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# A Pathway to Insight: Infusing Generalized Empirical Method (GEM) into Service Learning to Guide Professional Development.

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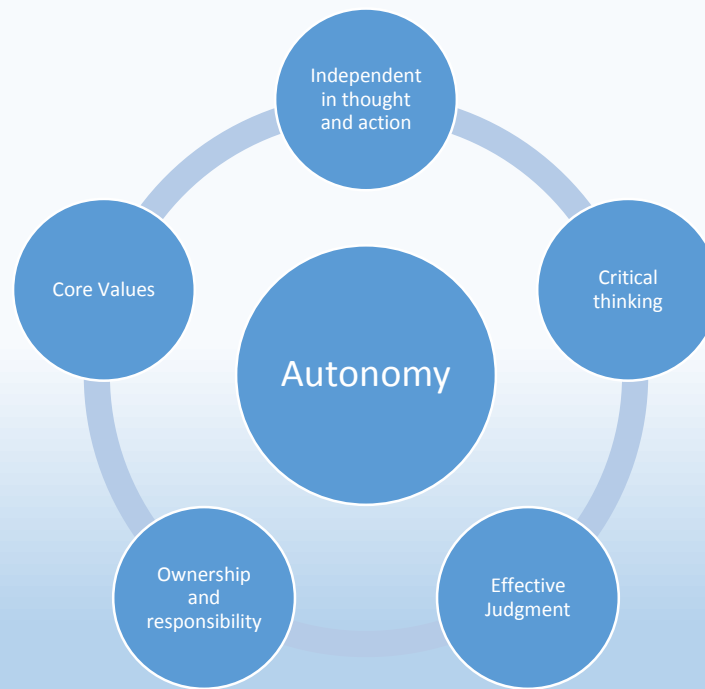
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# A Pathway to Insight: Infusing Generalized Empirical Method (GEM) into Service Learning to Guide Professional Development.



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# Doctor of Physical Therapy



# Service learning seminar

## Journey

Model to meet the Mission of University School & Program  
Core Professional Value of Social Responsibility

## Journey

Experiential Learning  
Local Community School-Based Facilities for Children/Adolescents with Special Needs  
In final academic semester prior to Full time Internships  
Aligned with current curriculum : Pediatrics, Ethics, Teaching & Learning, Clinical Integration Seminar

## Journey

Identify Needs & Foster the best interest of patient/client/community  
Recognize Health and Wellness issues for children/adolescents with special needs  
Explore Role and Responsibility as Advocates for Best Health Practice and Social Justice  
Integrate Theory and Practice at the Societal Level

# Question



Can a service learning project emphasizing health and wellness in children with special needs promote awareness and professional behaviors aligned with social responsibility for entry level DPT students?

# Questions



What **process** can fuse these components and **promote critical thinking, decision making and professional judgment?**

What ***cognitive pathway*** can be incorporated to guide the student's intellectual ***conversion from consumer of information toward producer of effective judgment?***

# SETTING STAGE to INFUSE GEM

- Emphasis on formulation of questions
- Need to be open to uncertainty, uncomfortableness
- Awareness of where they are on own professional Journey



***“A good teacher sets the stage for the emergence of insight.”***

# Generalized Empirical Method

Bernard Lonergan 1957 “Insight: A study of human understanding”. London

Bernard Lonergan, A Third Collection, Papers by Bernard Lonergan, SJ, ed. Frederick E. Crowe New York 1985



