

TABLE 30.2 Professional Reasoning Continuum and Characteristics

Category & Reflective Experience	Characteristics
Novice (No experience in practice area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.