

APPROACHES TO REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Daphne Hewson and Michael Carroll (2016)
www.reflectivesupervision.com

(Expansion of Chapter C5 of *Reflective Practice in Supervision*)

We found dozens of ideas in the literature on what to focus on when reflecting on your work. Here's a brief summary of some of them with one example question for each focal point:

THREE LEVELS OF REFLECTION (van Manen, 1977)

Based on Habermas's critical theory

- **Technical:** Technical application of knowledge and principles for the purposes of attaining a given end
What's the best evidence-based way of achieving that goal?
- **Interpretative:** The framework of meanings and assumptions on which choices of means and ends are made
What assumptions are you making that lead you to choose that goal?
- **Critical:** The "worthwhileness" of knowledge and choices in terms of the "politico-ethical meaning"
Whose needs are served by this approach?

FOUR PROCESSES (Schon, 1983:73)

- **Strategies:** Methods to solve the problem within the set frame (single loop)
Is that the most effective way to achieve that goal?
- **Theories:** Espoused theories and theories-in-use
You said you value being fully present, but you "got down to business" and asked question. How do these fit together?
- **Frames:** Examining the chosen frame and other possible frames and the beliefs/values that underpin them
Let's reconsider this incident as a problem of making a choice about who to prioritise. What beliefs led you to choose Bruce over Dawn?
- **Role frames:** Roles adopted within each frame
Who were you being when you chose to take Bruce's call? Who were you being when you sat with Dawn through her distress?

FOUR LENSES FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION (Brookfield, 1995)

- **Own eyes:** Self review of assumptions and reasonings that frame our work
How has your training in CBT shaped your approach to reflective practice?
- **Client's eyes:** Client's experience and feedback
What does your client's refusal to complete all those pre-treatment tests say to you?
- **Colleague's eyes:** Peers' experience and feedback
Think of two colleagues, one you respect and one you don't respect. What would each of them say about how one should deal with this situation?
- **Theoretical literature:** Perspectives from scholarly literature
Brookfield's article on the Dark Side of reflective practice points to some of the problems we seem to be having. I suggest we read the article and discuss how we can use those ideas in our work with each other.

SIX RINGS OF REFLECTION (Korthagen and Vasalos, 2005)

Levels from outer ring (environment) to the deepest core (mission)

- **Environment/Client:** Everything outside of self
What did you notice about how he behaved?
- **Behaviours:** Effective and ineffective response
What do you notice in how you responded to him?
- **Competencies:** Competencies needed
Have you had to opportunity to develop competence in doing an intake assessment?
- **Beliefs:** Situational and deep assumptions
What do you think is happening here and what are the beliefs that underpin that thought?
- **Professional identity:** Concept of professional self
How do you see yourself and your expertise as a professional?
- **Mission:** My calling in terms of my fellow humans
What inspires me and gives me meaning in this work?

THREE TYPES OF REFLECTION (Mezirow, 1997, 2009)

- **CONTENT REFLECTION** Learning with present meaning schemes
What did I do and what can I do?
- **PROCESS REFLECTION** Learning new meaning schemes
What were the positive and negative factors in this?
- **PREMISE REFLECTION (Critical Reflection)** Learning through meaning transformation
What are the premises underpinning why it was done this way?

THREE FOCI OF APPRECIATIVE REFLECTION (Ghaye and Lillyman, 2010)

- **Values:** Our values make us the kind of person we are
What do I believe and why do I believe it?
- **Practice:** A researcher-in-practice
What is my practice like? Why is it like this? Whose interests are being served? What alternatives are available?
- **Context:** Developing a reflective organisation
How can I contribute to a genuinely open, learning culture?

