The power of stories
Insights from a Schwartz Round facilitator

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Everything is held together with stories. That is all that is holding us together, stories and compassion.

Barry López
Need for narrative?

“We keep reducing the **mysterious** to the mundane, **complexity** to a quick fix, the **unsolvable** to a single solution. We stay partially blind and unable to gather up the courage, energy and vision we know we now need to have to respond creatively at a time of huge challenge and **uncertainty** in individual and organisational life.”

Barbara Wren
The significant problems we face today cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.

-Albert Einstein
Aim

Process:
- What are Schwartz Rounds?
- Why Schwartz Rounds?
- Rounds in the UK

Impact:
- Insights - learning & reflections
  1. Personal
  2. Interpersonal
  3. Organisational
What are Schwartz Rounds?

Ken Schwartz
non-profit charity
nurturing patient-caregiver relationship
strengthen human connection
safe and confidential space
share stories about impact of work
Why Schwartz Rounds?

demands and pressure in health care
productivity, efficiency ? cost
dehumanisation

Need for:
  awareness and understanding
  connection
  community
  cultural change
Schwartz Rounds in the UK

King’s Fund > POCF
2 pilot sites 2009
now 150 UK sites

WUTH:
July 2015
14 rounds to date, 886 attendees
70% provided feedback
86% rated excellent/exceptional
Schwartz team

Clinical lead
Facilitators
Administrator
Data analyst
Insights - learning & reflections

1. Personal
2. Interpersonal
3. Organisational
1. Personal

- curious
- courageous
- give voice
- bear witness, be present
- be human, be seen
- process emotions
- create meaning

Here is my secret.
It is very simple:
It is only with the heart that one can see rightly;
what is essential is invisible to the eye.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince
2. Interpersonal

listen, hold space
let go, drop the mask
connect through vulnerability
attune (shared experiences, values)
trust > strengthen relationships
reflection
  increased awareness and understanding
develop empathy and compassion
3. Organisational

prioritise staff wellbeing
create space and time
cultivate care and concern
new perspective
in the same boat
shared humanity
common good
community
Qualities of a therapeutic environment, Haigh 2004

1. Belonging
2. Openness
3. Safety
4. Living and learning
5. Empowerment
Conclusion

“The stories will hold us when nothing else can. The memory of those hours, when we could hear a tale that had a beginning, a middle and an end. That had a form that could sustain us. Ever since we were little the stories have kept the darkness at bay. That and each other will get us through.”

Barbara Wren
Questions
References

https://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/our-work/schwartz-rounds/
http://www.theschwartzcenter.org/supporting-caregivers/schwartz-center-rounds/


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