

## **An Introduction to Models of Reflection**

**(please scroll to p.2 for examples of models)**

Reflective practice is associated with learning from experience, and is viewed as an important strategy for health professionals who embrace life-long learning.

The act of reflection is seen as a way of promoting the development of autonomous, qualified and self-directed professionals. Engaging in reflective practice is associated with the improvement of the quality of care, stimulating personal and professional growth and closing the gap between theory and practice.

The following examples of models of reflection and techniques for reflection are presented to give you a feeling of choice about the most appropriate strategies to use to encourage reflection on practice and academic learning.

The work of Platzer et al (1997)\* identified that learning through reflection is more potent if there is an understanding of frameworks that encourage a structural process to guide the act of reflection.

Several models to help you engage in the process of reflection are now discussed. There is no right one. It is important you choose the framework that feels most comfortable for you and best assists you in learning from your experiences.

The most important aspect of engaging in reflective writing for work-based learning is that your writing is able to demonstrate a changed conceptual perspective. The process of reflective writing leads to more than just a gain in your knowledge it should also challenge the concepts and theories by which you make sense of knowledge. When you reflect on a situation you do not simply see more, you see differently. This different way of viewing a situation is reflected in statements about a commitment to action.

Action is the final stage of reflection. Sharing your reflective writing with your mentor/tutor/practice educator will assist you in the process of revealing new perspectives.

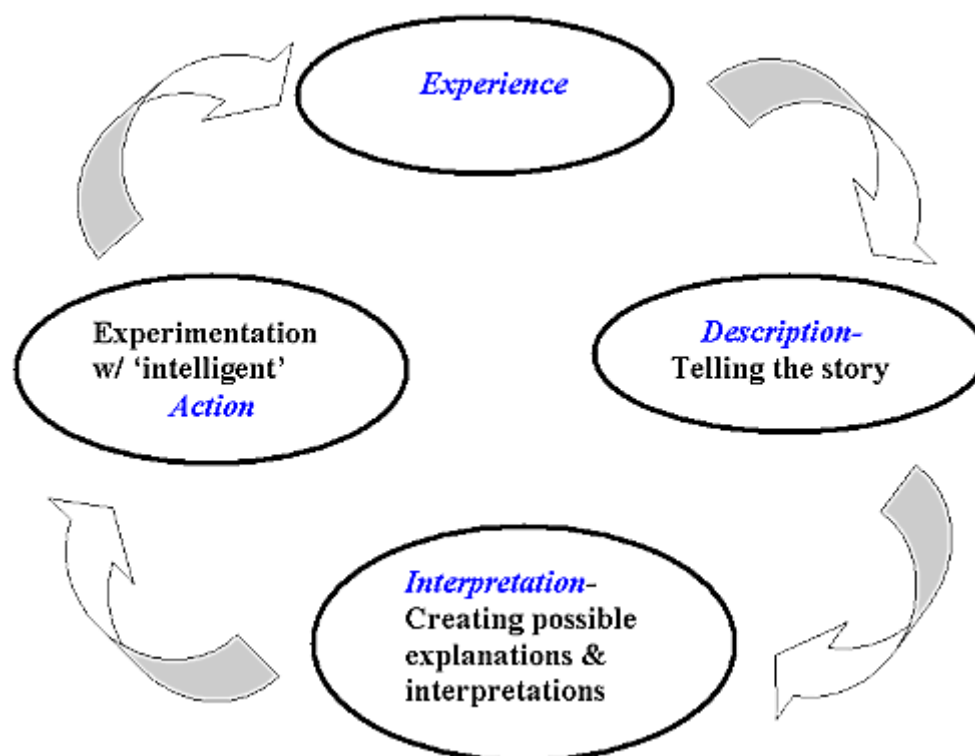
\*Ashford D, Blake D, Knott C, Platzer A, Snelling J. Changing conceptions of reflective practice in social work, health and education: An institutional case study. *Journal of Inter-professional Care* 1998; 12(1): 7-19.