# Generalized Empirical Method (GEM)

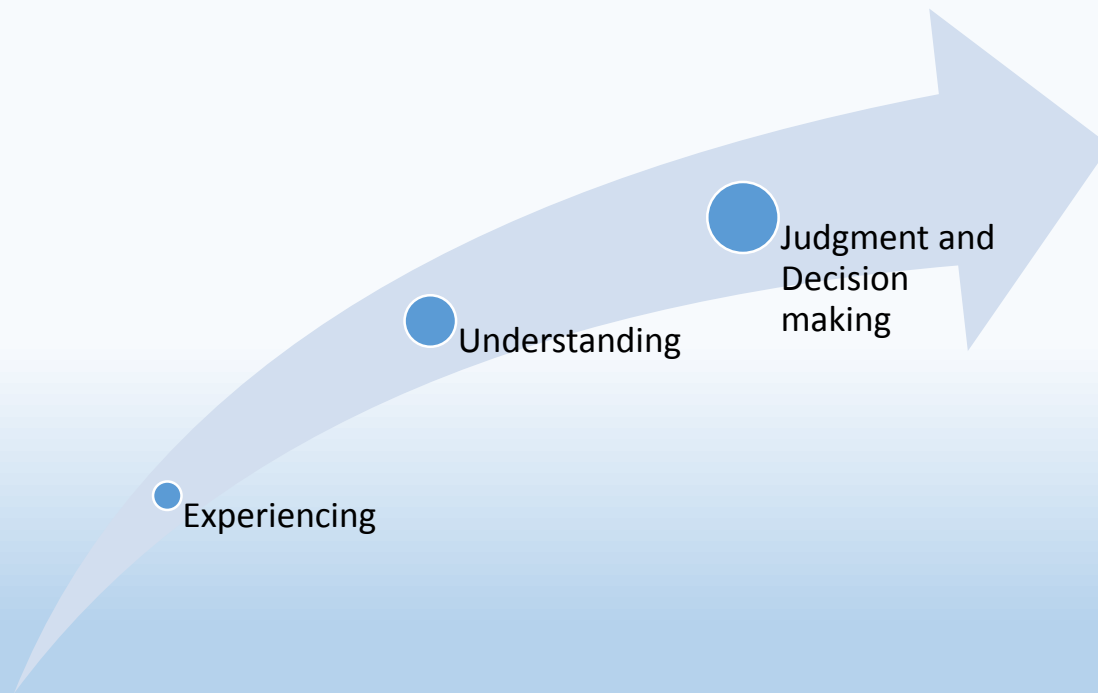
**ATTENTION** to a **Cognitive Thought Process** identifying the gap between “What I Do Know”, What I Don’t Know” ( “ The Known Unknown” ), & “What I Seek to Know”.

**GROUND**ED in Authentic **Question Formulation & Reflection**

**CONSTITUTED** toward the Dynamic Process of **Questioning** and **FACILITATING Insight**

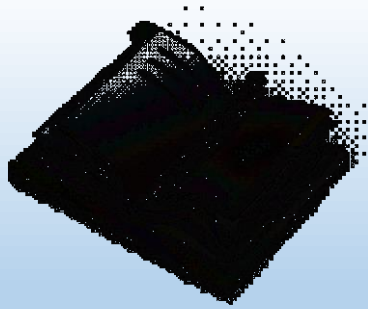
**DIRECTED** to **Decision Making and Judgment**

# Stages of GEM Model



# Reflection IN and ON Action

- Each **team** develop a portfolio that included the action and group's questions, uncertainty and insight
- Validation of New Knowledge in Relationship to the Group
- Each **student** submitted an individual personal reflection of the service learning project
  - **Key insights** gleaned
  - Development of their personal and professional growth
  - Impact of their project on the community they served
- Affirmation that New Knowledge Answers the Initial Question



# Student Reflections

- The growth and experience that I gained from my time at the.....Center was tremendous. I am not a pediatric person and the thought of working with children made me incredibly nervous.
- ..... tensed up when working with them, especially after our first day I could not believe how challenging it was for me to work with the children
- By the end of the experience I actually looked forward to working with the kids every week, and that was a big step for me since I thought I would never enjoy working in a pediatric setting. MD

- Throughout the course of this project I started feeling less like a student and more like a professional that was actually contributing to the community.
- It made me realize that as physical therapists our responsibility does not stop at the end of a work day; we have the ability to make beneficial changes in people's lives and it is important that we make as much of a difference as we can. JK

