

University of Essex

# INTRODUCTION TO REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

CREATED BY UNIVERSITY OF  
ESSEX OUTREACH TEAM

**THE AWARDS**  
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Winner  
University of the Year

# What is reflection?



# What is reflection?

- Reflection is an active process of witnessing ones own experience in order to examine it more closely, give meaning to it and learn from it.

Reflection involves three elements:

- Returning to the experience
- Attending to the feelings
- Evaluating the experience

Reflection can be of two main types:

- Reflecting on action (thinking back on a moment)
- Reflecting in action (thinking in the moment)



# Why reflect?



# Why reflect?

- Reflection is about getting the meaning from everyday experiences.
- We had the experience but missed the meaning.  
T.S Eliot, Four quartets

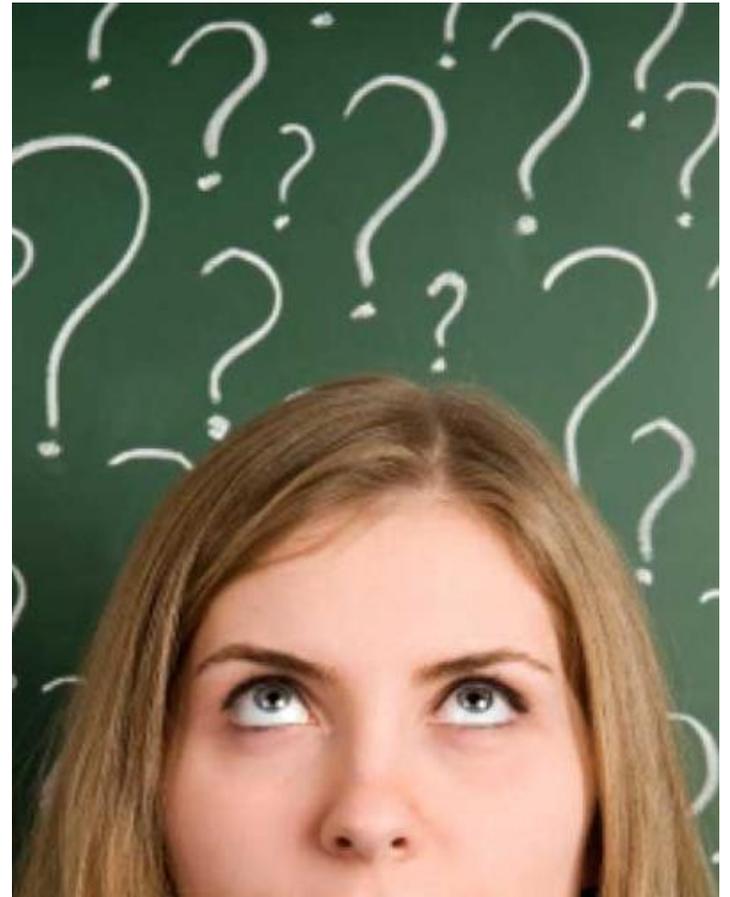


# WHAT IS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE?



# REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IS...

- Thinking about your actions
- Using them as a way of learning



“It is increasingly recognised that reflection is an important transferable skill, and is much valued by all around us, in employment, as well as in life in general. The ability to reflect is one of the most advanced manifestations of owning - and being in control of - a human brain.

