

Video 5 workbook

Tools for reflection

This resource book supports Video 5 on tools for reflection, part of a series of five videos created for Museum Development North

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Why reflection?

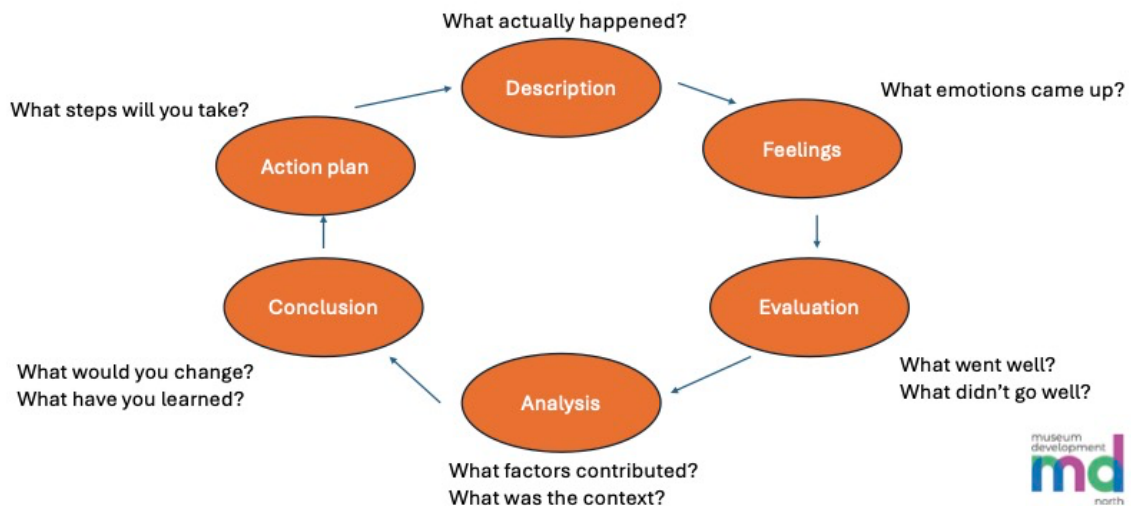
Taking time to reflect might feel self-indulgent or unnecessary in a busy working life. But taking even a brief moment to reflect, and building this into your practice, whether in how you work or just in life can help you to build your resilience.

Reflective practice can:

- Increase your self-awareness
- Help you to be curious and have self-compassion not self-judgement
- Support you in acknowledging and celebrating your achievements and strengths
- Support and exercise your growth mindset
- Help you to recognise patterns in your behaviour and decisions, and make change
- Enable you to remember your values and purpose
- Let you gain insights that you can apply to moving forwards

Graham Gibbs developed the **Reflective Cycle** in 1988¹ which was designed to support learning from experiences. It encourages exploration of an experience through 6 stages so that you can learn from things that went well or didn't go well and from that plan how you might move forward.

Gibbs' reflective cycle



It can be used for individual reflection, or in a project or group situation, for single experiences or repeated experiences.

The Reflective Cycle serves to illustrate what we are looking to achieve when we give some time to reflection. We are being curious, willing to learn from strengths and mistakes, acknowledging our feelings and looking to take actions to change, improve or develop new outcomes in future experiences.

The following tools provide you with some simple reflective approaches that you can try for yourself, depending on the time you have available and what you want to reflect on / what you want to change or develop.

¹ Gibbs G (1988). Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford

Tools for reflection and resilience

1 Appreciative reflection or exploring the best

Using the Appreciative Inquiry 4-D model to help you get unstuck.

What is the issue, situation or circumstance in which you are feeling stuck?

Write down how you would describe it then consider these four aspects in turn:

- **Discovery** – What is working well for me? When am I at my best? (you might think of a time in the past – what strengths did you use? How could they apply now?)
- **Dream** – What might be? If I was at my best what would that look like?
- **Design** – What should be? What could I do to make that happen?
- **Deploy** – What is the path forward? What action will I take?

Having reflected, what can you draw on to help you ‘unstick’ yourself?

What actions will you now take forward?

#2 Start, stop, continue

Use this to help you change unhelpful behaviours, or stop procrastinating, or keep developing yourself

Think about a project, challenge or issue. Write it down and then answer each of these questions in turn:

- **What do you want to start?** What is one small thing I could start doing to help me?
- **What do you want to stop?** What’s one small thing that isn’t serving me?
- **What do you want to continue?** What’s one thing I’m doing well or that is helpful I should continue / do more of?

No make a plan to take those actions or starting, stopping or continuing what you have identified. Ensure that these are small, manageable steps, or break down what might seem a large step / action into ‘bite-sized’ chunks.

#3 Reflective 3-2-1

Use this to reflect on a particular experience.

Set a timer for 3 minutes. Write down everything that comes into your mind about the experience.

Read back through your notes.

Set the timer for 2 minutes. Write down everything you notice about what you wrote.

Set the timer for 1 minute. Write down any actions you want to take / changes you will make now as a result of reflecting on the experience.

Consciously build those actions into your day to day.

#4 Momentum Builder

This tool is useful when you want to break down the big stresses into small, non-intimidating actions. It can help you to overcome action paralysis and give yourself agency to act.

Pick something that is overwhelming or stressful for you right now. Get that issue out of your head and onto paper. Then ask yourself:

- What's one small step I can take today to move this forward?
- Note the step
- Take action

5 The 10 minute brain dump

Clear mental clutter, destress before sleep or when you are feeling your mind is scattered.

Set a timer for 10 minutes (or less if your time is limited). Write down everything that is filling your mind. Write continuously, do not filter, organise, censor or correct grammar etc.

When the timer stops, you stop

The focus in the moment is on dumping worries and clearing mental space. You may wish to simply tear up and throw away the worries. Or you can choose to review and reflect on it later.

6 Journaling for regular reflective practice, in your own way

Find a time of day that works for you. When can you find the space to give to yourself?

You might consider 'habit stacking', adding your time for journalling onto something you already do regularly. For example if you have a bedtime routine, add this into the mix.

To help you to dedicate time for yourself, you could try scheduling it into your calendar. Making a 'date' with yourself to reflect.

Decide how long you want to spend – set a timer. It can feel less overwhelming or onerous if you just set yourself a short space of time. You'll be surprised how much you might gain in just 5 minutes. And if you feel you want to keep going, you can.

Use whatever tools work for you e.g. an attractive notebook and pen, voice notes, art materials, collage.

Consider using a prompt question, image or card so you have something to respond to other than a blank page.

Try just starting with what you are grateful for that day. A gratitude practice is a simple starting point for reflection, and supports resilience.

Some guides to journalling you might like to explore:

- Morning pages = Write three pages of conscious thought every morning
<https://www.yopandtom.com/blogs/news/how-to-do-morning-pages>
- Reflective journalling = at the end of the day capturing everything
<https://www.melaniehudson.co.uk/blog/journal-for-wellbeing>

What next?

Try applying one these reflective practices to an experience or introducing one into your day to day.

How might using reflection help to support you in increasing your self awareness and feeling more resilient?

Could you make use of a reflective practice in your workplace, perhaps with others in your team, to help you all feel more resilient or identify learning opportunities?

If you haven't already done so, explore the other videos in this series to understand resilience and mindful communication.