

Video 5 transcript

Tools for reflection

Hi and welcome to video 5, the final video in our series, being recorded for Museum Development North. This video is all about providing you with tools for reflection. My name is Sarah Oswald from The Authentic Spark.

So why spend time on reflection? Well, hopefully you've found the reflective opportunities in the previous four videos helpful to you in thinking about and understanding your personal resilience and in exploring how you can make use of some mindful communication as a tool. So some of the things that can benefit you from making reflection part of your regular practice is that it gives you a space to reflect and help build your resilience. We notice that, of course, resilience is supported by understanding what you have learnt and using that to move forwards.

It can give you an increased sense of your self-awareness. It helps you to be curious and also to have self-compassion rather than self-judgment. So again, supporting that resilience through curiosity and through caring for yourself. By reflecting, you can actually acknowledge and celebrate your achievements and your strengths and that positive outlook and that sense of optimism. Again, it helps your resilience. It's part of supporting and exercising a growth mindset, something that we've looked at in the resilience videos you've seen previously.

And by doing reflection, you can start to recognise patterns in your behaviour and in your decision making and you're able to help yourself become unstuck and break those patterns.

Reflection is a useful way of reminding yourself of your values and your purpose. And we know that to support us in being resilient, we also need to know and connect with our values and where we're going and have a sense of moving forwards. And the insights that you can gain from reflective practice means you can apply those to moving forwards in your life, to making choices, and to developing as a person.

Just to give you an idea and sense of understanding what we're meaning around reflection, and one of the models for reflection that's useful, to support you in this is Gibbs' reflective cycle. And this model has six elements to it. We start with the description of any situation, or any experience that we're reflecting on, we ask ourselves what actually happened. So the starting point for any reflection is, is what happened? Where are we now? What's going on?

Then we want to reconnect with our feelings, so noticing what emotions came up. Following by an evaluation. What is it that went well in that situation, what didn't go well. Having a balanced assessment of the experience or situation.

We want to apply an analysis, so understanding what was going on around that, what factors contributed to that situation, what the context was. And drawing some conclusions from that. So taking all that understanding, taking our emotions, our sense of what went well and what didn't go well and our understanding of the context. We can identify things that we've learned. Things that we would change. Things that we would do differently.

And then part of this reflective cycle is then also taking the next step. So identifying actions and ways you want to move forwards. So the last part of the cycle is having an action plan.

And a lot of these tools for reflection I'm going to share with you, help to take you through this cycle in different ways.

So the first tool for reflection and supporting your resilience is appreciative reflection. Or focusing on exploring the best. Often when we try to reflect we have a sense that we're looking for the things that went wrong. Whereas this appreciative inquiry model is about exploring what the strengths are, what went well, and how you can use those to help you get unstuck.

So you want to take some time, have a notepad and a pen with- or pencil with you, and in any particular situation that you're struggling with, or that you're looking back at, think about what is working well for me. You might want to look at a time in the past where things have gone well, and notice when am I at my best? What strengths did I use when I was at my best? So this is the discovery element of the 4D model.

Then moving on from that is the opportunity to dream. What might be. If I was at my best in this situation that I'm facing, what might that look like? What strengths would I draw on? Thinking about when I have been great when I've been at my best in the past, how could I bring that into the space now?

And then you create the design, so you explore what should be. You ask yourself, what could I do now to make that happen, to make my best happen?

And then deploy is your action. It's asking yourself, what's the path forward? What steps or actions am I gonna take to make this happen?

So if you're feeling stuck in a particular challenge or difficulty, looking at it through this lens in appreciative inquiry, a positive attitude can help you reflect and move forwards.

The second tool is the start, stop, continue model. And this is something that you can use to help you change unhelpful behaviours that you notice, to help you stop procrastinating, or as a way to help you continually develop yourself. Perhaps you'll want to look at how you move on in your career or your role. So, take a particular project challenge or issue, and again with a piece of paper and a pencil to hand, start by asking yourself, what do you want

to start doing? So what is one small thing that you could start doing to help you in your particular situation. You're not trying to solve the whole. You're just looking for one thing that you can start on.

And then reflecting on that situation, what do you want to stop? So is there something that's going on, something that you are doing, something that's happening that isn't serving you? What's that thing that you could put a stop to doing, or engaging with, or thinking about that could make a change?

And finally, what do you want to continue? So is there something that you're doing well, that is helpful to you in your situation, that you could continue to do, or do more of, and that would make a difference?

