

Abstract

Exploring self-care has become a discourse which has skyrocketed as a result of Covid-19 pandemic. Although self-care is gradually becoming an ethical imperative that should be available to all social workers in the performance of their profession, in the Czech Republic self-care has not yet been reflected in the Code of Ethics for Social Work. The presented work explores the issue of insufficient preparation of social workers for self-care.

In the theoretical part, I define the key terms, self-care plan, social worker and crisis situation. In this part I also deal with managing crisis situations, maladaptive coping and the consequences of providing social services to clients. Subsequently, I focus on the impact of crisis situations on the mental and physical health of social workers. At the end of the theoretical part, I present a manual for creating a self-care plan and describe the resources and techniques that can be the key to a social worker's greater resilience. In the conclusion of the theoretical part, I describe the studies of self-care that have been conducted to date. The aim of the thesis is to answer the basic research question: What is the lived experience of social workers in applying a self-care plan when exposed to life events that can result in an acute personal crisis? To answer the research question, I chose the interpretive phenomenological analysis method, which allowed me in-depth analysis of the experience of the participants with the application of the self-care plan. The research was carried out through semi-structured interviews.

All respondents considered the self-care plan to be a guide that had helped them become aware of the activities needed for their mental well-being. For all respondents, doing something for yourself and being happy with yourself was the key. The interviews showed that it was only thanks to the creation of a self-care plan that the respondents started to take care of their current well-being consciously. Respondents perceived that without a conscious reflection of their experience, they would have been deprived of some factors that undoubtedly helped to increase their resilience in life. All respondents stated that without a self-care plan they would have harmed not only themselves, but also people around them and a longer period. The price they would have paid for taking care of themselves through a care plan would have been very high. In the Czech Republic, research on self-care plans has not yet been carried out and my diploma thesis should open the door to research in this field.