

Narrative Ethics: A storied approach to managing challenging ethical concerns

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Allan Barsky, PhD, JD

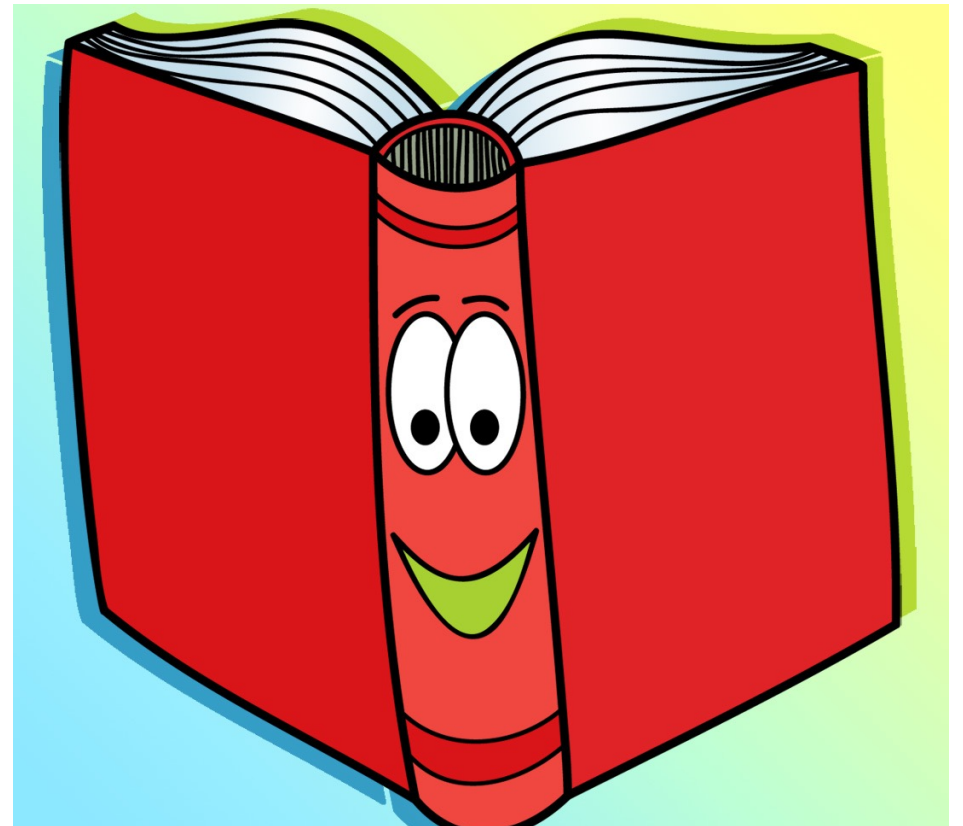
Sandler School of Social Work

Florida Atlantic University

abarsky@fau.edu

www.barsky.org

NASW Presentation

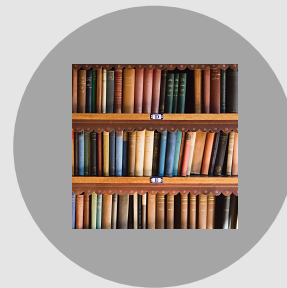


Agenda

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Approaches to Ethics



What is Narrative Ethics?

