotional reaction of an individual, we can gain knowledge about what this person has invested, what value is in the encounter with another individual, situation, or life in general. Emotions express that sense of vulnerability, insecurity, and imperfect control of self in the environment. Whether an object is seen as good or bad indicates some meaning assigned to it (Ahmed). Emotions reflect a reality of the world from the subject’s personal sense of importance and value for their well-being. Thus, emotional socialization is influenced not only by the number, kind, and quality of contacts with different people but also with the perception of those people, and the interaction.

Theory

Saarni, (2000a) says, “[P]eople are motivated to construct a desired identity that derives its meaningfulness from others’ responses to the self’s projected image; it is in this sense that identity itself constitutes a contextual process that permeates people’s emotional and social experiences” (p. 318). Mead’s “looking glass-self”, (Boss et .al, 1993), and Keen, (1991) supports acquiring our sense of self through what is reflected in the emotions, behaviour, and attitude of others or by imagining and anticipating what others think and feel about us. West (1993) states that, “There is a fundamental link between what you understand the nature of reality to be and your conception of yourself as a human being” (p. 40).

Symbolic Interaction (SI) Theory (Boss, Doherty, LaRossa, Schumm & Steinmetz, 1993), addresses the importance of “meaning” in human behaviour, positing humans act toward “things” based on the meanings these “things” have for them. Myss (1997) notes an individual’s sense of self is not innate but developed through social interactions. SI supports meaning arising through interactions between people with meanings handled in and modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with things encountered. SI addresses the development and importance of identity, of “self-concept” confirming individuals develop a sense of self through social interaction, in actual contacts with the world, incorporating into itself the meanings derived from those contacts. Once developed, this sense of self provides an important motive for behaviour. It can be suggested the individual self can be wounded or disfigured by its interaction with society which can impair the healthy discernment of and sensitivity toward oneself and the external “other”.

Multiple Intelligence

Gardner (1983) described intelligence as a “set of problem-solving skills, enabling the individual to resolve genuine problems or difficulties he or she encounters and, when appropriate, to create an effective product” (p. 60-61) and suggested it included a broad range of intelligences supporting a variety of human abilities rather than one master intelligence. The range
of intelligences includes Logical/Mathematical, Verbal/Linguistic, Spatial, Body-Kinesthetic, Musical, Intrapersonal, and Interpersonal.

It appears educational institutions have largely ignored “intrapersonal and interpersonal” skills training. Empirically, one can find a class, course, training, curricular, effort or situation to shape, mold, develop, enhance or educate the first five of Gardner’s “intelligences”; reading, writing, English and literature classes (Verbal/Linguistic); science classes, mathematics, and statistics (Logical-Mathematics); a wide variety of art classes (Spatial); theatre, dance, gym, and athletics (Body-Kinesthetic); and band, music appreciation, and choir (Music). Conspicuously absent are dedicated classes teaching or developing interpersonal or intrapersonal skills. Skills that, without exception, are necessary for all human interaction in general and social work practice in particular. Matto, Berry-Edwards, Hutchison, Bryant, and Waldbilling (2006) said there was a high level of agreement among a sample of social work educators, that interpersonal, intrapersonal intelligences are the most important for social work practice and culturally competency.

**Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence (EI) or the ability to understand one’s own emotional state and the emotional state of others has been hypothesized to be critical for appropriate and effective connection with others (Bekenham, 1997; Goleman, 1995; Justice, et al., 1998; Saarni, 1999), interpersonal, and to one’s sense of self, intrapersonal. Conceptualized by two psychologists, Salovey and Mayer’s, they define emotional intelligence as being able to monitor and regulate one’s own feelings, understand the feelings of others, and use that “feeling” knowledge to guide thoughts and actions. EI includes five functions or skills necessary for the effective use of one’s emotions, Self-Awareness or knowing what you are feeling; Handling Emotions or being able to manage those feelings well; Self-Motivation or analysing thoughts, being able to delay impulsive actions, and maintaining hope and optimism despite setbacks; Empathy: taking the other’s perspective; and Social Skills or interacting harmoniously with others, which is called the “art of relationships” (Goleman, 1995, p. 43).

