



Cultivating Critical Thinking Through Case Studies

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Learning Objectives

- Understand how to assess more complex feeding situations
- Identify the root cause(s) of the feeding issue at hand
- Implement personalized care plans to help dyads coping with unique issues
- Utilize critical thinking skills when supporting dyads through challenging feeding situations

In a perfect world...

- ...every baby would latch beautifully and feed happily ever after....

In the real world...

- ...most dyads need a little help to get breastfeeding off to a good start.
- ...Many dyads need a lot of help.
- ...Some need a miracle to breastfeed successfully.
- How can we best help these tough cases? CRITICAL THINKING!

The Art of Critical Thinking

“...much of our thinking is biased, distorted, partial, uninformed or down-right prejudiced...
...Excellence in thought must be systematically cultivated.” (Elder, 2019)

The Art of Critical Thinking

- Self-guided, self-disciplined thinking
- Attempt to reason at the highest level in a fair-minded way
- Commitment to overcome native egocentrism and sociocentrism
- Entails effective communication and problem-solving abilities
- Finding the right question is as important as finding the right answer
- (Elder, 2019)

Critical Thinking for Lactation Care

- Gathering and assessing relevant information
 - Full Hx/assessment.
 - What is happening on baby’s side, the parent’s side?
 - What is the baby used to?
- Raising vital questions, skillful conceptualizing
 - What is the underlying problem(s)?
 - What does *this* dyad need to feed well?

- Tools helping or hindering?
- Synthesizing and applying gathered info without bias or prejudice
 - What is our working hypothesis?
 - Are we working off preconceived notions?
- Communicating effectively
 - Do these solutions work for *this* dyad and *their* feeding goals?

Critical Self-Reflection

- What steps do you take to gather info, form a working hypothesis of the issue?
- What information do you feel is critical to collect?
- Are there certain types of cases that regularly ‘stump’ you?
- Reflecting on cases, are there areas of assessment or care plan creation that you wish to strengthen?

Communicate Effectively

- Communicating with parent:
 - Understanding of what the issue is and what we think will help
 - Care plan ideas in line with parental goals?
 - Care ideas practical, sustainable?
- Communicating with baby:
 - Baby’s reactions to care strategies seem positive?
 - Is overt stress apparent?
 - Challenge rapidly or ‘baby steps’?

Lactation Care IS Critical Thinking...

- Finding right question as important as finding the answer
- Set ego and bias aside
- Examine your own approach to gathering info and synthesizing it
- Think outside of the box
- Care plan only as effective as communication

How will the care I provide affect this baby in the next 10 mins, next 10 hours, next 10 days, next 10 weeks, next 10 months, next 10 years....

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