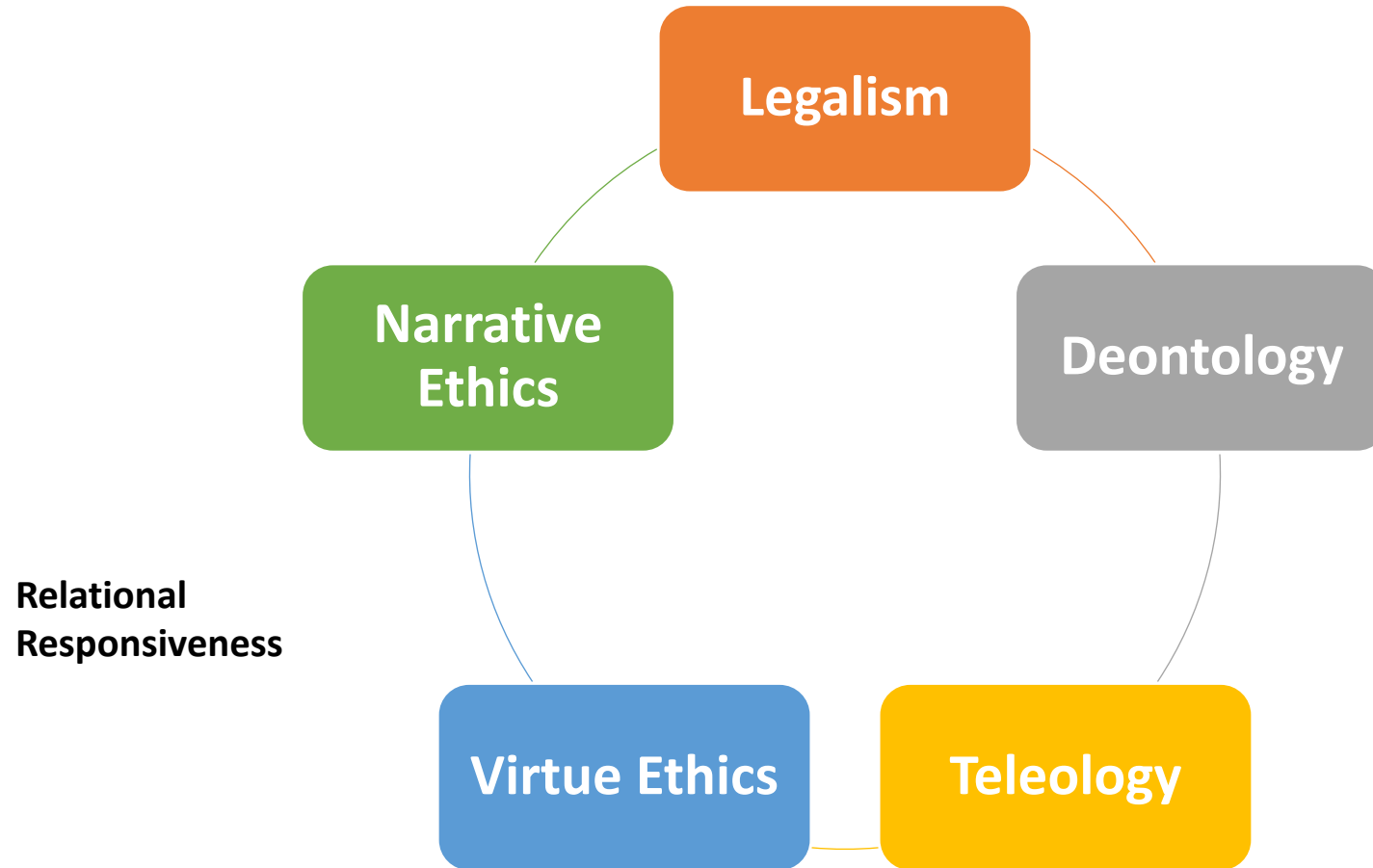


Case Discussions



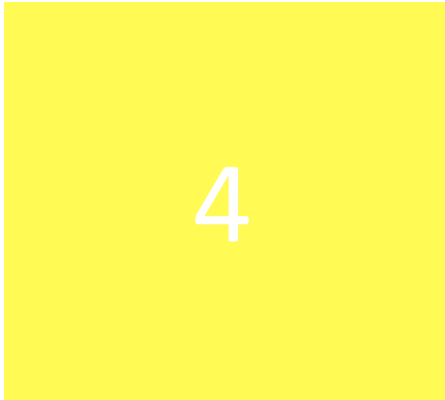
Questions / Take- Aways

Approaches to Ethics





“It's like everyone tells a story about themselves inside their own head. Always. All the time. That story makes you what you are. We build ourselves out of that story.”
- Patrick Rothfuss (author)