Bar-On (1997a) distinguishes cognitive intelligence (IQ) from non-cognitive intelligence or EI. EI addresses the personal, emotional, social, and survival dimensions of intelligence. While IQ is more calculated, EI is more purposeful. EI helps predict success because it reflects how a person applies knowledge to the immediate situation. Most importantly in comparing EI to IQ is that IQ does not change over time, while EI can. Goleman (1998) confirms IQ peaks around the age of 21, EI grows from childhood into the late 50s and reaches its peak from one’s mid-40s to mid-50s. It is this changing over time that presents significant implications for social work education.

**Social Work Education**

Matto et. al. (2006) suggests, “an important question for those involved in educating social workers is, What does it mean to be an intelligent social worker (p. 405)?” They ask, “whether social work education is effective in developing the intelligences that are required for practice” (p. 414). These questions are at the heart of social work education, emotional intelligence and narrative journaling. Literature suggests social work education cannot focus
on educating the cognitive aspects of its students to the exclusion of the interpersonal and intrapersonal.

Liff (2003) states an educational system that does not take affective learning into account cannot be truly effective; while Barker (1999) notes, “Emotional incompetence can and does have serious effects in clinical and educational settings” (p. 155). The literature suggests a current interest in education is the growing awareness that the development of social and emotional skills in students is critical for the foundation of academic knowledge achievement in the classroom (Kremenitzer, 2005).

Social workers in all practice settings deal with clients and non-clients who present with a variety of psychosocial issues that are emotionally based and manifest in emotional and behaviour symptomatology gained from their interaction with the larger society in the development of the self. Social work students, present with a variety of emotionally based issues influencing thinking, feeling, and behaviour as they enter into the process of social work education and practice. Matto, et al., (2006) confirms that, “We should assume that our classrooms are inhabited by students with individualized profiles multiple intelligences and find ways to corral those intelligences as tools for individual and collective learning that will translate into more effective services to our clients systems (p. 415)”.

Smith (2006) found students entering a program of social work presented within the average range of the BarOn-EQ-i scores with the Interpersonal scale significantly higher than the “normative” score of 100. This effect was attributed to the type of student entering the social work programs. It was not surprising students entering a social work program would have high scores in this areas as the process of self-selection into social work is strongly associated with caring for and about others. Thus, social work programs overall may attract students whose entry levels of EI (competence) may provide a foundation on which to mold EI for academic performance and practice effectiveness.

The significance of these findings for social work education and practice could be the need to research and develop new more inclusive teaching and practice methods for students.

**Narrative Journaling**

In her study of social work students and self-awareness, Gardner (2001) concluded an important and implicit element approaching learning is the capacity to be reflective with reflection being the term for those intellectual and affective activities individuals engage in to explore their experiences to develop new understanding. Reflective practice and reflective practitioners has been a part of education since 1933 (Kremenitzer, 2005). The practice of reflection has been identified as an important component of counselor development (Griffith & Frieden, 2000).

Journal writing is a technique of learning that allows student to be reflective and make a connection between course content, their lived and socialized experiences and consequently the experiences of the external other, client or professional. “Journal writing encourages students to reflect on personal, classroom, or clinical experiences... Journal writing gives the student an outlet for reflections on clinical experiences. Writing about the experience helps students to think critically and develop keener insights into assumptions and beliefs that can interfere with clinical judgement” (Griffith & Frieden, 2000, p. 84, 86). Hettich, (1990) noted students believe journal writing stimulates critical thinking, provides feedback about learning, and is a means of self-expressions. And depending on the teacher’s objectives,
allows the student to explore both the affective/motivational and cognitive processes of their experiences, rather than from just the level of knowledge.

There appears to be no universal definition of a narrative, nor is there a “self evident definition” of what is relevant or irrelevant in a particular narrative, “The choice of what to tell and what to omit lies entirely with the narrator and can be modified, at his or her discretion by the questions of the listener” (Greenhalgh and Hurwitz, 1999, p. 48). A narrative is a short story about an experience of an individual in the context of interaction with others. All professional and personal experience is “naturally” storied and telling or writing stories are prime human ways of understanding (Bolton, 2006). Life and living in all its aspect can be viewed a series of stories and experiences, a narrative of individual experiences, fraught with meaning significant to the individual. Greenhalgh and Hurwitz, suggest, “We dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate, and love by narrative” (p. 48). Shweder’s (1994) “schema” suggests the human, personal experience of fear, shame, or sadness is not something independent of or separate from the conditions justifying it or from the actions it demands. He suggest the emotion in and of itself is the whole story, a somatic event (fatigue, chest pain, goose flesh) and/or affective event (panic, expansive, emptiness) experienced as a kind of perception (of loss, gain, threat possibility) linked to a kind of plan (attack, withdraw, confess, hide, explore) (p. 38). Thus, “emotion” as represented in somatic and affective experiences is more than simply feeling such as tiredness or tension or a headache but is an individual perception having meaning such as betrayal by trusted allies or a lover with an inherent plan—retribution, realignment, withdrawal, and so forth.

