

**Petr Fabián<sup>1</sup>**

ORCID: 0000-0001-5144-9754

Department of Social Work, College of Polytechnics Jihlava, Czech Republic

*The use of reflecting teams and principles  
of reteaming in the teaching of social work –  
a tool for changing the paradigm  
in the performance of social work*

*Abstract*

The work aims to point out the possibility of using reflecting teams and the principles of reteaming in the professional training of social workers. It may also trigger a professional debate on the topics of the preparation of experts for practice and tools for continuous education. Another important element is to provide a practical tool that will allow further professionalisation of social work within the decommodification of services.

The theoretical background corresponds to situations, in which social work focused primarily on the provision of services and ceased to be a tool for developing the personality of clients, thereby changing the quality of their lives.

The methods used aim to show the history and principles of the reflecting teams in practice. The next part focuses on the reteaming method as a model of the approach between the helper and the receiver. Furthermore, the description of the use of these techniques in the professional training of social workers is discussed. In the conclu-

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<sup>1</sup> **Corresponding author:** Petr Fabián, Department of Social Work, College of Polytechnics Jihlava, Tolstého 16, 58601, Jihlava, Czech Republic; email: petr.fabian@vspj.cz.

sion, the results of the structured questioning of the graduates of the subjects, which utilise these methods, are summarised.

The change aims to restore the creativity of social work and the ability to help people to fulfil their lives.

Social work is based on the communication and retrospection skills of one's personal attitudes and work practices. We also present a tool to change the attitudes of social workers from the redistribution of services to the development of society as such.

**Keywords:** skills, paradigms, new teaching methods, reteaming

## *Introduction*

In the teaching and professional training of social workers, we often encounter the issue of motivating students to study the theories and methods of social work, or to understand their importance and meaning.

Over the past decades, social work has become more of a tool to redistribute help and services. Attention was already drawn to these risks by van der Laan (1998). This topic was explored further by Ziółkowski, Drozdowski, and Baranowski (2022) as a model of commodification of services. The results of these processes are described by Škoviera (2022)<sup>2</sup> in the framework of child protection. He discusses the situation of providing child protection instead of family education. Education is a two-way process, which helps to find the fulfilment (meaning) of life and affects both the surrogate parents and the children. On the other hand, commodified care provides primarily material essentials and life in a family environment, which can only be a service within this change.

We know similar processes from practice at all levels of social services and social assistance. As van der Laan states, during this process, the clients “lose confidence in their own initiative and believe that their fate is determined by institutions” (van der Laan, 1998, p. 14). Hubíková, Havlíková, and Trbola (2021) describe this issue in a similar way – as a model of the deprofessionalisation of social work and its shift into a redistributor of services and financial benefits.

In solving these challenges, after having discussed it with colleagues, we tried a total change of approach in teaching this subject as such. The goal of searching for change was to teach future social workers to work with the client's entire life (sometimes generational) story. We also want to bring back creativity and a certain passion for social work through decommodification (Ziółkowski et al., 2022). An important factor for the realisation of change in teaching was the completion of solution-oriented therapy training and supervision training, which are carried out with a similar focus in mind.

The above-mentioned training focuses, among other things, on using the reflecting team technique and the principles of reteaming as supporting tools for changing the

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<sup>2</sup> The lecture entitled “Foster care in the context of trends and changes in the concept of parenthood” was presented at the conference “Family Transformations XI”. To appear in print in *Social Pathology and Prevention*.

approach to both students and teaching as such.

The first part describes these techniques, their origin, and the authorial intent of their use in practice. The second part mentions the specific use of these methods in the teaching process. It includes the aforementioned change in the approach to teaching as such, and to students, considering them as partners, who actively co-shape the change of the entire learning process. This shift can be, in a certain sense, seen as a Copernican revolution, with the teacher becoming an expert in the teaching process and leaving the freedom of the choice of the path to the goal to the student. The subject matter is created from the bottom up and not from the lectern. In parallel, we enable the professional training of new social workers who are willing and able to think in the categories of a therapeutic paradigm rather than a counselling one (Fabián, 2021). The final part of the contribution deals with the personal views of the students on the implemented changes. The data collection was carried out through a structured interview with students after the final exam. This was a form of evaluation that focused on their emotional and informational experience, as well as the strengths of these changes, and the space for future development.

