

Topic Explorer for: *'Stories of Psychological Practice from Neonatal Care'*

Exploring New Perspectives and New Ideas

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We have written these Topic Explorers to aid deeper reflection, exploration and learning about some of the themes in the book *'Stories of Psychological Practice from Neonatal Care'*. This Topic Explorer should be read alongside the "Read-Along Guide", another of the extra resources accompanying the book. The read-along guide provides some introductory prompts to begin exploring your responses to the stories in the book, and also shares some ideas for practical activities that can support your reflective practice as an individual or as part of a group. This Topic Explorer focuses on themes related to exploring new perspectives, ideas, and points of view. This includes invitations to view your work from different standpoints, and through different practices.

Exploring your work from different perspectives

One of the most valuable contributions of psychological practice is to broaden perspectives on a topic. This is not about finding the 'correct' perspective, but rather finding flexibility so that we can try different ideas on for size and choose the one that works best for us.

In *'Stories of Psychological Practice from Neonatal Care'* there are many shifts in perspective, particularly illustrated in chapters 8, 11, 13, 28, 35 and 36. Consider what new insights can we gain by:

1. Focusing on the relationship between people, rather than focusing on separate individuals?
2. Seeing a neonatal admission as part of a broader path that includes pregnancy (and before), and discharge (and beyond).
3. Exploring our experience of work together as a group (as in a group debrief or a group reflective space), rather than separately as individuals?
4. Shifting from a focus on reactively supporting individuals in need, to a focus on protectively nurturing supportive systems?



Exploring new ideas and practices

'Stories of Psychological Practice from Neonatal Care' presents lots of opportunities to do things differently. Not just for psychological professionals but for the whole neonatal community. Chapters 5, 10, 14, 19, 23 and 47 in particular offer ideas that might challenge the status quo. The following questions invite you to think about how you might approach your work differently. Or perhaps how you might think differently about what you are already doing.

1. Imagine a spectrum, with 'Doing' at one end (practical support, offering solutions, taking action) and 'Being' at the other end (listening, understanding, connecting).
 - a. Where, on this spectrum, are you focused in your work?
 - b. Are there times in your work when you are in a different place on this spectrum?
 - c. What would it be like if you took a different place on this spectrum in your work?
2. How can we listen to those whose voice might be harder to hear, or to make sense of (e.g. the voices of babies)?
3. Consider the idea that "every interaction is an intervention." What are your thoughts on this? What opportunities open up for your work through this idea?
4. Through these stories, what new opportunities have you encountered to make a positive impact in your work?