Narratives journaling and techniques, under different names, have long been a part of social work education and practice. “Process Recording” has been a long valued social work teaching method where, using a split page format, “the narrative is accompanied by one or more columns in which the client feelings, worker feelings, the skills utilized by the worker, implicit worker values, theory base, self-evaluation, or all of these are recorded” (Swenson, 1999). This method is similar to the Narrative Medicine Program created by Dr. Rita Charon in 1996 at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital (NPR Radio, Oct 28, 2003, Mangan, 2004). This approach to medical student training involves the practice of keeping “parallel charts”. Besides the medical charts they keep on patients, the students are writing about their encounters and emotional reactions in ordinary language to convey a student’s emotions and experiences in working with patients. Narrative medicine is based upon physicians’ awareness of patients’ narration of their suffering, their hopes, and how illness has affected them.

Social work education has extensively used such methods as “reading logs” as an active way to integrate new and creative ideas into practice. Students learn by questioning, reflecting, tearing apart, and recreating—not memorizing” (Ginsberg, 1986, p. 97). It provides a medium for developing empathy with oneself and others, for exploring the larger realm of the individual experience for problem causality and solution. Narratives offer a method for addressing existential qualities such as inner hurt, despair, hope, grief, and moral pain which frequently accompany, and may even constitute, people’s illness” (Greenhalgh & Hurwitz, p. 48). Narrative journaling in the context of social work education and practice offers an infrastructure for a whole person paradigm of student education and academic success in performance, as well as the efficacy in interaction with clients and professional peers.

Because the social work profession requires helping clients understand, resolve, and reframe their emotional lives, issues, interactions, and perceptions, it would seem prudent for schools
and programs of social work, as part of an overall educational curriculum for professional competence, to research the potential of EI to enhance academic performance and the effectiveness of practice. Understanding human emotions is a general goal of social work education. However, it may not be detailed enough to address the holistic nature of students' clients and their emotional experiences.

**Method**

**Instrument**

Emotional intelligence was operationalized and measured using the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) (Bar-On, 1997). The BarOn EQ-i is composed of 133 questions, each using a 5-point self-rating Likert scale (1 = “Very Seldom or Not True of Me” to 5 = “Very often True of Me or True of Me”). The test measures 16 factorial components in five functional areas: **Intrapersonal** (emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, independence); **Interpersonal** (empathy, interpersonal relationship, social responsibility); **Adaptability** (problem solving, flexibility, reality testing); **Stress Management** (stress tolerance, impulse control); and **General Mood** (optimism, happiness).

The student’s responses (raw data) were scored by Multi-Health Systems (MHS), the publisher of the instrument with suggestions within the emotional dimensions of the individual subject that can be improved. Although the Bar-On EQ-i takes approximately 30-40 minutes to complete, there are no imposed time limits. The reading level of the Inventory in English has been assessed at the North American sixth grade level. It was developed to be suitable for individuals 16 years of age and older.

**Participants**

The study participants were students in SW585 Emotional Intelligence and Social Work Practice, a graduate elective level class in the Spring Semester 2009. It was held on Saturday’s, January 24 – March 14, 2009 for eight (8) classes from 9:00am – 1:00pm. There were a total of eight (8) students, three (3) males and five (5) females. An Informed Consent form was given to each student to sign inviting them to participate in the study. The study was reviewed and approved by the University’s Institutional Review Board for the Study of Human Subjects. The BarOn EQ-i was administered the first day of class prior to any discussion of the class syllabus or class material. The students were told the journal was an opportunity for them to process their learning, feelings, thoughts and behavior as a result of the class. The journals were weekly.