### *Reflecting teams*

Reflecting teams are a technique, or perhaps a method of work, popular in postmodern or systemic approaches to therapy or supervision. Its development is attributed to the Norwegian therapist Tom Andersen (Zatloukal & Vitek, 2013). Others associate this process with the Milan Approach (narativ.cz) but the evolution and practical use of this technique is tied to the aforementioned Andersen who aimed at involving a wider range of perspectives in therapy. The therapy was conducted in spaces that are now commonly used for interrogations (rooms with a one-way mirror), with a team of experts, who were supposed to contribute to the development of therapy with their insights and observations.

Andersen followed the postmodern idea and social constructivism in his work. It is an effort to understand the interactions and ways of thinking that take place in the therapies. Andersen expected that with this approach, he could get answers to the questions regarding the psychosomatic context and social impact of mental illnesses.

As professionals, we often talk about our clients. We tend to describe the pathology, even without the presence of the clients but this process gives us expertise (or sometimes overview) on the issue and creates a sense of distance, however, it can reinforce the problem (De Shazer in Zatloukal & Vitek, 2013, p. 3)

Postmodern approaches are collaborative, and reflecting teams present a tool thanks to which otherwise “hidden” voices can be heard in the help-seeking process. It often shows the experience of the assistants and their emotions but also the concerns about changes, experiences, and emotional states of the clients.

Working with a reflecting team is also used as a practical teaching tool in psychotherapy training. However, the reflective process should not be (and is not) understood only as a technique or a simple exercise. The philosophical roots of this work method, respectively, what Andersen calls a philosophical stance, should not be

omitted. “For Tom Andersen, a reflective approach was a way of life, a way of being with others, the belief that one lives in relationships, in conversations, in interactions, and is, therefore, an active participant in all events, not just an observer” (narrative.cz), so the therapist, just like a member of the reflecting team, is not separated from the clients and their situation. The therapist thus becomes a participant (as opposed to an observer) by sharing a common process with the client.

### **Advantages of using reflecting teams**

Zatloukal and Vitek (2013, p. 3) discuss the technique and work in a reflecting team, and emphasise its possible benefits:

- emphasising local instead of universal knowledge
- including multiple perspectives (voices) in the conversation
- respecting different points of view without trying to find the “correct” one and rejecting others (not using either/or approach)
- emphasis on co-creation in the dialogue with clients and colleagues
- devoting the effort to disrupting hierarchical relationships and taking on a more partner-like relationship with the clients.

According to Zatloukal and Vitek (2013) it is a solution-focused approach. The clients, who come looking for help, play the main role, and they mainly gain control over their situation. No directive approach is applied here. In parallel, the clients gain control over their lives and stop being dependent on the service. They describe the general characteristics as:

1. The basis for mastering the technique successfully is the skill to reflect – the process that takes place between the therapist and the client, personal emotions, the therapist’s ability to stick to the client’s instructions (see below), and safety. This skill also includes the ability to ask questions and formulate them. Another important precondition is the fact that the clients are experts in their lives.
2. Contract negotiation – what brought the clients to therapy and what are their needs? There is an emphasis on their motivation, which is tracked with questions such as: “What would you like to take away from today’s consultation so that you find the time meaningful to you?” (joint project), “What will life look like when the problem disappears?”, “What has already been achieved?”, “What helped the process?”.
3. In the therapeutic process, the reflecting team sits as if remote from the client-therapist interaction, still, they are in the same room and watch the consultation.
4. For the client (in our case, the student), the reflecting team may present several things in the process:
  - possibility of consultation with several experts
  - loss of security
  - gaining a broader perspective on their lives
  - understanding the process of change.
5. Team reflection. During the consultation, the roles can alternate and the therapist can use the reflecting team for discussion, especially on the topic of how the

reflecting team perceives the whole matter. Following the convention and principles of practice, team members focus on:

- What goes well (appreciation) – highlighting exceptions, resources or progress, with reference to what the client reported in his narrative.
  - Ideas (alternatives) – they can refer to new perspectives, reframing or proposals for an experiment.
6. Continuation of the consultation – “What was inspiring for you?”, “Is there something you want to return to?”, “What were your thoughts?”.
  7. Experiment (or better – feedback) – to observe with the clients the elements that should remain unchanged (what works), to observe where the problem does not occur (exceptions), or to pretend improvement (preferred future).
  8. Reflection of the meeting – what the course of the meeting was, and what was important for the clients and for those reflecting? This part is also crucial for the use of this technique in teaching (Fook, 2002).