## **Kolb's Reflective Cycle**

Kolb D A (1994) *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Prentice Hall. New Jersey.

The four stages in the Kolb (1994) reflective cycle are:

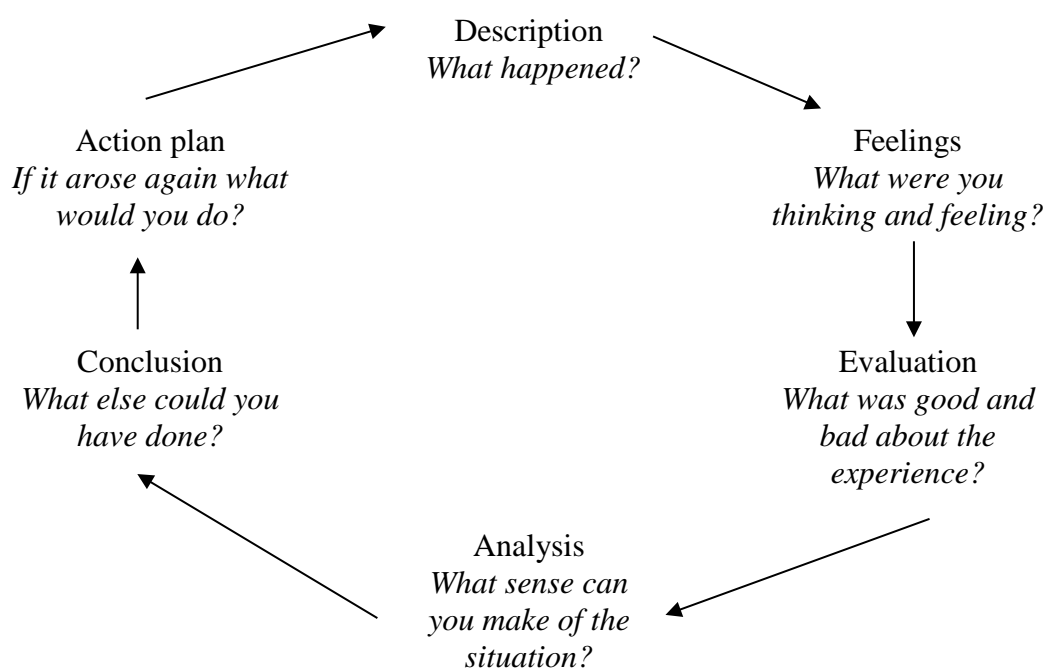
- The experience – e.g. running a group/treating a patient
- The reflection – e.g. questioning what happened
- The conceptualisation – e.g. looking for meaning
- The experimentation – e.g. applying insight/ new learning in practice



## Gibbs Reflective Cycle

Gibbs, G. (1998). *Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods*. Further Education Unit. Oxford Brookes University. Oxford.

The Gibb's cycle encourages a clear description of the situation, analysis of feelings, evaluation of experience, analysis to make sense of the experience, conclusions to consider possible other options and reflection on the experience to examine what you would do if the same situation arose again?



## **Boud and Walker - The 3 Stages of Reflection**

Boud, D.J. & Walker, D. (1990). Making the most of experience. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 12(2), 61-80.

Boud, D. & Walker, D. (1998). Promoting reflection in professional courses: the challenge of context. *Studies in Higher Education*, 23(2), 191-206.

Boud D, Keogh R & Walker D (Eds.) (1985) *Reflection; Turning Experience onto Learning*. Kogan Page. New York.

The three stages of the Boud, Keogh, and Walker Model (1985) are:

1. Preparation:
  - a) What the requirements of the activity?
  - b) Skills recognition
  - c) Resource acquisition An outline of the aims of the activity and the broad structure of what is to take place
  
2. Engagement:
  - a) What were the experiences, events, remarks, questions, thoughts?
  
3. Processing -Discussion, personal diary
  - a) Record issues and feeling
  - b) What has been left undone?
  - c) What questions have been left unasked?
  - d) What records have been left incomplete?