SEVEN-EYED MODEL (Hawkins and Shohet, 2000, 2012)

Therapy and supervisory systems

- **Client/session:** Account of the client and the session
How did your client hold themselves during different stages of the session?
- **Strategies and interventions** What, when and why of interventions used/not used
What did you do? Why did you choose that approach?
- **Client-practitioner relationship** Conscious and nonconscious processes
Find an image or metaphor to represent your relationship with this client
- **Practitioner** Practitioner's countertransference and other processes
Who does this person remind you of?
- **Supervisory relationship** Here-and-now process as mirror or parallel of there-and-then process
You keep giving me "yes-but" responses. Is this how your client responds to you?
- **Supervisor** Supervisor's countertransference and other processes
I'm feeling sleepy. This often happens when some feeling is being shut down. Can you check what you might be holding back from saying?
- **Wider context** Organisational, professional and systemic influences
How does your handling of this situation fit with the expectations of your agency?

STRUCTURED REFLECTION (Johns, 1998, 2004, 2009)

- **Aesthetics** How the situation is interpreted
What was I trying to achieve?
- **Personal**
What internal factors were influencing me?
- **Ethics**
How did my actions match with my beliefs?
- **Empirics**
What knowledge did or should have informed me?

- **Reflexivity** Making sense of the present in terms of the past with a view towards the future

How does this connect with previous experiences?

SEVEN TOOLS FOR PEER SUPERVISION GROUPS (McNicoll and Baker, 2000)

- **Practice Review** Devil's Advocate and Angel's advocate

I have a concern that...

- **Good News Analysis** Positive feedback

I think the key to your success was ...

- **Critical Incidents** Stress debriefing

What were you feeling when that happened?

- **Veridical Report** Sharing of own experiences

That reminds me of when I ...

- **Professional Issue Review**

My perspective on this is ...

- **Peer Review**

What would make you more effective?

- **Dress Rehearsals**

Let's roleplay this

NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION (Taylor and White, 2000, Taylor, C., 2006)

- **Rhetorical devices** Texts and talk construct client's and practitioner's identity

Who are you being when you describe it in this way?

EXCAVATING FRAMES OF MIND (McKee, 2003)

- **Assumptions**

How is my way of looking at this situation simultaneously making possible and limiting my understanding?

What assumptions, personal theory, or values are suggested by my actions?

Where did I learn these values?

What feelings am I aware of in this situation?

Why do I feel threatened when I am challenged on this issue?

DECONSTRUCTIVE-RECONSTRUCTIVE (Crowe & O'Malley, 2006)

- **Deconstructive** Unpack assumptions that underpin taken-for-granted actions

How is the problem constructed?

Whose opinions are excluded?

What have been the dominant influences on your developing this role/view?

- Reconstructive Critical understanding of factors supporting current practice and capacity to support any change

What are the options for alternative actions? What rationales support them?

How can change strategies reflective different worldviews and knowledge?

FOUR TRADITIONS FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION (Fook & Gardner, 2007)

- **Reflective practice**

Are there any gaps or contradictions between what I say I do and what is implied by what I do?

- **Reflexivity**

How has who I am affected what I noticed or felt was important?

- **Postmodernism/deconstruction**

What binaries, or 'either-or' categories have I constructed?

- **Critical theory**

What assumptions are implicit in my account and where do they come from?

THREE DIMENSIONS (Thompson and Thompson, 2008)

- **Cognitive:** Mindfulness, analytic and creative thinking

What options are available for dealing with situation? How do you evaluate those options?

- **Affective:** Feelings and emotions in self and others

You said you feel tight. What is it you're afraid of?

- **Values:** Empowerment and social justice

What are the values of your profession and how do they fit with your personal values?

SEVEN CONVERSATIONS (Clutterbuck, 2010)

- **Supervisor's reflection before dialogue**

What's the big picture?

What's being avoided?

Am I looking forward to this meeting?

- **Practitioner's reflection before dialogue**

What have I learned?

What do I need?

How do I feel about this relationship?

- **Supervisor's internal, unspoken reflection during the dialogue**
What's the quality of my listening?
What are we each feeling?
- **The spoken dialogue**
Are we exploring multiple perspectives?
- **Practitioner's internal, unspoken reflection during the dialogue**
What assumptions am I making?
How are we each feeling?
- **Supervisor's reflection after the dialogue**
What did I learn?
What emotions am I aware of?
- **Practitioner's reflection after the dialogue**
What did I learn?
How will I put it into practice?