A discussion in a reflecting team must resolve according to the following rules (Andersen in Zatloukal & Vitek, 2003). Team members only talk to each other and they do not bring clients into their conversation. The clients thus gain a reflection on their story. The members lead a conversation; it is a dialogue, not a series of monologues. The consultation focuses on here and now, the members do not refer to what was said during earlier consultations, or to assumptions that may be an accompanying phenomenon of our work and our conception of the clients' lives. The reflection should be formulated in such a way that the clients can be inspired by it but can also refuse it. Different options should be created intentionally so that the clients may choose or reject them – to take control over their lives. The use of metaphors is allowed. The technique allows for unusualness, not to be bound by conventions. The safety of the clients is handled by the therapist and the team members can be more daring. Time economy is also an important factor in the reflection of the team as it should not be longer than 5 to 10 minutes. Where Zatloukal and Vitek (2013) recommend looking at the appreciation of the team and its focus on change.

Reflecting teams represent a safe environment for learning new skills (Zatloukal & Vitek, 2013). In this part, we introduced the reflecting team technique. Another philosophical basis is the technique of reteaming. If we were to describe these two techniques as a computer, then the reflecting team is the hardware, and the reteaming is the software.

## *Reteaming*

Reteaming is a model of work in coaching and therapeutic process, the author of which is Ben Furman (Zatloukal & Vitek, 2014). Furman noticed that many support conversations and group work are oriented towards problems that need to be addressed. He described this approach as a popular concept in therapeutic, supervisory or coaching practice. In the introduction to the book on reteaming, which was mediated for the Czech environment by Zatloukal and Vitek (2014), Furman describes his team

noticing that in practice, the search for a problem created problem cycles that stirred emotions such as anger, dissatisfaction, frustration, blame or sadness. However, a solution-oriented approach rather encourages the search for resources for a change towards a desirable (preferred) future. The process, which is focused on the preferred future, encourages the exploration of new ways and non-traditional solutions, and above all, works with the resources that the clients or teams already possess.

Reteaming is, therefore, a coaching technique, which we utilised in teaching as a tool for a specific process of working with the clients – in this instance a casuistry. The goal was to achieve a certain basic mastery in navigating the life of the clients differently and to leave the well-worn paths of the traditional way of teaching and education, which are (in our opinion) based on controlled conflict. The social worker learns to see the complexity of the client's situation within her or his life story, does not only work with symptoms but helps to discover tools to change the causes. As Zatloukal and Vítek state in their publication, “coaching is the art of facilitating the performance, learning, and development of others” (2014).

Methods other than coaching, but often used in the practice of social work include the following:

- **Counselling** (consulting) – the counsellor is an expert on a certain issue and they are the bearer of clear answers and advice for solving problems. We are sometimes unable to avoid these approaches but we must be aware of when and for what purpose we use them.
- **Mentoring** – this usually involves experts accompanying less experienced workers.
- **Management** – this is associated with authority and power. As described by Erikson, it is a parental role towards children.
- **Education and training** – the purpose of education is to transfer knowledge, and sometimes also skills. In the spirit of reteaming, coaching is working with already acquired skills and sources that are available.
- **Therapy** – approaches that work with therapeutic models exist within the theories and methods of social work. On the other hand, it is often a specific work focusing on the very existence of the clients, and within social work, they are rather sporadic therapeutic inputs or deeper analyses of the problems.

The process of working in the reteaming model has its basis in the process of learning and working with existing resources. This is an effort to increase the competence of the clients to have control over their life, giving them the sense of empowerment (Fook, 2002).

Reteaming focuses on the client's wish (what is attractive and achievable), resources (finding and using skills and knowledge that the clients already have in their cultivation and development), transformation (defining and planning incremental steps towards a desired future), and co-creation (cooperation). In short, this is a model of SMART goals that we know from case management in social work. However, it should be noted that we work purposefully on the partnership level here. We want the clients to be in control of their life, and the workers to serve just as guides, which means it is a completely different philosophy of working with the client.

