

'In our own words: writing about practice'



Karen Gold, MSW, PhD, RSW
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'From A to C'

Rita Wilder Craig, *Canadian Woman Studies*, 2007

I disposed of almost everyone
From A to C the other day
I was short of filing space
So I decided to go through
My chemo files
I threw away the files
Of all the people
I'd sent to palliative care units
Those that the computer told me
Had died in my own hospital
And those who just seemed to
Disappear

But when I got to C
I lost my stomach
for the whole thing
I stopped
And never returned to this task
Even when I moved to another job

Purpose of today's session...

1. Introduce narrative & reflective writing in practice
2. Share examples of writing
3. Brief writing exercise



What do we write about?

- Critical incidents & rites of passage
- Ethical dilemmas
- Everyday practice
- The margins (e.g. uncertainty; messiness)
- Connection between professional & personal
- Professional identity/role
- Practice issues with social/policy implications

Why do we write?

- To reflect (solo and shared)
- To bear witness
- To cultivate empathy, listening skills, mindfulness
- To consolidate professional identity
- To build resiliency & promote self care
 'afloat in a sea of the day's distress'
- To communicate and advocate
 'storytelling with a purpose'



'A Second Chance'

"The hospital became their home, and for days they slept in the waiting room, keeping a vigil at Sarah's bedside..."

Illana Perlman, *Collaborative Caring: Stories and Reflections on Teamwork in Health Care*, 2014.



'Learning Curve Journal'

Orientation

They introduce you to the water
by throwing you
in the deep end

Welcome to the life
Welcome to the work

A near-death experience
soon to be followed
by another
& another
& another...