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Introduction: Narrative Ethics

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- An approach to dealing with ethical concerns by listening, interpreting, and responding to the stories told by clients, co-workers, or other people affected by the situation
- Morals and ethics are embedded in stories (helps us understand local context, history, culture)
- Encourages us to attend to the unique experiences, stories, emotions, and identities of the people affected by the ethical issues
- Deconstruction – exploring assumptions, meanings, and implications of stories
- Co-constructing stories – moving forward

History of Narrative Therapy

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Michael White (Oz) & David Epston (NZ)
“People Live their Lives by their Stories.”

Principles

- Stories capture living experience of individuals and families
- Stories rich, complex, explanatory
- Stories have power to enrich lives and are inclusive rather than exclusive.
- Stories encourage meaning making.

Underlying Theories

- social constructionism, feminist theory, literary theory, & critical theory

Elements of Stories



Voice



Perspective



Audiences



Plot



Character



Conflict



Resolution



Rationale & FIT WITH SW

Starting with the Client

Person-In-Environment

Beginning with self

Holistic
(avoid reductionism)

Relationships
(not rules)

Cultural humility

Storytelling in practice

- Ethnographic interviewing
- Social histories
- Group work
- Incident reports
- Bearing witness
- Supervision
- Conflict resolution

Framework for Employing Narrative Ethics in Practice



Engage others in storytelling – listen actively, validate, clarify



Jointly deconstruct – consider voice, perspectives, characters, plots, key points (moral lessons), assumptions



Identify questions – “How should the story move forward?” “What should we do now concerning...” “What’s the rest of the story?”



Co-construct the future

Applications of Narrative Ethics

Example: Chantal

- French Canadian, studied SW in FL
- Field placement in Vietnam
- Client: Huy, 16,
- Late onset Pompe disease – 3 months to live
- Learns Dr. Ngo has not told Huy or parents about diagnosis
- How would Chantal and Dr. Ngo approach conversation from various ethics approaches: legalism, deontology, teleology, & narrative ethics?



Ethical Issues

Boundary Issues

Interprofessional Conflicts

Professional vs. Personal Values

Gun Rights/Safety

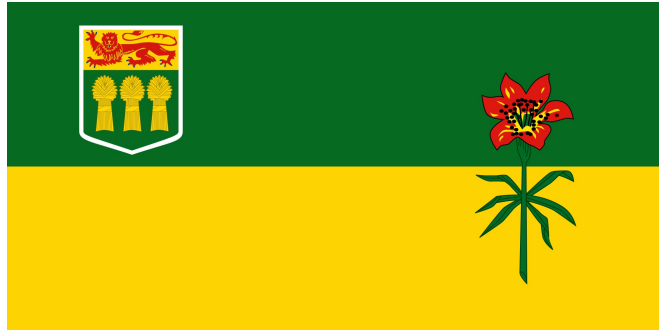
Pro-Life/Pro-Choice

Confidentiality vs. Safety

End-of-Life Decisions

Organizational, Family, Community, Policy conflicts

Barsky Family Story



- Generations of boys
- Mom's first pregnancy
- Carried to term
- Funeral but not allowed to go
- No mourning, no SW or counseling
- Never to discuss
- Stephen - first born
- Adelle – “You had a sister”

Narrative Ethics: Generation to Generation

- Think of a story that members of your family have passed down from generation to generation
- From whose perspective is the story told?
- What can we learn about the characters from the story?
- What can we learn about their values, morals, or messages that they would like the next generation to embrace?



Stories with Moral



What is your favorite...