For a closer understanding of the reteaming philosophy, the Dalet<sup>3</sup> team focuses on the following principles: developing solutions, not problems; efficiency; cooperation/co-creation; process expertise; inevitability of changes, and individual approach (Zatloukal & Vitek, 2014, p. 22).

**Table 1.** Developing solutions, not problems

<b>Clients' situation in time</b>	<b>Focused problems</b>	<b>Focused solutions</b>
past	past failures	past achievements
present	present shortcomings	present resources
future	future limitations	future possibilities

Source: Zatloukal & Vitek, 2014, p. 22, own adjustments

From the beginning, we talk with the clients about their goals (dreams) and not their problems. Then are we able to aim at methods that work, what worked in the past, and how can these tools be used to develop clients' lives. As Zatloukal and Vitek (2014, p. 51) point out, the solution is not interested in where the problem arose.

The change in the approach is quite apparent in the table. Historically, we are taught to talk about things that do not work and describe the problems and conditions which prevent us from living. Reteaming focuses on what the lives of the clients should ideally look like, and then we discuss skills (resources), and past and present good experiences (while questioning the exceptions). We begin with the assumption that, as opposed to a therapist or a social worker, the clients are experts on their lives.

### Efficiency

Efficiency in reteaming is meant as an idea that, from the very beginning, we work towards the resolution of the cooperation. A solution-oriented approach is also called "short" (Zatloukal & Vitek, 2014, p. 23). It is about doing the work without delays, making the clients aware of their goals and skills, and handing over the responsibility for the implementation of necessary changes.

### Cooperation/co-creation

According to Zatloukal and Vitek (2013), cooperation based on the client's point of view on the whole matter is important for the co-creation of solutions. The self-respect of the clients and their respect for life experiences is also essential. The art of agreement does not mean agreeing to everything. According to the above-mentioned authors, any resistance is a signal to change our approach or point of view.

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<sup>3</sup> Dalet is a Czech company which focuses on training in psychotherapy and supervision.

## **Process expertise**

We are historically used to authoritarian approaches. Parents, teachers, educators, and other authorities always know better than us what we should do, what we should learn, and how we should behave, etc. Process expertise deals with a change in approach. The clients themselves are the experts on their own lives and we are only experts on the process of change. Our style of conversation should only help the clients to define their goals, describe their tools of work, and set partial and achievable goals. Here lies a significant similarity with SMART goals, with the key difference being that the clients set the goals, tools, and timeframes themselves.

The expertise of the social worker is primarily at the level of the client's life story and the ability to see and believe in the potential for change.

## **The inevitability of change**

Any change with the clients is at the centre of our interest. If the problem diminished or was limited, it is an exception with a reason and we are interested in it. The awareness of changes is closely related to the process expertise, as well as to the ability to slow down major changes for the safety of the clients.

## **Individual approach**

The individual approach process is based on respect for individuality. Each client has their own ideas regarding the tools and the solutions that they want to utilise. There is a certain amount of fascinating discovery in this process as we are drawn into the clients' world. Unlike consulting, where we have a certain checklist of individual steps, here we leave it up to the clients to make their individual choices.

## **Reteaming process map**

Connecting to clients with "small talk". Getting to know the clients, talking about their interests, hobbies, and abilities. At the same time, there is a space for the client's questions. During the process of connecting, we get information about who we work with, not about their problems. This is important because past achievements, skills, etc. are the tools for change (see: Table 1). At the same time, we create a feeling of safety, while we "automatically" think about what to offer for the development of the client. The services are only an accompanying tool for solving an acute threat, not a tool for changing the quality of life.

## **Questions about the dreams**

These questions can be directed to the topic of what should happen during the consultation to make the client satisfied, or even to long-term plans, e.g., what will life look like should the problem be solved?



The key is the worker's ability to distinguish between what is a request for change from others, and what the clients want to do themselves (they are in control of their lives). There are also questions regarding how will the clients' emotions, thoughts, and behaviour change, and how their surroundings will recognise the change. With this, the dream becomes comprehensible and tangible.

## **Goal**

A goal is something very specific in reteaming. Whereas a dream is very broad and provides many different objectives to choose from, specific goals are, in a certain sense, quests. The goal must begin and end with the client, it is dependent on their actions. For instance, the goal "I will be happy when my children are happy" is a task for the children and not the client.

