

Professional Identity Formation

Caren M. Stalburg, MD MA

Clinical Assistant Professor

Obstetrics and Gynecology and Medical Education



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Intended Learning Outcomes

- Consider what it means to be a “professional”
- Understand the necessary components of professional identity formation
- Develop familiarity with reflective judgment stages
- Identify techniques to promote professional development

Take 10 seconds and write down 3 things you ‘expect’ of someone who is a professional

WHAT IS A “PROFESSIONAL”

A 'Professional':

- Expert knowledge and skills
- Ethical behavior, exhibits integrity
- Altruistic, benefits others
- Licensed and accountable
- Self-regulating—individually and as a group
 - » *how do we teach these attributes???*

- **From the ACGME:**

Professionalism: “Commitment to *carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles and sensitivity to a diverse patient population.*”

- **From the LCME:**

IS-16: “The development of *core professional attributes* (e.g., altruism, social accountability) needed to provide effective care in a multidimensionally diverse society.”

MS-31-A: “As part of their formal training, medical students should learn the importance of demonstrating the attributes of a professional and understand the *balance of privileges and obligations that the public and the profession expect of a physician.*”

- **From the AACN:**

“Professionalism is defined as the consistent demonstration of core values evidenced by nurses working with other professionals to achieve optimal health and wellness outcomes in patients, families, and communities by *wisely applying principles of altruism, excellence, caring, ethics, respect, communication, and accountability* (Interprofessional Professionalism Measurement Group, 2008)”

From “they” to “we”

- Knowledge/expertise (cognitive development)
- Psychosocial development
- Moral development
 - Reflective judgment as a skill (King and Kitchener)
 - Proto-professionalism as a state (Hilton and Slotnick)

Reflective Judgment

- How can individuals answer “ill-structured” problems?
 - The uncertainty of ‘knowing’
- Depends on how one views knowledge.....
- Depends on one’s understandings of mitigating factors and how those are judged/weighed in coming to an answer or conclusion

Stages of Reflective Judgment

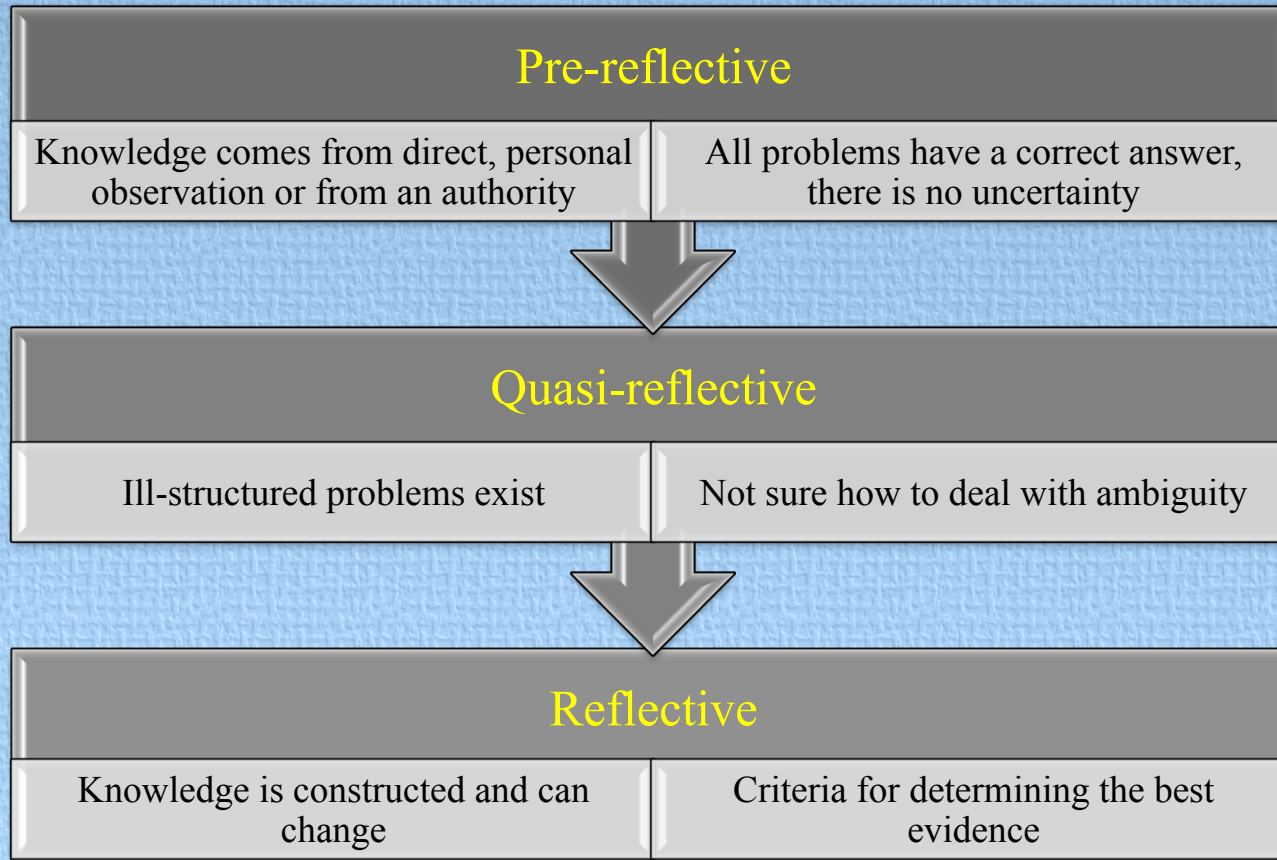
- Pre-reflective (Stages 1, 2, 3)
 - 1: Knowledge is concrete/absolute, no justification needed
 - “I know what I see”
 - 2: Knowledge is certain and held by an authority
 - “If it is on the news, it must be true”
 - 3: Knowledge is absolutely certain or only temporarily uncertain. If uncertain, it is just a belief until you can get the knowledge
 - “Just guessing until someone proves it with evidence”

Stages of Reflective Judgment

- Quasi-Reflective Thinking (Stages 4 and 5)
 - 4: Knowledge is uncertain and knowledge claims are idiosyncratic to the individual due to ambiguous circumstances. Choose evidence based on belief.
 - 5: Knowledge is contextual and subjective
 - “People think differently and so they attack the problem differently. Other theories could be as true as my own, but based on different evidence”

Stages of Reflective Judgment

- Reflective Thinking (Stages 6 and 7)
 - 6: Knowledge is constructed by individual conclusions based on a variety of sources. Criteria for weighing the evidence exists
 - 7: Knowledge is the outcome of a process of reasonable inquiry in which solutions to ill-structured problems are constructed. Based on evidence as it currently exists, and can be re-evaluated as new evidence/perspectives arise



Supporting proto-professionals

- Professionalism is an acquired state
- Encourage reflection on ill-structured problems
- Provide role-models for dealing with uncertainty, ambiguity, and complex teams
- Foster the correct balance of attainment and attrition of traits such as idealism/cynicism or naivete/wisdom

Professional Identity

- Complex state involving beliefs about knowledge, it's justifications and applications
- Depends on role-modeling and expectations
- Evolves over time and can be influenced

Adult Learning Summarized

- Individuals want to learn when activities are relevant, have meaning, and provide benefit
- Many theories regarding how individuals learn
 - External training, co-creation, individual action, social interaction, identity formation
- Knowledge of theoretical frameworks can improve your teaching strategies