- family story
- fairytale
- movie
- fable

with a moral question or lesson

Perspective: Dorothy / Elphaba



1. Think of a story that your parents/grandparents often told you when you were growing up
2. Write 5 key points – the plot
3. Who were the characters?
4. What was the story's lesson?
5. What assumptions are within the story?
6. How does culture and location affect the story, its moral questions, and lessons?

Example: Mae

- SW works at an agency that provides outreach and support to families with transgender individuals
- Mae (22) – Assigned male at birth, identifies as female
- Mae’s mother, Elida – believes her “son” is male and should always be male
- Mae’s brother, Rodolfo, is getting married and wants both Mae and Elida to attend his wedding
- Elida says she will not attend the wedding unless Mae dresses and presents as a man; Mae refuses
- SW wants to use narrative ethics to engage the family

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Video example

- Trauma not Transformed is Trauma Transferred | Tabitha Mpamira-Kaguri | TEDxOakland
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR36jJMj_0CJs_fT5UdqPenoWoUoabihlbFchct_hlOghjiuChnJTpLU2sPo&feature=youtu.be&v=b4loBphYCXI&app=desktop

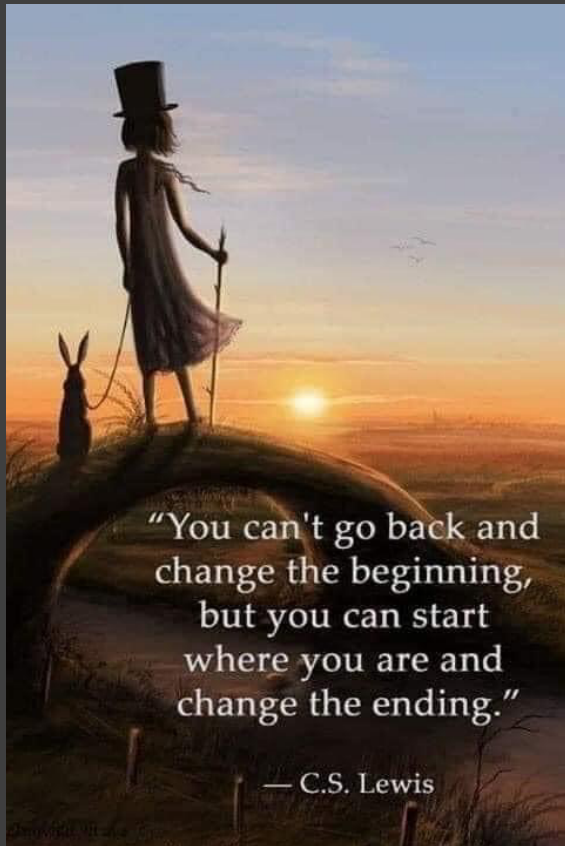
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Experiential Example

- What is the appropriate role of government in society?
- Select facilitator – establish ground rules for courageous narrative conversation
- Engage in storytelling rather than answering the question directly
- How do you identify politically, culturally, and ethnically?
- Describe an experience or story that helped to inform your beliefs about the appropriate role of government?
- How do your past experiences affect your views about democracy, socialism, capitalism, conservatism, and liberalism?
- How does your identity as a social worker affect your political belief system and moral values?

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Journaling Exercise



Describe a situation in which you made use of help from another person (e.g., a social worker, clergy, physician, nurse, teacher, mentor).

Describe the boundaries that you and the other person established, including examples that you felt were appropriate or inappropriate.

What made the boundaries appropriate or inappropriate?

How might your perception about the appropriateness of boundaries change depending on the professional role, culture, age, and religion of you and the other person?

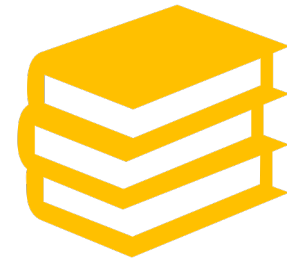
Conclusion



Key points



Questions



Additional Resources

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