An obtainable goal must fulfil the following characteristics and it must be: specific; formulated positively as something desirable; achievable (the client believes that they can achieve it); and realistic (the clients have the tools necessary for the implementation, or they can acquire them).

Only the essential points of the reteaming process were presented here. The aim of these chapters was primarily to introduce the tools we use in teaching, where we try to convey not only information but also a certain skill that is methodologically anchored in reflecting teams and reteaming.

## *The change of view*

In the following part, we discuss the ways of adopting methods and theories from social work into teaching as well as possible changes of the way we teach social work.

## *Information and us*

Today's world gives us unprecedented possibilities. Anyone with a phone and Internet connection has access to the newest information – if they know how to search for them. The students may also have more up-to-date information than their teachers.

People and information are connected in a new way, which also brings new needs. The main ones can be described as the skill of finding relevant data and their critical analysis, the courage to leave the comfort zone of one's beliefs and willingness to change our opinions and views.

These new possibilities deny the traditional form of teaching and even discredit it in a way by making it look absurd. How do you want to convey information when the students have everything in their pockets (on their mobile phones) to a greater extent than the teachers have in their heads (including mistakes and inaccuracies)?

## *Experience and us*

As students, we were taught that when we come to practice, we should not be surprised, as theory and practice are two different quantities. Then, what is the point of learning anything that will not help us in practical situations, where we will need to react to different stimuli?

Experience comes from the fact that I have (or sometimes do not have) enough information and I try to implement solutions and use them in a safe environment. Subsequently, I can accept the importance of the information and possibly expand it further according to experience.

Thus we can say the following: INFORMATION + EXPERIENCE = SKILL. From the pieces of information, combined with experience, a skill is developed. Skills are a completely different category. They show that I know how to work with certain topics, I have experienced the patterns, and I know the effects on reality. Ideally, I have already tried several formulas and I can practically alternate and modify them according to the current situation.

## *Experience and education in social work*

### **Change of teaching methods**

The change in the teaching principles is based on the students' experiences and their views on the matter. Thus, the student's views on the matter are important and supporting elements in the whole process, as opposed to the lessons themselves. We prefer personal experience to generally accepted information or beliefs.

The teacher brings creativity, the ability to think critically and a departure from the old patterns of redistribution of services, as the goal of social work. To change the teaching method, we utilised the technique of reflecting teams (Zatloukal & Vítek, 2013), which was implemented in a case study related to the "Theory and methods of social work" and "Socio-legal protection of children" subjects. The case studies do not change during the semester – there is one, or two at most.

### **Reflecting teams and reteaming in teaching**

In the previous chapters, we introduced both reflecting teams and the principles of reteaming. In teaching, these two models were combined into one, creating a model for the development of students and their competencies within the framework of teaching the theories and methods of social work. A similar procedure that is used in training at Dalet is called reteaming nests. The work in lectures is, therefore, organised in small teams. The basis of the reflecting teams is described within the systemic approach during the therapeutic process.

The entire process is preceded by familiarisation with the relevant theory, followed by work in a reflecting team. The work with the theory itself is always focused on the client's entire life story, abandoning the instrumentalisation of social work (Fook, 2016).

Two people carry on a conversation on a given topic (a view of the case study concerning the discussed theory) and the other two remain silent and take notes. The conversation time is limited. One person describes her or his view of the given problem and the other actively listens and asks questions that should not start with “why”. Differently posed questions encourage thinking and creativity while offering the creation of a change process.

In the end, they receive feedback from the observers regarding their thoughts throughout the conversation, its course, and the way the questions were phrased (e.g., supportive, closed, open, problem-oriented, solution-oriented, etc.) Another point is defining what is the supporting theme for the questioner and the responder (Fook, 2002).

In the process of active teaching, we use one or (at most) two comprehensive case studies throughout the whole semester. For the “Theory and methods of social work” subject we used one, and or the “Socio-legal protection of children” subject, we used two less extensive case studies.

## **The first lecture**

We consider it a very important lecture, as the teaching methodology is introduced (what reflecting teams, reteaming, and the “solution-focused” approach are) as well as some small talk facilitating connecting with others. The reflecting teams, which (if possible) do not change during the semester, are formed during the first lecture. This process of social interactions is based on the reflecting team technique, where one introduces themselves, somebody asks questions, and the remaining ones observe the process that takes place between the participants. It is essential to follow the process from the point of view of the quality of the questions, to ask about the skills and experience of the other, not to follow the problems, and to refrain from the “why” questions.

