<table>
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<th>Category &amp; Reflective Experience</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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| Novice (No experience in practice area) | - No experience in situation of practice; depends on theory to guide practice.  
- Uses rule-based procedural reasoning to guide actions but does not recognize contextual cues; not skillful in adapting rules to fit situation.  
- Narrative reasoning is used to establish social relationships but does not significantly inform practice.  
- Pragmatic reasoning is stressed in terms of job survival skills.  
- Recognizes overt ethical issues. |
| Advanced beginner (<1 yr) | - Begins to incorporate contextual information into rule-based thinking.  
- Recognizes differences between theoretical expectations and presenting problems.  
- Limited experience impedes recognition of patterns and salient cues; does not prioritize well.  
- Relies on external guides so as forms to guide reasoning.  
- Gaining skill in pragmatic and narrative reasoning.  
- Begins to recognize more subtle ethical issues. |
| Competent (1–3 yr) | - Automatically performs more therapeutic skills and attends to more issues.  
- Is able to develop communal horizon with people receiving service.  
- Is able to sort relevant data and prioritize intervention goals related to desired outcomes.  
- Planning is deliberate, efficient, and responsive to contextual issues.  
- Uses conditional reasoning to modify intervention but lacks flexibility.  
- Recognizes ethical dilemmas posed by practice setting. |
| Proficient (3–5 yr) | - Perceives situations as wholes.  
- Reflects on expanded range of experiences, permitting more focused evaluation and more flexibility in intervention.  
- Creatively combines different diagnostic and procedural approaches.  
- More attentive to occupational stories and relevance for intervention.  
- More skillful in negotiating resources to meet patient/client needs.  
- Increased sophistication in recognizing situational nature of ethical reasoning. |
| Expert (5–10 yr) | - Clinical reasoning becomes a quick intuitive process.  
- Procedural and pragmatic reasoning more detailed.  
- Able to flow conversation and action smoothly.  
- Use understanding of client and client’s perspective to determine intervention.  
- Relies on internal guides or images to support actions. |

From Benner, 1984; Clark et al., 1996; Creighton et al., 1995; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Mattingly & Fleming, 1994; Rassafiani et al., 2009; Slater & Cohn, 1991; Strong et al., 1995, Unsworth, 2001; Unsworth & Mitchell, 2005