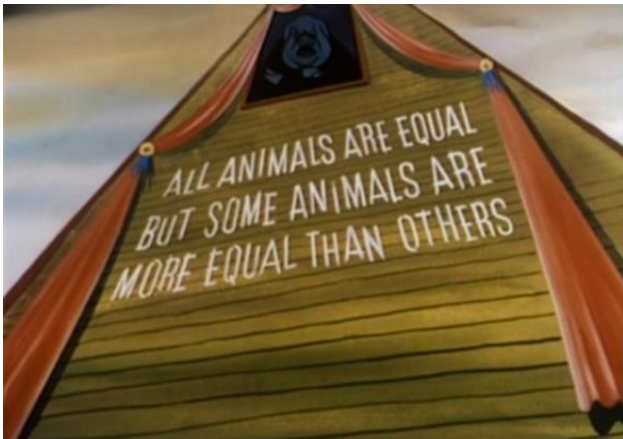


# The Sweetie Game

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# Context - purpose of discussion

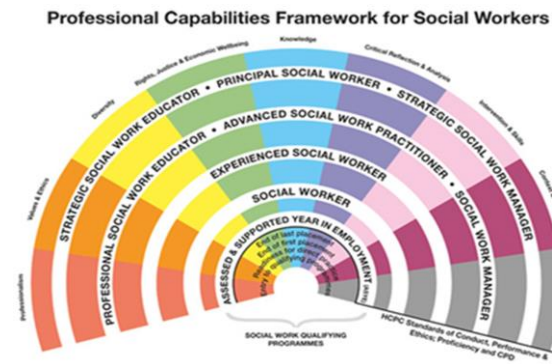
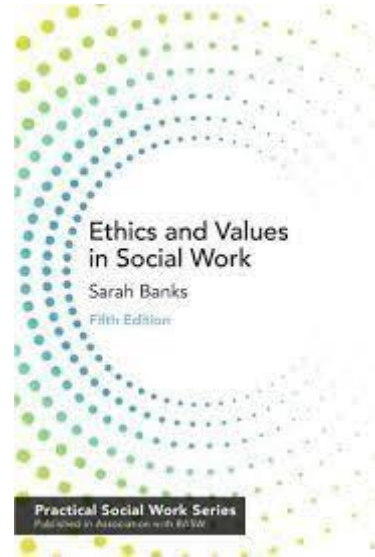


- ▶ As covered in the symposium brief: “The COVID-19 global pandemic has forced Higher Education to pivot from a predominately face-to-face pedagogy to a blended or pure online delivered pedagogy. Academics and students have faced challenges with a difficult and dynamic situation”.
- ▶ The use of online platforms have forced academics and students out of their comfort zones.
- ▶ This presentation allows me to share my experiences of using a game in support of learning.

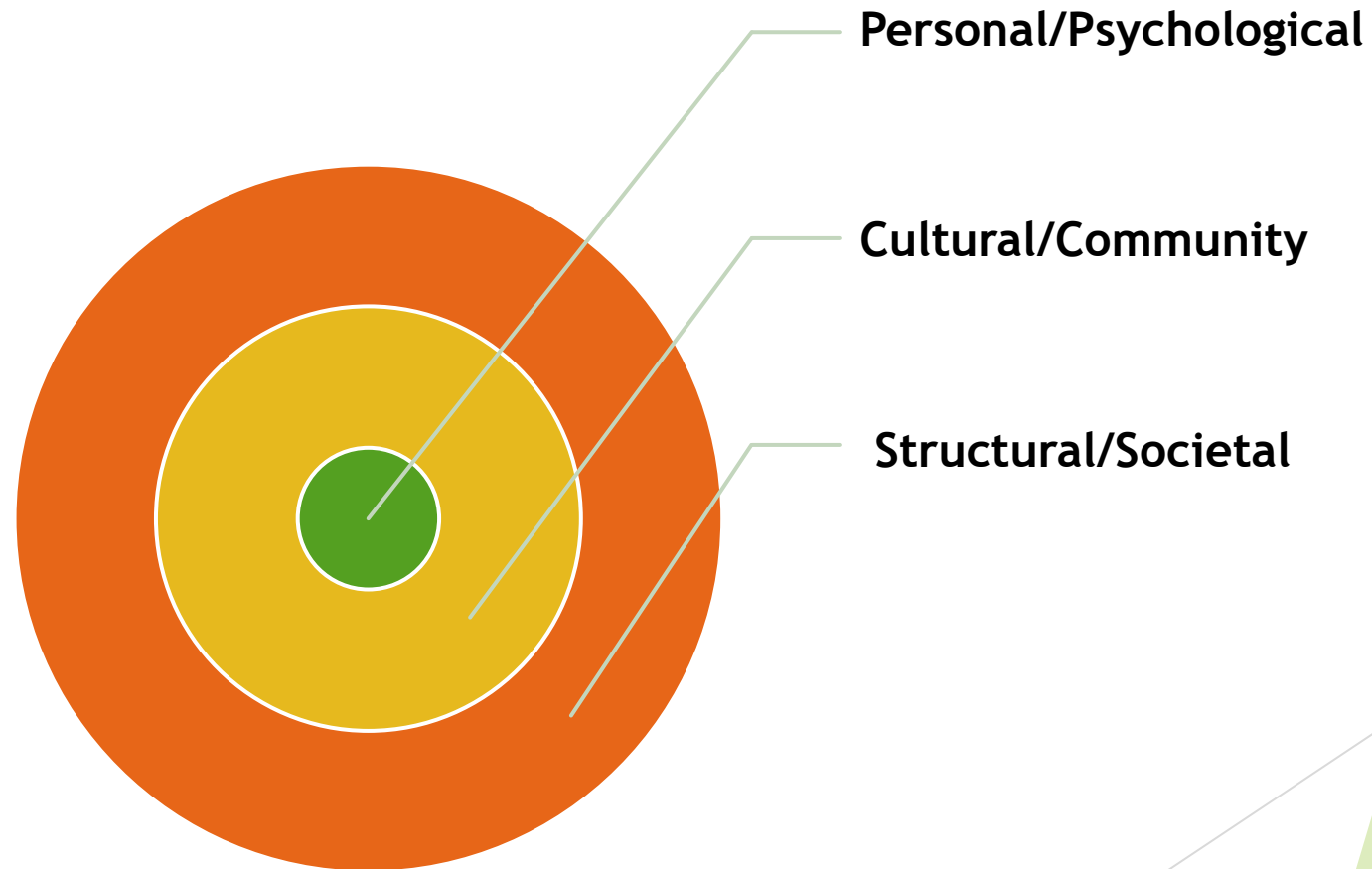
## Relevant themes:

