

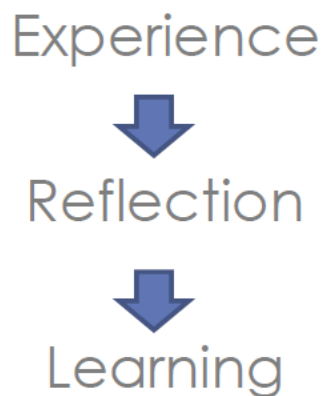
4) Reflection

Reflection is the process of reflecting (i.e. of remembering or recounting what you experienced).

Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one's experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. – Rodger, C. (2002)

Evaluation is the process of evaluating that reflected experience (i.e. of judging what worked and/or what didn't from that experience).

Reflection is about taking the time to consider and ponder an experience (whether that be with a person or a book or a lecture or an event). So, instead of moving forward first, when you reflect you're bending back in time to consider what happened or what you read or heard or experienced.



Evaluation, on the other hand, is about appraising something or someone. So when you're evaluating, you're literally trying to find the value in that experience (or book or event or lecture, etc.).

Though they may seem similar, they're not the same thing. For example, it is possible to reflect on an experience and not evaluate it. As I'm sure you've noticed by now, there are plenty of people who will often recount something from the past (let's say a group of friends reflecting on growing up in the same neighborhood) but never evaluate that experience as to what was good or bad or what they learned from it or how it's changed their lives.

However, it is difficult to evaluate an experience without reflecting (Note: you can evaluate an idea without reflecting or evaluate something that just occurred (like which dessert was better) without really reflecting). Reflecting is about pondering a past experience, evaluating is about finding the value in that experience.

For example, you could reflect back on yesterday and say, "That was a good book I read yesterday," and stop there. However, evaluation would go the next step and cause you to review the contents of that book to apprise its value, "What in that book was valuable to me (either as something positive to do or negative to avoid)?"

Reflection is presented as a cyclical stage process and many stage process models of reflection have been proposed to be used. The models all share some variation of three basic stages: experience (the event and feelings toward it), a critical analysis of the situation and any new knowledge gained, development of and internalization of new perspectives and strategies to apply in the future.

Schön's model of reflective practice

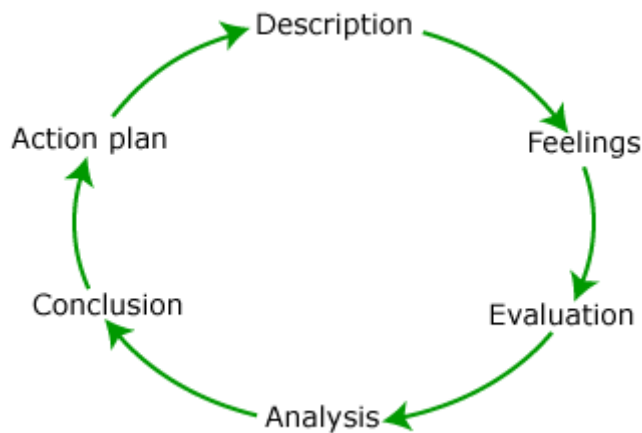
Donald Schön divided reflection into reflection-in-action (the use of theories, examples and actions to new situations, i.e. the capacity to think what one is doing while doing it) and reflection-on-action (looking at the event or problem and how it was dealt with afterwards).

Greenaway 3-stage model

Based on a simple 3-stage experiential learning cycle the Greenaway model suggests a Plan>>Do>>Review>> cycle



Gibbs' reflective cycle



Johns' model for structured reflection

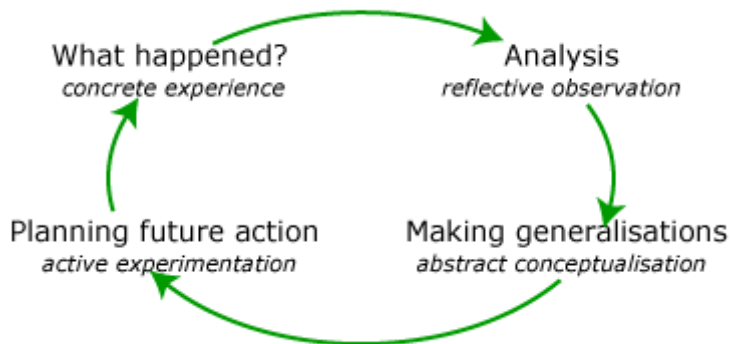
More of a list of key questions to guide an analysis of a incident or general experience. Johns recognizes the benefits of sharing reflections which is an essential part of building a community of practice and the importance of the 'situatedness' of an incident as highlighted by the attention given to influencing factors and learning as involving considering actions to support others.

- Description: Drawing out of the key issues within an experience through a description of thoughts and feelings and contextual background of the experience
- Reflection: Examination of one's motivations and the resulting actions, the consequences of actions for all stakeholders (including their possible emotional reactions).
- Influencing factors: Determining internal and external factors that influenced decisions and actions. Determine knowledge that did or should have influenced decisions and actions.

