

Review of: "Picture collage: A pedagogical reflective practice tool for nursing students in mental health practice"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

It is always welcome to see creative approaches encouraging reflection. This article explores the use of picture collage to support reflection of nursing students following their first mental health placement.

The article starts with a very good introduction of mental health, quoting the world health organisations definition of mental health as “a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”. It is welcome to see this definition as too often the term “mental health” is used as synonymous with “mental ill-health”. The authors should take care not to make the same error as later in the introduction you state “mental health is a global concern”.

The introduction overall is helpfully informative. The final paragraph however describes the students’ experience overall in a way that probably does not fit the experience of each individual student and perhaps should be softened in language.

I’m not sure of the relevance of a paragraph about mental health nursing education in the UK given that the setting for this study is UAE.

It is not correct that the concept of reflection was initially coined in 1993 by Dewey. There are models of reflection which pre-date this, for example Schön 1983 which the authors mention in the next paragraph and there are also others before 1993.

The paragraphs explaining the complexity of supporting reflection in the context of mental health nursing for these students are very good. They could perhaps be made even stronger by providing an anonymous example of how the students’ frame of reference, influenced by cultural stigmatisation presented a barrier to reflection.

The picture collage activity is introduced and thoroughly described. The individual accounts of students are good to read and the authors tell a good story about how engaging in this activity allowed students to explore the juxtaposition of their own beliefs and around mental health and illness and the experience of their first clinical placement. The descriptions given illuminate the experience. It would be good also to see some analysis either of the written statements or of interviews with the students specifically about the activity and how it illuminated their learning.

Overall it is a very interesting article and introduces a creative idea for facilitating reflection on topics that may be personally challenging.

