

How Child and Youth Care Students Understand and Communicate to Others the Meaning of Relational-Centered CYC Practice: A Qualitative Course-Based Inquiry



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RESEARCH QUESTION

"What are CYC students' understanding of relational- centred CYC practice, and how do they articulate the uniqueness of CYC practice to others outside the field?"

RESEARCH PARADIGM

This course- based research project operated within an interpretivist paradigm.

SAMPLING

STRATEGY

A non - probability, convenience sampling strategy was used to recruit participants.

DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY

- ❖ Four questions were asked (see “Word Cloud Activity” section) using three different data collection strategies:
 - Two hour- long focus groups were organized with a total of eight participants engaging in the study. Word cloud and art- based activities were facilitated to promote group discussion
 - Four individual interviews were conducted over Zoom
 - Thirty- five participants responded to our online survey

DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six - step method of thematic analysis was used to analyze our data.

DISCUSSION

CYC practice is characterized by a person - centred approach, prioritizing meaningful relationships to support growth and development. This relational focus extends to different personal and professional life spaces, allowing for versatility. A strengths - based mindset reinforces a holistic perspective, fostering mentorship, empathetic listening, and mindful trauma - informed practices. Key elements of relational - centred CYC practice include advocacy, inclusivity, open communication, and vulnerability.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS RESULTS

- ❖ **Intra - & Interconnection:** *"I find that CYC practitioners, if they use relational practice, could be seen as vulnerability artists. They're able to be vulnerable with themselves and others and they see that trait as an art."*
- ❖ **Purposeful Use of Language:** *"Language has so much power. People carry the words and labels with them. That can last a lifetime —positive or negative."*
- ❖ **Professional Advocacy, Identity & Presence:** *"...we work from the human up because it's very intentional...and we meet them where they're at"*
- ❖ **Cultivating a Thoughtful Mindset & Approach:** *"CYC practice emphasizes relationship building, individualized care in a holistic manner focused on empowerment and participation from a trauma informed care perspective while being reflective."*

WORD CLOUD ACTIVITY

Our research team encouraged our focus group participants to respond to each of the four question prompts with words, terms or phrases that came to mind that pertained to our topic.