SIX LEVELS OF REFLECTION (Carroll, 2010a; see LENSES in toolkit)

- **Zero reflection:** Me stance (external)- attributing issues to another
I notice you think the client is the problem in this
- **Empathic reflection:** Observer stance – compassionate blame
You empathise with her, but do you still blame her?
- **Relational reflection:** You-and-me stance
What do you notice in the relationship between you?
- **Systemic reflection:** The bigger picture stance
How do others see this?
- **Self-reflection:** Me stance (internal) – awareness of one role
In what ways are you creating this problem?
- **Transcendent reflection:** Universal stance –meaning, philosophy
What are the real values you believe in?

SELF-PRACTICE/SELF-REFLECTION (Bennett-Levy et al., 2015)

Identifying and understanding unhelpful (old) ways of being and then creating and strengthening new ways of being. Bennett-Levy et al.(2015) provide a rich package for self-practice and self-reflection. The following focal points are only a sample of the reflective process.

- **The environment** Immediate context and background influences
What cultural identity am I bringing to this situation?
What made me vulnerable in the first place?
- **Thoughts**
What are my negative automatic thoughts about this?
What are the underlying assumptions?
- **Emotions**
What feelings am I experiencing?
- **Behaviours**
What did I not do that I might have done?
- **Bodily sensations**
What's happening in my body?
- **Change**
How would I like to be?
How can I use narrative, imagery, drawing, movement and music to strengthen this?
How can I put this into practice to 'build the muscle' of this new way of being?

A range of other ways to focus during reflection have also been proposed including those by Bain et al. (1999), Bolton (2005), Bond and Holland (2010), Boud et al. (1985), Brockbank & McGill (1998), Driscoll (2007), Hatton and Smith (1995), Osmond and Darlington (2005), Peters (1991), Rolfe (2001), Ruch (2009), Taylor, B. (2000), Taylor, C. (2006), Taylor and White (2000), Uhrich (2009), Valli (1997).

The key ideas in these approaches in terms of the content and perspectives are:

Content The two content themes in the various approaches are:

- **Happenings** Everything that happened or was experienced in the situation. This includes actions, thoughts, verbal and non-verbal communications, body feelings and emotions.
- **Beliefs** The practitioner's assumptions, theories and values about how to do their work including single loop reflection (the beliefs that underpin the choice of strategies and how to relate to the client) and double loop reflection (how the problem was framed and the meaning of the work).

Perspectives The other theme in the various approaches is that actions, beliefs, and emotions can be explored from the perspective of each of the parties involved:

- **Client** (individual, couple, group or organisation) What did the client experience in the session and in their relationship with the practitioner? What worked for them and what didn't work? What do they notice?

- **Practitioner** What did the practitioner experience in the session and in their relationship with the client and what are they experiencing in their relationship with the supervisor? What do they notice?
- **Supervisor** What is the supervisor experiencing in their relationship with the practitioner? What do they notice about the practitioner or client or interventions?
- **System** (anyone who's involved, such as client's family social and professional network – [including the referral person] and practitioner's team and workplace) What's their involvement? What do they notice?
- **Profession** What would like-minded colleagues notice? What would colleagues from other theoretical positions notice? What are their views? What would they do? What does the literature say about best practice?