- The most important insight I gathered that this journey of being a student is not only about learning facts to use as a professional, it is learning to take our knowledge and skills and share that with those less fortunate JM

- When we started our service-learning seminar in the beginning of the semester, I honestly did not think this project was going to have as much of an effect on me as it did.
- In the beginning of our time at the ....., it seemed like it would be challenging to modify activities for certain children in the classroom, but the more we went each week and got to know the children, the easier it was.
- Personally, it was not only a good feeling to provide a fun, health and wellness promotional service to these children, but made me realize how much I enjoy working and providing physical therapy in a pediatric setting. RN

- As a student physical therapist who is still working on developing as a professional, this project helped me focus on values, especially those of social responsibility and professional duty.
- Working with the children at the ..... every week in the classroom helped promote the social responsibility that we as physical therapists have to the public, and in this case underserved populations, to address needs for health and wellness.
- We were able to successfully fulfill these core values by planning mini fitness activities each week and bringing them all together into a collective fitness day, bringing our experience of learning to be a physical therapist outside of our classroom.



- The Service learning Fitness day was a great experience for me ..... not only helped children improve their function and have fun but they also helped me see how important social responsibility is and how in my profession I can continue to volunteer and use my knowledge to influence positive healthy behaviors. NF

- This service learning project, and class in general, was a great and important experience.
- The day itself didn't go exactly as planned, but it was great to see my team communicate well with each other to adjust. In the end it all worked, and the kids really enjoyed. RN

- My professional values have grown as well in terms of accountability, social responsibility, and professional duty. I had the opportunity to be responsible for an important task. I saw myself owning what was before me for the betterment of others. I also love my profession as a physical therapist. AR

- Most importantly, I was able to see who I was as a person through this experience. I saw my character continue to grow and it's on my heart to do service projects in the future. AR

- As a student physical therapist, my growth as a professional has grown tremendously as a result of this service learning project. From day one, I had to communicate with my classmates as well as our community partner with what our thoughts and ideas were for the service learning project.

The most important insight that I gained as a result of this service learning project experience was to always put the students first and to make them have as much fun as possible; during physical therapy and throughout their everyday lives.

- It is imperative to keep the students needs ahead of your own and to keep the students as active as possible. The smiles that were put on the students' faces during Fun Fitness Day is something that I will never forget. It was all thanks to the hard work that my classmates, community partner, and I put into making

- I truly enjoyed the service learning experience, as it provided me with an opportunity to develop my professional values in much different format that our previous clinical experiences permit.
- For this project, we were given the chance to play the role of a leader rather than the more passive role of student. This helped me develop my decision making skills as well as my ability to plan and coordinate services to meet the unique needs of an individual population. KH



- The most important insight I gained from this experience is the importance of impacting the community through our profession.
- As health care professionals, we obtain the appropriate knowledge and skill base to be able to treat our patients.
- However beyond the scope of individual patients, it is our professional duty to apply this skillset to bettering our communities as a whole. JJ

- .....feel much more comfortable in taking on a leadership role to be able to use what I have learned in school and apply it on a much broader scope. This project was a unique opportunity for us as students, and should remain an essential part of the educational growth process of physical therapy students. JJ

# Reflection

“ I feel that I have learned a good deal from this project, and it made me realize how important it is to reach out into the community and lend support to schools and programs.” KC

“ This project was definitely beneficial to my development as a professional...We need to become advocates for healthy lives.” JS

# Outcomes

- Service, and more importantly the reflective process following the service, seemed to have a significant impact on the student commitment
- Context of uncertainty and uncomfortableness in thoughts and expectations students gained personal insight and professional judgment as evidenced by their critical thinking and reflection

- GEM methodology provides a pathway for active engagement of students in cognitive strategies to promote insight and bridge knowledge and critical thinking as they transition into emerging professional.

# *Questions?? Insights!!!*

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