- Alternative strategies: Evaluation of one's actions and consideration of other possible choices and their respective consequences.
- Learning: Situating the experience and feelings within past experience and future practice and in providing support to others and considering the impact the experience will have on reflection-in-action.

Structured reflection based on Kolb's Learning Cycle

A model based directly on Kolb's experiential learning cycle where active experimentation leads to a transfer of learning from current cycle to a new cycle.



Rolfe Framework for reflexive practice

What? >> So what? >> Now what?

Atkins and Murphy's stage model of reflection



There are a lot of ways of using reflection in the frames of educational projects.

- Reflection-on-action

Any and any combination of these have been suggested as ways to enhance reflection-on-action

- Reflective writing in journals or [blogs](#)
- Video and Audio taping

- Critical incident technique - identifying particular helpful or unhelpful behaviours in a specific critical situation

- Discussion
- Drawing/ Concept mapping
- Role playing
- Storytelling
- Using spreadsheets

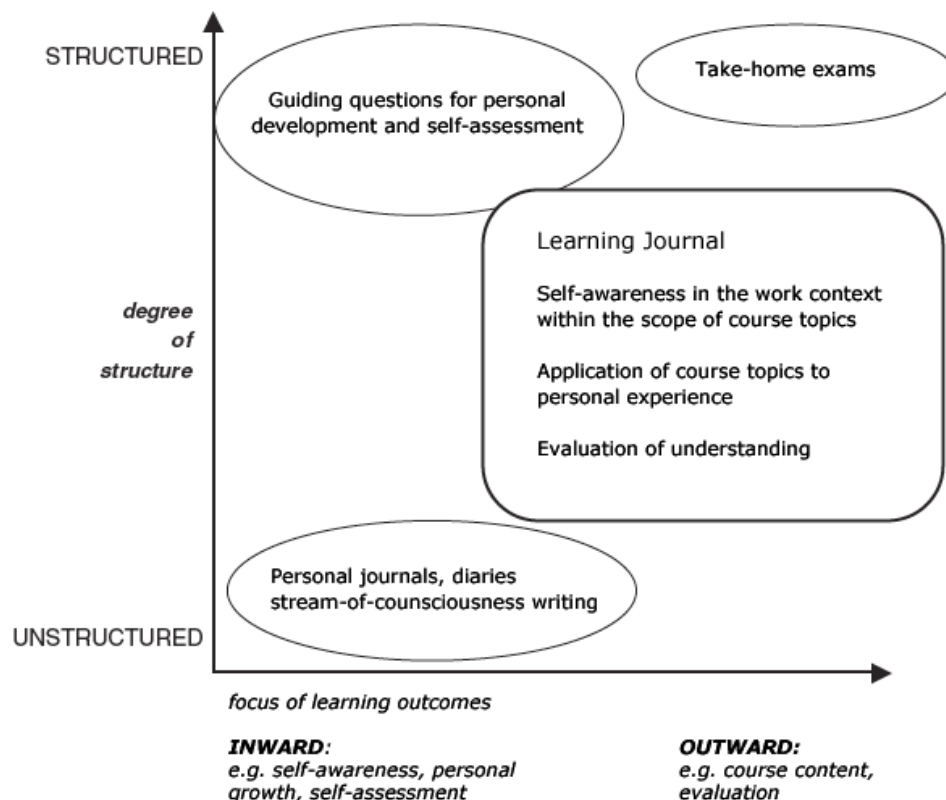
- Reflection-in-action

Here the methods become a little more esoteric, but the aim of these activities are to provide physical relaxation and mental awareness and grounding that will enhance reflection in a particular situation.

- Mindfulness
- Meditation/Yoga/Physical activity
- Music

- Reflective writing

Writing require participants to engage in critical and reflective thinking can be used in a variety of learning situations. Reflective writing can include the use of readings, observation and experience related to the learning situation in question. Reflective writing assignments can be highly structured or unstructured. Reflective writing may also be inwardly or outwardly focused depending on the degree to which reflection is directed towards self-awareness.



Types of reflective writing assignments taken from Varner & Peck (2003, p. 4)

There is also a certain method to evaluate reflective writing. It evaluates three levels of reflection and awareness:

- Level I: Descriptive - description of the situation and the reactions of all involved
- Level II: Analytical - analysis of context and consideration of the other and their interrelations
- Level III: Integrated - discussion of one's feelings and reactions and their impact in the particular and possible broader contexts with a focus on future actions

The three levels are examined from the perspectives of the reflective practitioner, other stakeholders and the particular context to discern the role each plays in the course of current and future events.

- Technology-based tools:
 - Online journals or blogs for reflective writing
 - Social software for synchronous and asynchronous discussions and sharing of stories and experiences, etc.
- Reflection groups.

Reflection groups are small groups of between 4 and 6 people. They usually take place daily at the end of the programme and last between 30 minutes and one hour. Their composition is normally fixed for the whole duration of the activity. This allows the members of the reflection group to create their own atmosphere during the several sessions over the duration of the activity.