## **The following lectures**

The following lectures have an established script. In the beginning, the theory of the given issue is presented, followed by the work in reflecting teams. The recommended roles in the team are one person in the role of a client, another in the role of a social worker, and others as supervisors of the process. After the specified limit, the students return to the whole group and we share our experiences. By doing so, we mean grouping different solution proposals of solutions together and describing what was important for the proposals of individual teams. We also focus on feedback on the process that took place in the teams, including the emotional side of the participants.

In conclusion, we get several different ways to solve the problem, together with descriptions of various models of thinking about the given situation. At the very end, the results from all groups are combined. Questions regarding the feelings and emotions of the participants are also included.

Through this process, we get a plastic image of the discussed issue, while the supervision-like process takes place in parallel. In our opinion, the fundamental advantage is when the students are our partners in the process and they construct their way of working – creating thought and practical structures. Another advantage is the fact that the students are aware of their attitudes and approaches on which they receive feedback throughout the (rather supervisory than instructive) process.

### **A summary of benefits for teaching and social work**

In the cases of big theories such as critical or environmental theory, there was an interesting outcome. In the same case study, different groups chose different clients. Based on the case study, sometimes the primary client was the family, for some teams it was the mother or the father, for other teams it was the children. As all the answers are correct, this opened the discussion about how the participants think and what leads them to this choice, which is one of the most important elements of critical theory (Fook, 2002).

The students gained an interesting experience with role-oriented theories in how the social worker's approach changes when they are paternalistic, and how the dynamics of the conversation shift when they keep the philosophy of reteaming – adult-adult interaction. Since casuistry also works with family history (a description of the model of the original family), it was possible to pinpoint transgenerational transmissions, which also have their strengths (i.e., psychoanalytic theories).

All participants in the teaching process (i.e., the lecturer and students) undergo a change in their view of social work as such and shape their personal thought processes. The teachers should bear in mind that is crucial to maintain the basic line of thought – that social work is a creative activity bringing a changed quality of life to society, and not just an “ATM for services”.

### **The change of roles**

There is no student, patient, or client, there is only a person, who wants to deal with her or his current situation. The person, who needs the competence to change their way of life, to deal with the past and their acquired or inherited traumas, to find their truth of being (Heidegger, 1993). In other words, a change in the approach to oneself, and thus a change in the approach to life. There is also no doctor, teacher, or social worker. There are only experts on the process of change, who are ready to guide other people through it.

All participants in the process are active participants in the process of education, recovery, and social services. By the term active participants, we mean a state, where the people involved revise the process of change that is taking place. This process corresponds to the view of the critical theory of social work as presented by Jan Fook (2002). One of the most important elements of critical theory is an insight into one's personal approach to work performance, observing what is important for a social worker, and how one works with power.

## **From the point of view of the guide**

For the guides, the fundamental advantage of this technique lies in the contact with the way of thinking of the next generation, their priorities, goals, and views on social work in the context of the times they live in.

Each generation has its way of thinking, which frames and describes social reality. Our academic social work can, in the process of capitalisation, easily get into the practical and institutionalised isolation of social work (Bergmann & Luckmann, 1999, p. 56) This phenomenon has already affected us in the system of social work standards and the monitoring of their fulfilment. Standards were supposed to stimulate development, however, with a system of inspections, they become more of a tool of uncertainty.

The principles of liberalism and democracy have become more ingrained in new generations of students, but so have a sense of responsibility or sensitivity to the abuse of services. Most of them enter the university with the concept of social work as a tool to reduce poverty, primarily as a means of caring for vulnerable groups with a service delivery model (commodification of social work). For all participants in this process, the search for creativity, working with the client's life story and finding ways to develop their competencies is a relief.

## **From the point of view of students**

The examination also had its specifics. The students chose one of the theories, which they were supposed to briefly present. This was followed by a very brief version of another case study, on which they were supposed to demonstrate the way of working and thinking in the spirit of this case study.

Subsequently, they should evaluate themselves, thus applying the learned skill of perceiving the process and their strengths. In the end, they were asked about the benefits of the teaching method, what should be further improved, and eventually, avoided.