- Adaptation of existing classroom game-based learning to an online environment
- Use of game-based activity for specialised teaching support

# Context for learning in social work



# Thompson's PCS analysis of oppression

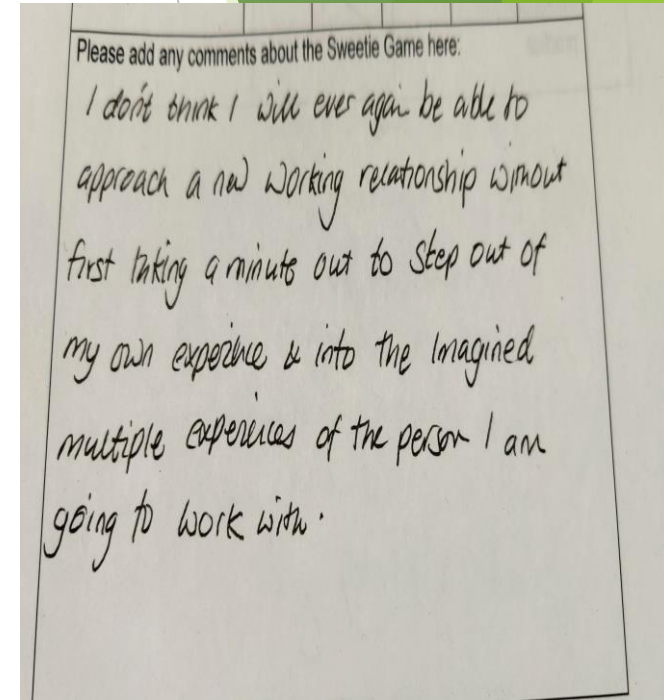


# Context of the game

- ▶ Playing ‘Sweetie Game’ in teaching of anti-oppressive social work practice, where focus is given to developing skills in empathy, appreciation of power and self-reflection.
- ▶ Low/no tech!
- ▶ Purposefully provocative - ‘playing games’ and ‘social work’ not naturally linked
- ▶ Memorable, tactile, senses, movement, high level of physical interaction
- ▶ Highly rated by students - see next slide

# Historical feedback - in-person delivery

- ▶ Unanimously positive
- ▶ Enjoy physical aspect of activity - 'change from the norm'
- ▶ Reported 'deep' learning especially about personal prejudices and personal ability to oppress others
- ▶ Appreciation of agreed written ground rules
- ▶ Brings cohort together
- ▶ Increased confidence - especially challenging self and others
- ▶ Value in being kind to self and others rather than condemning
- ▶ Permission to make mistakes and learn from them
- ▶ Provides foundational knowledge in preparation for placements and qualified social work practice - 'solid grounding'





# Aim of the Sweetie Game

To highlight inequalities that exist between different groups within everyday activities and experiences