## **Fish et al - “Strands” of Reflection**

Fish, D., Twinn, S. & Purr, B. (1991) *Promoting reflection: Improving the supervision of practice in health visiting and initial teacher training*. West London Institute of Higher Education

The four “strands” in the Fish, Twinn and Purr (1991) approach to reflective practice are:

### The Factual Strand -

- Setting the scene
- What actually happened?
- Pinpointing significant/critical incidents
- What did you feel, think and do?

### The Retrospective Strand -

- Involves looking back over the whole event, seeking patterns and new meanings and reviewing intentions
- Process outcomes and personal views

### The Sub-stratum Strand -

- What assumptions, beliefs, culture, customs, attitudes or values underlie the event?
- What were the environmental demands?

### The Connective Strand -

- What are the implications on future practice?
- What was learned?
- What could be changed?
- Could concepts or assumptions be challenged?

## **Guiding Questions**

- ***The Factual Strand (Debriefing) (Year Two)***
  1. Recalling the practical situation
    - i) Describe the context
    - ii) Who was there?
    - iii) Where did the practice take place?
    - iv) Why was the situation created?
  2. Telling the story – in chronological order
    - i) What was planned?
    - ii) What actually happened?
    - iii) What was different from planned?
  3. Can you pinpoint the critical incidents?
    - i) What questions arose? What points offer scope for learning
    - ii) What do you think you need to learn more about?
    - iii) How did you feel and react at the time?
    - iv) What have you learnt
  4. Identifying views about future practice
    - i) What should happen in the next piece of practice? (general views and intentions)

- ***The Retrospective Strand (Year Two)***

- What patterns of behaviour and responses were evident?
- What did you think you expected to get out of it?
- What were the overall aims, intentions and goals?
- Were these achieved?
- What viewpoints might the other people involved have to offer? How might they have felt about it?
- How does the context relate to what actually happened?
- What existing knowledge did you draw upon?
- How and where did you apply that knowledge?
- What new things did you learn and from which part of the piece of practice?
- What can you say about the interactions occurring between the people involved?
- What could be said about human relationships as a whole?
- What might the language used during the interaction tell you?
- What new discoveries did you make from the whole practice?
- What were the reasons, motives and emotions that might have been associated with the actions?
- For you as the practitioner, what happened?
- What were the critical incidents? Were these connected?

- ***The Substratum Strand (Added in Year Three)***

- What customs, traditions and rituals were brought to the situation or were apparent?
- What beliefs, dogmas, prejudices or emotions were brought to the situation or were apparent?
- Where did they come from?
- Is an ideological pattern emerging?
- What basic beliefs and assumptions underlie the actions, emotions and decision reported in the other strands?
- What beliefs are emerging about existing and new knowledge and how it is gained and used?
- What do you think about the theory and practice implicit in the practice and your reflection upon this?
- How can you explain the kinds of evaluation and justification used so far to guide the reflective process?
- What theories have you based your actions upon?
- What can you say about the ends/outcomes of the actions undertaken? On what grounds were they justified or were they defensible? Whose were the anticipated outcomes?
- What is your relationship with your work?

- ***The Connective Strand (Added in Year Three)***

- What have you learnt from this situation as a whole?
- How has it related to past experiences? How might it relate to future ones?
- What do you understand now about what drove your practice?
- How do your thinking and your actions sit with the wider context of the actions?
- How might you modify your thinking and your actions specifically in this situation in the light of experience, further thought, and further reading?
- Thinking about the ends of pieces of practice, what of the previous piece of practice? How were the ends considered in this one? How and when might they be considered in the next one?
- What tentative further theories might be developed for future action?
- What implications do your reflections have for future practice?