This is simple, short reflective tool, again with a focus on moving forwards rather than being stuck. Reflective 3-2-1 tool is something that you can use to reflect on a particular experience you've had. It's really helpful when maybe you have been in a training context, or when you have gone through something that is new, perhaps you are doing a new element in your role.

You can set a timer for 3 minutes, and write down everything that comes into your mind about that experience. Don't filter it, just write down everything that comes forward. Read back through what you've written at the end of those 3 minutes.

Then set the timer again, but for 2 minutes. And during those 2 minutes, write down everything that you noticed about what you previously wrote. What is coming forward for you? What patterns do you recognise? What things or themes come out?

Then when those 2 minutes is up, set the timer for a further 1 minute. And in that 1 minute, write down any actions you want to take, or any changes you want to make, as a result of reflecting on your experience. So this is a model or a tool for allowing you that growth. That sense of learning and personal development. It's very simple, but it can have a positive impact on giving you an action, or a few small actions that you want to take to move forwards.

Tool number 4 is called the Momentum Builder. And this is something you can use when you are feeling overwhelmed, where there's a sense of a big stress, and you want to break that down into simple, small actions that aren't intimidating to you. They help you overcome paralysis, and it gives you more of a sense that you have the power to act. So think about something that's overwhelming you or stressful for you right now. And ask yourself one question. What is the one small step I can take today to move this forward? You are not trying to move mountains, you are just trying to take one step at a time.

Find that one small step, note it down, and take that action. Make it something that you can move forward on straight away.

This tool, the 10 minute brain dump is a great one for, if you want to, declutter to your mind. It's a good one to use at the end of the day if there's been a lot going on and you need to, support your sleep. Because we know, of course sleep and rest is great for supporting our resilience. It's also something to use when you feel your mind is scattered, when you've got too much going on in your head. So that may be a point during the day at work when you just need to clear your mind.

You set a timer for 10 minutes or less. If 5 minutes is all you have, that's fine. During that time, write down absolutely everything that's filling your mind. You write continuously, you don't filter it or organise it or censor it or correct anything. You just let all that material come out. When the timer stops, you stop. And your focus on this is on just dumping those worries, clearing your mind, putting everything down on paper so that it's no longer held up there.

You might choose to come back to your notes later on and review them and reflect again on any themes you might see coming up, any patterns, anything that you realize you might then be able to impact on. But at the moment, in time, all you're trying to do is clear that space, particularly if you're using this before you go to sleep. It's clear in your mind to let your brain rest and recuperate and regenerate and build your resilience.

This tool is something that I'm sure many of you have heard people suggest to you, which is journaling. Journaling is a tool for regular, reflective practice, something that you build as a habit into your way of life. But you need to find a way of journaling that works for you, choosing your own way.

So things to think about if you want to employ journaling as a reflective practice is, find the time of day that works for you. You might consider habit stacking by tackling it onto something you already do regularly. So if there is a point in the day where you have a particular habit, I don't know, when you go to bed at night, maybe always pick up a book, but before you pick up the book, do you pick up- could you potentially pick up your journal first, and then pick up your book? Something that you can stack onto.

You might try scheduling journaling space into your calendar so you actually make a date with yourself. A time with yourself to do that. Decide how long you actually want to spend on journaling. It isn't something that you have to spend a long time on. It may just be five minutes as a download. Set a timer for yourself so you don't feel that you have to keep going all the time.

And think about using whatever tool for you, whatever you're attracted to. It might be paper and pen and having an attractive notebook. It might be that you much prefer to voice note things. And that actually works better with the time of day that you've chosen for your journaling, for your reflections. You might like to work with creative materials with collage, with scribbling and doodling as a way to journal and notice what you're feeling.

You might find it helpful to consider a prompt question or a prompt image or you can buy cards with prompt cards to help you into that reflective mood. Or you could just simply try starting with what you're grateful for that day. So you might recall from, video 2, this idea of a gratitude journal or having a gratitude practice. Starting this journaling practice with simply being grateful for something and then seeing what flows from that is a good way to build that regular practice.

And in the slides you'll find a couple of links to ways or guides around journaling. The idea of morning pages. Where you just write three pages of conscious thought every morning. You let it all come out there, you see what's happening. And also some tools on reflective journaling. So how you capture things at the end of the day.

So what next for you? Well, I really encourage you to explore and try out one or more of these reflective tools for yourself. See what works and what doesn't work for you. And then think about how you might build these into your day-to-day to support your resilience. To support you personally. There's also the opportunity to think about whether any of these reflective practices might be useful in your work, or as part of a team, can you draw on any of these to support you together in being resilient? I hope you've enjoyed this and the previous 4 videos and that you find that these are useful to take you forwards