**Results**

All scores of this group of social work student, like social work students in previous studies, were within the average range of 90-110 on the BarOn EQ-i at pre-test. All scores remained within the average range at post-test. The scores for Total EQ-i and the five functional areas point to an increase in post-test scores from the pre-test score in all of the EQ-i areas except the Interpersonal scale which remained exactly the same at 102. The Total EQ was 94 (pre), 98 (post); Intrapersonal EQ 95 (Pre)/99 (Post); Interpersonal EQ 102(Pre)/102(Post); Stress...
The student’s narrative journals seemed to support the propositions of the literature with regards to self-image and esteem. Their self-reflective journal seems to suggest people who are emotionally connected and self-aware of their emotions and are struggling to understand them, the emotionality of being a student, the feelings associated with their learning and becoming social workers. The journals also seem to suggest a willingness, with support to deal with their emotions and grow from them. The following are small portions of three journals from a total of 56 journals submitted during the course.

One student said, “I have been thinking a lot about what I am going to do when I graduate even though I have another year. To tell the truth I am afraid because in a sense I have to become an official adult, I can no longer use the excuse that I am a student. There are many reasons why I am fearful one of them of course has to pay back financial aid. The thing that upsets me the most is having to move away in order to be with my boyfriend. I don’t want to leave my sister and my new niece behind it hurts to think about not seeing about not seeing them everyday. I never really had a close relationship with my sister until about five years ago. It seems like every time I start to build a close relationship with a family member they either move or I have too.”

Another student notes, “My emotional state most recently has been a little tumultuous. Through the years I have endured the unthinkable and unfathomable pain, loss and disappointment. I have experienced so many emotionally devastating things that just leave me numb to it all. I would have hoped that with age and maturity, that I could get at some peace with all of the world. To find myself in just as tough times as when I was young is rather disheartening for me at my age. I feel pain so deep that it frightens me just how deeply pain can touch you. Some times I am scared that I am my own worst enemy. I think about the people who have wronged me in my life, and I find that they all pale in comparison to my own self-destructive tendencies… Yet some how I seem to have a self-conscious and self-critical notion of my own imbecility that my colleagues do not share with me. While my peers seem confident in what they are doing, I am simply perplexed with uncertainty of being an effective therapist… I guess I fear under-serving people and the potential disappointment and embarrassment of being charged with malpractice… College debt makes me more and more uneasy as I get closer to finishing my MSW.”

Still another student said, “While I was in the car driving away from the court house, I recognized the ruminating thoughts beginning. I was rehashing what I said and my difficulty showing my body’s stress response. The difference is this time I didn’t tell myself, ‘stop thinking about it.’ This time I opened myself up to the thoughts and feelings to learn something. I replayed my testimony, listening to the things I had said earlier, I was proud to discover that in response to one particular question I provide my professional opinion. In the past I may have said something different in response to fear (covering my own backside). But in this instance I said what I thought, and still feel good about it. I then replayed the feelings I experienced and tried to track them back to a source. I concluded that I have a fear of authority figures. I connect this back to a professional relationship with a past boss. I never felt comfortable around him due to his ‘Type A’ approach, I noticed a physical reaction when I heard him enter the office. I then remembered two instances in which my parents left me hanging emotionally. On one occasion as a child I told my dad to ‘shut up’ in a joking way as he was giving me a hard time in a joking way. His response was a look of hurt and
a ‘stonewall’. I apologized and said he said, ‘okay’ but remained closed off for a time. As a teenager I remember expressing anger to my mother, and she responded in a similar way. In both instances I felt as if I was in an impossible situation and unable to change it (because I could not change their emotional reaction). After considering these things, I came to a much simpler conclusion: I have a fear of being found to be incompetent, a fear of being ‘found out’. When I pondered this thought, it seemed somewhat absurd but I had to admit it. I then said out loud, ‘I can trust my judgment… I can trust myself.’ I continued saying this through a prayer. Then the intensity began to decrease.”

Discussion

This study suggest social work students as sentient beings do present with the emotionality that can be measured, assessed and may be address with a eye towards competence. This study indicates a group of students dealing with emotions, about their past, present and their future and would seem to support a need to help students process emotions, meaning and the information perceived for their understanding and growth. Ideally, having time in a class where students can dialogue with each other and the teacher in the processing of feeling information is of great benefit. But, journaling with teacher’s “eyes only” support, may give students a outlet to reflect on their life and clinical experience. Reflections enable students to consider on a deeper level their emerging self-perceptions and apply that knowledge to various areas of their lives, including their attitudes and feelings toward schoolwork, the profession, their relationship with peers and family members, and their aspiration and fears for their future.

