

THE 1ST SELF-OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

This Protocol seeks to offer an instrument of self-observation and monitoring for the professional. It is useful for keeping one's emotions under control, understanding them in order to reflect, to learn from one's errors as well as from one's unexpected successes, to foster awareness of possible conditioning by past experiences. It is to be used whenever events occur which the professional considers significant or in any case on a weekly basis.

A Professional is asked to accurately describe both the story of the event and the analysis. This "exercise" of accurate writing can bode well for the correct use of the instrument and the achievement of objectives:

- To reflect on the operational objectives and the action taken,
- To acquire knowledge about their vision of specific people with whom they have an active educational relationship (How do I see this person? What do I actually think about his/her skills, limitations, resources, feelings and emotions? Am I ready to accept the possibility of surprise - and then to change my vision - or am I too conditioned by the diagnosis?)
- To reflect on the quality of the educational relationship.

Sometimes he/she will start processing the protocol with a clear idea, with a certain view of what happened and, in the course of writing, this vision may change. As already mentioned the writing process encourages reflection. Therefore, a professional is asked to check the consistency rather than report, thus enhancing the process of thought: first, I was convinced of ... now I think...

Register used by the professional _____

Date _____

1. What happened?

Please describe in narrative form the event you consider particularly meaningful and interesting to analyse. Kindly describe the bare facts, reporting the actions of the various protagonists involved, including the professional as well, taking care to avoid every form of interpretation and personal judgment.

2. What did I feel? What do I feel?

Please describe the emotions aroused by the facts above (seeking to distinguish between the emotions felt at the time of the event and those it continues to arouse).

Please try to visualize and describe the eventual images the event provoked.

[Please note that this distinction is very important when reflecting on their actions.

The emotions you feel when a major event happens inevitably affect the means of intervention that is implemented. For example, if I were afraid that the person could get hurt, it is likely that my speech was focused on trying to avoid this possibility and perhaps I lost sight of other possibilities for intervention. If I felt irritated because the person had not complied with an established rule, I may have lost sight of the possibility of seeking - together with the same person - the reason for this

behaviour, and so I did not considered the possibility or opportunity to make an exception, etc].

3. Which experiential reference points come to mind?

Does the event recall previous experiences? In what context? What emotions did it arouse then? Are there similarities? [The experiences that the event evokes can be both professional and personal. If professional, they may include contexts and types of users completely different from today. Striving to make mental associations with different experiential situations is particularly useful as it allows you to get out of the mental cage determined by the daily routine of the service and to reflect on the inevitable stereotypes that it causes. Please describe briefly the emotions caused by a past experience and make a correlation with the emotion of the current event].

4. How do I evaluate this?

At this point, please make an evaluation of the event, of the motives that caused it, of the manner of action/reaction carried out by the professional and by the others involved. Please do not limit yourself to "explaining" the event with the characteristics of the person, for example with levels of severity. You need to make a more extensive evaluation, including:

- If the event is a person's unusual behaviour: the reasons that may have caused it; personal reasons (his/her emotions, his/her feelings) or related to the context of the service (change of a program, the arrival of a new person)*
- If it concerns a positive but unexpected result obtained by that person: ask yourself if this can be a demonstration of a previously undiscovered competence and why you had yet to discover it.*

With regard to your intervention, try to understand if it was a matter of routine or if it was a new way of expressing your own manner of confronting reality. Try now to decipher in the same way the intervention of your colleagues.

5. What determines my evaluation?

The professional is asked to reflect on the theoretical reference points and the fundamental values considered to be guiding his or her judgment and to try to describe them. This is certainly the most complex part of the register and risks being neglected and resolved using standard responses or slogans (e.g. "the

centrality of the person” as a value). Because the professional is being asked to make some reflections, this is to be elaborated: e.g. if he or she chooses C. Rogers as their theoretical reference regarding the “centrality of the person”, one then asks the professional to try and explain what this means, or how it might apply to the situation.

6. What have I learnt?

Please try to identify the lesson learnt from the event and from the analysis carried out.