## Objectives:

- ▶ to raise awareness of inequalities and the experiences of different groups
- ▶ to highlight complexities
- ▶ to draw attention to multiple disadvantage
- ▶ to consider how students and social workers can 'make a difference'
- ▶ to increase confidence

# Comfort zone: in-person playing of the game



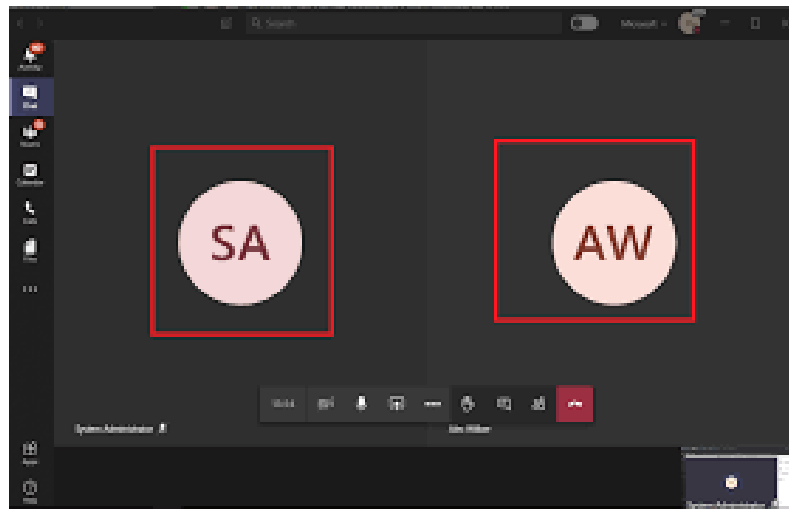


# The in-person game in a nutshell:

- ▶ Put chairs into one large circle
- ▶ Place bowl of sweets in centre of circle on floor/small table
- ▶ Allocate envelope and vague character description - keep to self, close eyes, pause and reflect on daily experience and step into shoes of character
  - for example: 18 year old white male, 50 year old black African female, gay 62 year old female, 16 year old with learning disability.
- ▶ Ask series of 18 questions
  - for example: Are you happy kissing your partner in public? Do you see yourself represented positively on TV? Are you comfortable making a complaint about a poor service you've received?
- ▶ Collect a sweet from the centre if they can easily say YES to a question
- ▶ After all 18 questions - count and reflect
- ▶ Individually reveal and discuss - then group discussion
- ▶ Debrief - step out of shoes



# Expectations prior to online delivery





# The reality

- ▶ Went *surprisingly* well - see feedback next slide
- ▶ Ground rules remained important
- ▶ Managing expectations became more important - sweets, engagement, cameras
- ▶ Ice-breaker worked well - what sweets? Fun.
- ▶ More control of opening activity (Trump/Skittles) - link posted in chat

Donald Trump Jr. [@DonaldJTrumpJr](#) Following  
This image says it all. Let's end the politically correct agenda that doesn't put America first. #trump2016



John Legend [@johnlegend](#) Follow  
There's a tiny chance that anyone could be a murderer. Get rid of everyone now!!!  
[#trumplogic](#)  
RETWEETS 1,058 LIKES 2,605

# 'Online' student feedback remained positive reflecting the 'in person' experience

*“Was very insightful and I found it was very interesting hearing everyone else's point of views”.*

*“I can consider these issues and questions further throughout my studies and have been left with much to ponder”.*

*“This was a great session. It forced me to dig deep into what other people's life experience can be like. It showed the different layers of being seen as 'different' by today's society (on a professional level, a personal one, in everyday activities)”.*

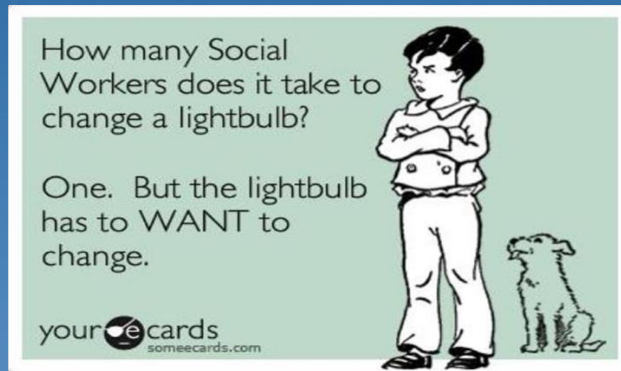


# Social Work

## Reflections

- ▶ sweetie game *can* be played online despite rules of engagement being different
- ▶ reinforced the need to support students' appreciation and understanding of safe learning environments and need to agree ground rules
- ▶ students appreciate feeling safe to make mistakes
- ▶ 'reading the room' feels almost impossible
- ▶ online approach was more enjoyable for me than expected but I look forward to a return to in-person delivery
- ▶ each version of the game will be used in future according to the situation

Thanks for listening. I welcome any opportunity for discussion.



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