It is interesting to have in each group participants from different backgrounds, with different personalities and profiles, so that within each group there is wide range of points of view. This is particularly important for the evaluation. In addition, small groups offer a more secure space for expression in public than a large group. .

The Reflection Group gives the possibility participants:

to exchange experiences with fellow participants

to evaluate the day

to let off steam

to come up with suggestions and ideas to improve the programme

For facilitators, reflection groups are a way to “keep in touch” with what is going on in the group.

Emotional Go-Around

Participants are asked to show with a word, their body, or a facial expression how they feel right at the moment. Let people show their reaction, one at a time, and then have participants explain their reaction. This activity can give the facilitator a sense of the group mood and gives the participants a chance to express how they feel at that moment.

Service Skits

Split the participants into groups of three or four and ask each group to portray their service experience through a skit. Give each group 10 minutes to plan what they will do and up to five minutes to share their skit with the rest of the group. After each group's presentation, have the whole group process reactions, give suggestions for effective future projects, and give positive feedback to the actor/actresses. This activity could take 30 minutes to an hour to complete.

Visualization

Take your participants on an imaginary tour of their service experience. Ask participants to find a comfortable position (lay on the floor, rest your head on the table, lounge in a chair) and close eyes. Play relaxing music at a low volume. Ask participants to become aware of their breathing, ask them to leave their present thoughts and clear their

minds. Once the participants appear to have relaxed, ask them to begin remembering their service experience. To assist them in remembering their experience mention common events, allow participants to remember how they felt before they did their experience, what their expectations were, what happened in their preparation, how they felt during their service experience. To stimulate their thinking you might mention some of what you remembered. Slowly bring them back to the present. Ask them to become aware of their surroundings, again concentrating on their breathing, and open their eyes when they are ready. Ensure that a quiet tone is maintained. Continue to play music, and ask participants to share their recollections with another person and finally have people make comments to the whole group.

Group Banners

Using a large pieces of banner paper and markers, ask participants to get into pairs and depict their experiences using a combination of words and pictures. Give them about 10-15 minutes. When completed ask each pair to share their banner with the whole group. Use their banners as a jumping off point for processing the experience.

All Tied Up

Have the group stand in a circle. Holding the end of a ball of string, hand the ball off to a participant. Ask them to reflect on a particular question (e.g. what was something new you learned today?). Once they have answered the question ask them to hold onto their piece of the string and to pass the ball onto someone else. Continue the process until everyone has reflected on the question, and has a section of string in their hands. When completed, you should have something that looks like a web. When they are all done talking, make some points about the interconnectedness of people, how they are all part of the solution, for if one person had not contributed to their service projects the outcome would've been different, etc.

Stream of Consciousness

After lying down, relaxing and allowing their minds to wander, encourage participants to begin free word association around their service experience. Guide participants through the process by offering refocusing words, but allow them to say what comes to their minds, without censor or restriction.

Collage of Words

Using a large sheet of paper, have participants write words that described their experience. Provide plenty of creative material (e.g. markers, crayons, colored pencils) and a large sheet of paper on a smooth surface. Give participants twenty minutes, and have them explain their work when they're finished. Explain how without everyone's contributions, the work wouldn't be as rich and varied as it is.

Service Interviews

Encourage participants to see their projects through the public's view by conducting media-style interviews with one another. Remember to cover all the bases: who, what, when, where, why and how.

Rap and Rhyme Responses

Divide the group into small teams, and give participants 10 minutes to write a rap or rhyme about their service experience. The teams must incorporate all of their members into the production.

Show and Tell

Individually or in pairs, have participants describe items they've collected or used throughout the activity, including their reactions and emotions regarding the item or the activity it was used in.

Human Sculpture

In a large open space, divide your group into two halves. Each half creates a sculpture around a word or phrase (e.g. peace, service-learning) with few props. Then each group displays its 'art' for the other group. The watching group can interpret the sculpture, without disruption, for two minutes. When they're finished, the sculpture group can explain its work.

Group Poem Writing

Like a circle journal, this will bring your group together in a reflection on their service. Circulate a piece of paper around your group with the title across the top "For Love of Service", encouraging each participant to write a line in response to the previous until everyone has written. When finished, have a volunteer read the work to the entire group, and then discuss it.

Questions Left Unanswered

In pairs, ask participants to write down any question they feel is unanswered from the activity you just completed. Encourage participants to ask anything, and then report their questions to the large group. Refrain discussion until all the questions are read, but then allow for an open exchange between participants.

Imagining the Future

Ask participants to imagine that the year is 2020, and the participants in the group have rejoined for a reunion. As a group, reflect on all of the changes that have happened because of the service you've completed, and the difference that work has made on your life

Graffiti Museum

Glue a wide variety of magazine pictures on construction paper, and post them down a hallway wall. Have participants look through all of the pictures, and chose one that represents their impression of the previous event (e.g. an activity, the day, or the whole weekend). Gathering in a circle, have participants quietly circulate the pictures, and write why they do or don't relate with the picture.

There is always possibility and need to adopt the models, methods and frameworks to build an even stronger framework in the methods according to the needs of the project.