



## Case study one: Ayesha

### Tool 2 - Reflection on Our Ways of Knowing

#### The Deconstruction of Professional Knowledge

"We are socialized into 'ways of looking' which render some things visible, others invisible. These ways of looking are so tacit, so habitual and automatic that they themselves are rarely the topic of conversation. The problem when we try to explain to others what we see is that we tend to assume that what we see, or what we know, is obvious to anyone who 'looks at the facts'. But there are no neutral facts waiting to be seen. It is only when one knows how to look, that the facts relevant to that way of looking appear. Opening our ways of knowing to inquiry is not unlike the challenge of trying to explain to someone how to look in such a way that they can see that third dimension."

#### Reference

Sellick, M., Delaney, R. and Brownless, K. (2002) *'The Deconstruction of Professional Knowledge: Accountability without Authority.'* Families in Society Vol. 83(5), pp.493-498.

Epistemic - of or pertaining to knowledge or the conditions for acquiring it. From the Greek 'epistemology' (knowledge, science) - theory of knowledge or the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope (limitations) of knowledge. It addresses the questions:

#### Reflective questions

*Reflection on the sources of our knowing may lead us to ask ourselves the following kinds of questions:*

- What frames of mind am I bringing to this situation? (e.g. what are my initial thoughts and explanations for the situation?)
- What am I taking to be the facts of this situation?
- Why did I orient to these particular facts rather than others?
- What am I not seeing in this situation?
- Would someone whose gender, social location, professional doctrine or culture is different to mine orient differently to this situation?
- Where did I learn this 'way of looking'?
- Whose voice is being exercised in this knowledge? Is it mine, or someone else's?
- What are the cultural, gender or epistemic<sup>1</sup> biases implicit in this way of looking?
- Is my own experience represented in this knowledge?
- Is there some personal experience which is silenced by this knowledge?
- Do I recognise myself and my experience in this way of speaking my knowledge?

- > What is knowledge?
- > How is knowledge acquired?
- > How do we know what we know?