Journal writing forces students to critically analyze not only what they have done in class but also how these incidents relate to their personal development outside of their professional classes. Griffith & Frieden (2000) confirm journaling helps students think critically and develop keener insights into assumptions and beliefs that can interfere with clinical judgment and professional relationships. As faculty and gate keepers of the profession we do have a responsibility to facilitate the social emotional learning of social work students. Without emotional self-efficacy on a student’s personal level there will be professional self efficacy. The journal of another student noted one of the possible consequences of social work education’s failure to directly and specifically address the past, present, and future emotion learning of social students and practitioners. “Now I have a feeling which reminds me that the main career frustration I have had was not due to clients but with colleagues. I have been appalled at the enormity of misconduct among ‘helping’ professional. I have met females who had sex with teenagers, people who did drugs with their at risk clients. I have seen colleague dehumanize client & ones that have gotten into physical altercations with clients. I have seen corporate greed, selling out, fraud, stealing of ideas, etc. So I wonder just what I have gotten myself into & just what it all means. I had hoped more of people & I feel let down.”

Implications for Social Work Education

Literature suggest high levels of EI, especially in the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions, are important for good social work functioning and effectiveness. Lam & Kirby (2002) quote Gardner as saying, “accurately determining moods, feelings and other mental states
in oneself (intrapersonal) and in others (interpersonal) and using the information as a guide for behaviour” defines a key component of emotional intelligence (p. 139) and arguably, the key dynamic in the social work educational and practice process. This self-awareness is an important element toward what social workers call the “professional use of self” and the avoidance of transference issues with clients. In a study of practicing social work managers, the respondents identified interpersonal skills as the most critical for management practice (Martin et al., 1999). The significant implication of this exploratory study is social work education must prepare students holistically to be effective and competent in coping with their professional challenges not only cognitively but emotionally. Narrative self-reflective journaling is an important tool for strengthening intrapersonal skills and interpersonal skills.

Conclusions

The literature points to changes in the way the medical profession has changed with regards to the inclusion of emotions and self-reflection as elements of medical competence. Murinson, Agarwal, and Haythornthwaite (2008) stated the overarching goal of medical training is to nurture the growth of knowledgeable, caring, and insightful clinicians guided by the ideals of medical professionalism. They state recent definitions of professional competence identify essential clinical skills, including cognitive expertise, emotional competence, and reflective capacity. Social work education must likewise reevaluate and change its definition and paradigm of competence to be more inclusive of the emotional, affective or non-cognitive learning of its students and practitioners. If social work education is to promote academic performance that yields a fully competent practitioner there must be increased acknowledgement of the role our emotional nature plays in education and practice. Swenson (1998) reminds us of a very important fact that, social workers and the professional gate-keeping organization may forget or ignore, that “clinical social work is art as well as science”. Social work must educate for the art and science. Students must be helped to become comfortable with their own emotions, emotional socialization, and issues and thus the client; coached to be self-reflective, to use both cognitive and affective intelligences to understand themselves as a necessary first step to academic effectiveness and connecting with and understanding others. Social work education has the ethical and fiduciary responsibility to ensure students are holistically prepared as competent practitioners.

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**About the Author**

*Dr. James Smith*

Dr. James Smith, MSW, MPA, LCSW, Associate Professor/Social Work, Washburn University has 29 years of direct clinical social work practice, program and agency administration/management and program development and teaching experience including casework. He researches emotions, emotional intelligence in behavioral interaction, Social Work Education and Practice Outcomes; Social Emotional Learning of Race and Gender; Cultural Competency, Violence; Criminality and Rehabilitation. In addition to his University, teaching, research and service responsibilities, he is current a part-time contract clinical therapist in private practice. His articles can be found in a special issue of the *Race, Gender, & Class; The Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics; Journal of Nursing Scholarship: Criminal Justice Review; The International Journal of the Humanities; The International Journal of Learning; Forum on Public Policy: A Journal of the Oxford Round Table, and Society for Spirituality and Social Work Forum*. He has presented in local and national conferences in Laramie & Casper, WY., Kansas City, Topeka, Omaha, New York, Anaheim, Portland, Atlanta, Boise, Big Rapids, MI and international conferences in Honolulu, HI, the University of Granada, Spain, and Cambridge and Oxford Universities in the United Kingdom of Great Britain, and the University of Waterlo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.
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