References

- Bain, R., Packer, J., & Mills, C. (1999). Using journal writing to enhance student teachers' reflectivity. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 5 (1), 51-73.
- Bennett-Levy, J., Thwaites, R. Haarhoff, B. and Perry, H. (2015) *Experiencing CBT from the inside out. A self practice/self-reflection workbook*. Guilford.
- Bolton, G. (2005) *Reflective practice: writing*. 2nd ed. Sage. (3rd Ed, 2010)
- Bond, M. and Holland, S. (2010) *Skills of Clinical Supervision for Nurses*. Open Uni Press.
- Boud, D., Keogh, R. and Walker, D. (1985) Promoting reflection in learning: a model? Chapter 1 (18-40) in D. Boud, R. et al. (eds.) *Reflection: turning experience into learning*. Kogan Page.
- Brockbank, A. and McGill, I. (2012) *Facilitating Reflective Learning*. 2nd ed. Kogan Press
- Brookfield, S. (1995) *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. Jossey-Bass.
- Carroll, M. (2010a) Levels of reflection. *Psychotherapy in Australia*, 16, 2, 24-31.
- Clutterbuck, D. (2010) *Using the seven conversations in supervision*. davidclutterbuckpartnership.com
- Crowe, M. and O'Malley, J. (2006) Teaching critical reflection skills. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 56, 1, 79-87.
- Driscoll, J. (2007) *Practising clinical supervision*. 2nd ed. Bailliere, Tindall, Elsevier.
- Fook, J. and Gardner, F. (2007) *Practising critical reflection: A resource handbook*. Berkshire: McGraw Hill, Open University Press.
- Ghaye, T. and Lillyman, S. (2010) *98? Reflection: principles and practices for healthcare professionals*. (2nd Ed). Quay Books.
- Hatton, N. & Smith, D. (1995) Reflection in teacher education: towards definition and implementation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 11, 33-49.
- Hawkins, P. and Shohet, R. (2000) *Supervision in the helping professions*. (2nd Ed). Berkshire: Open University Press. (quote: 51) (4th Ed. 2012)
- Johns, C. (1998) Opening the doors of perception. (1-20) in C. Johns and D. Freshwater (eds). *Transforming nursing through reflective practice*. Blackwell Sci.

- Johns, C. (2004) *Becoming a reflective practitioner, 2nd Ed. Blackwell Pub.*
- Johns, C. (2009) *Guided reflection: Advancing practice.* Wiley.
- Kitchenham, A. (2008) The evolution of John Mezirow's transformative learning theory. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 6, 104-123.
- Korthagen, F. and Vasalos, A. (2005) Levels in reflection. *Teachers and Teaching*, 11, 47-71.
- McKee, M. (2003) Excavating our frames of mind. *Social Work*, 48, 3, 401-408.
- McNicol, A. and Baker, W. (2000) *The power of peer supervision: 7 tools for supervision groups.* Auckland: New Zealand Mentoring Centre.
- Mezirow, J. (1997) Transformative learning: theory to practice. In P. Cranton (Ed.) *Transformative learning in action.* (5-12) Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J., Taylor, E.W. (2009) *Transformative learning in practice.* Wiley.
- Osmond, J. and Darlington, Y. (2005) Reflective analysis: techniques for facilitating reflection. *Australian Social Work*, 58, 3-14.
- Peters, J.M. (1991) Strategies for reflective practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 51, 89-96.
- Rolfe, G. (2001) Models and frameworks. In Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D., Jasper, M. *Critical reflection for nursing and the helping profession.* Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ruch, G. (2009) Identifying 'the critical' in a relationship-based model of reflection. *European Journal of Social Work*, 12, 349-362.
- Schon, D. (1983) *The reflective practitioner:* Jossey-Bass.
- Taylor, B. (2000) *Reflective practice. A guide for nurses and midwives.* Allen & Unwin.
- Taylor, C. (2006) Narrating significant experience: reflective accounts and the production of (self) knowledge. *British Journal of Social Work*, 36, 189-206
- Taylor, C. and White, S. (2000) *Practising reflexivity in health and welfare.* Open Uni Press.
- Thompson, S. and Thompson, N. (2008) *The critically reflective practitioner.* Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ulrich, T.A. (2009) The hierarchy of reflective practice in physical education. *Reflective Practice*. 10, (4), 501-512.
- Valli, L. (1997) Listening to other voices. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 71, 67-88.
- van Manen, M. (1977) Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical *Curriculum Inquiry*, 6, 205-228.