The proposed change brings new challenges for students. During the semester, they are encouraged to self-study topics aimed at the problematics of theories to be discussed in the following lecture. This change mainly concerns students of the combined form of studies (remote learning and blocks of lectures on weekends), as there is less time for the students to get acquainted with the overall idea of the theories during the semester.

Another interesting factor is the feedback from the students:

*At the beginning, the case study was completely clear to me, who was the culprit and what needed to be done. Now, I rather perceive what the possible views on the whole situation are, and that some things may seem different, and how important it is to follow our views as well. I am also aware of the number of possible solutions and the influence of the internal motivation of the participants on the process of change.*

It is important for other students to engage in interaction, to verbalise and communicate their views, and be able to describe them, and possibly, even defend

them. They describe it as: *There is nowhere to hide, and suddenly, I find that the unspoken thoughts are something different from the verbalised.. It develops the ability to communicate, and we also get to know each other more as colleagues.*

The students of the combined form said that: *We have to come to the lectures already prepared, having read the chapters so that we better understand the use of the theory in practice.*

A fundamental view also emerged: *Social work is not just services, it is thinking in the context of the client's life so that they can manage themselves in the future without social benefits.*

We, as the authors, also perceived the assessment as free of judgment: *No opinion was wrong; it was just different from the others. We were, above all, colleagues, we were equal, and the lecturer took all of our opinions seriously while taking notes and introducing the ideas back into the lectures.* It was one of the fundamental observations.

## *Conclusions*

In the article, we dealt with two techniques that are known in therapies and coaching. We described these techniques and subsequently discussed their implementation to change the approach to teaching theories and methods of social work so that the practice can return to creativity in social work – decommodification.

The last part was dedicated to their practical, alongside a description of the work with students. For the evaluation, we used a structured interview with students to capture their views on the benefits of the change in teaching.

In general, it can be said that the methodology of transactional analysis follows the child-parent-adult approach (Lister-Ford, 2006). Harris (2020), who uses these principles in his practice, describes how important it is to come to an adult decision “I am OK, you are OK”.

In the presented model of the change in teaching, everyone is (or is trying to be) in an adult role. This teaching method allows students to try the theory in practice and develop skills based on “information + experience = skill”. At the same time, the lecturer (guide), gains insight into generational changes in thinking.

Students also gain insight into their way of thinking – whether they are problem-oriented or solution-oriented. They can also realise situations, where a person seeking help is a child, they are looking for parents, but the process is directed towards adult roles.

One of the advantages is that students can gain more “expertise” in the methodology of the clients being experts in their lives. In this process, they are guides and lead the client to become independent or to find a way towards growth.

In the author's opinion and from his own experience, a change in the approach to teaching brings a necessary change in the perspective of social work as such. Social work is supposed to be both practical and scientific. The basic tool facilitating change is thinking of the next generations, as they have different access to information and sources, some go through different models of education (Montessori, democratic schools, etc.) and mere theory is no longer enough for them.

The process of state exams may also be influenced by subsequent changes when instead of demonstrating encyclopaedic knowledge, students will process solutions for specific case studies from the point of view of all the state exam subjects.

Students also benefit greatly from gaining practical interviewing skills and feedback from colleagues on how they think and what they focus on.

The teacher serves here more as a guide, who supplies the theory but, at the same time, also experiences the change of thinking of the next generation. This also means a constant change of the lecture topics and materials. The course of the lectures must also constantly return to the context of the entire subject – to help students realise the broader background of the discussion.

The essential contribution of this paper is, in our opinion, the return to the debate that van der Laan describes as the problem of the process of “disciplining” (van der Laan, 1998), which casework models in social work followed, but did not go beyond service commodification framework. Similarly, the authors Hubíková, Havlíková, and Trbola (2021, p. 14) describe the current state of social work performance as politically directed to ensure services and benefits.

We offer the topic of decommodification of social work as such, not only on a theoretical level, but also on directly with a tool for practical use in the preparation of a new generation of social workers. There is an opening of a possibility for change, which van der Laan (1998) describes as a “newly formed reality” and which Berger and Luckmann (1999) portray as “successful socialisation”. These changes stem from the proactive and creative thinking of social workers, who cease to be redistributors of services.

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