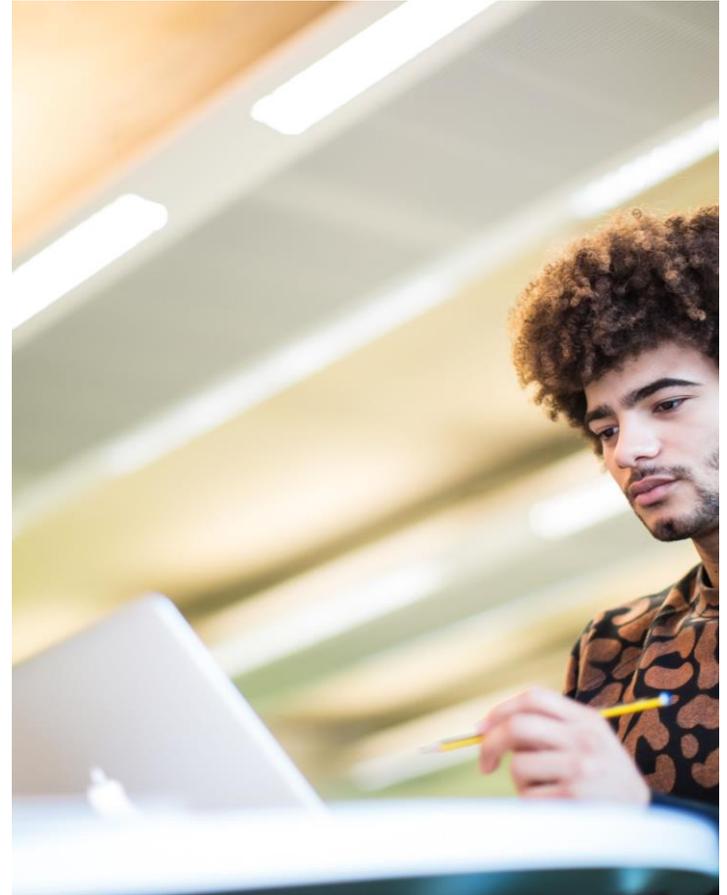
Have you reflected today? Almost certainly 'yes!'. But have you evidenced your reflection today? Almost certainly 'sorry, too busy at the moment'. And the danger remains that even the best of reflection is volatile - it evaporates away unless we stop in our tracks to make one or other kind of crystallisation of it - some evidence.”

(Race 2002)



# Task:

- Consider and write down the benefits of reflective practice.



**Acts as a safeguard against making impulsive decisions.**

**Creates opportunities to seriously consider the implications of any past or future action.**

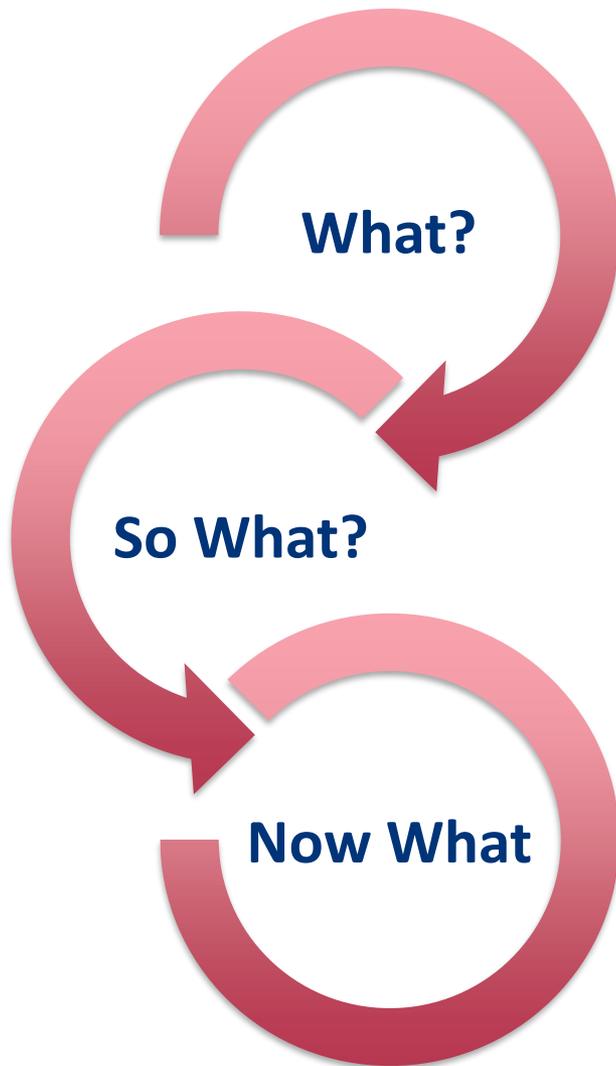
**Challenges individuals to be honest about the relationship between what they say and what they do.**



**Enables you to think more deeply about an issue, leading to greater insights and learning.**

**Connects the rational decision-making process to a more effective and experiential learning process.**

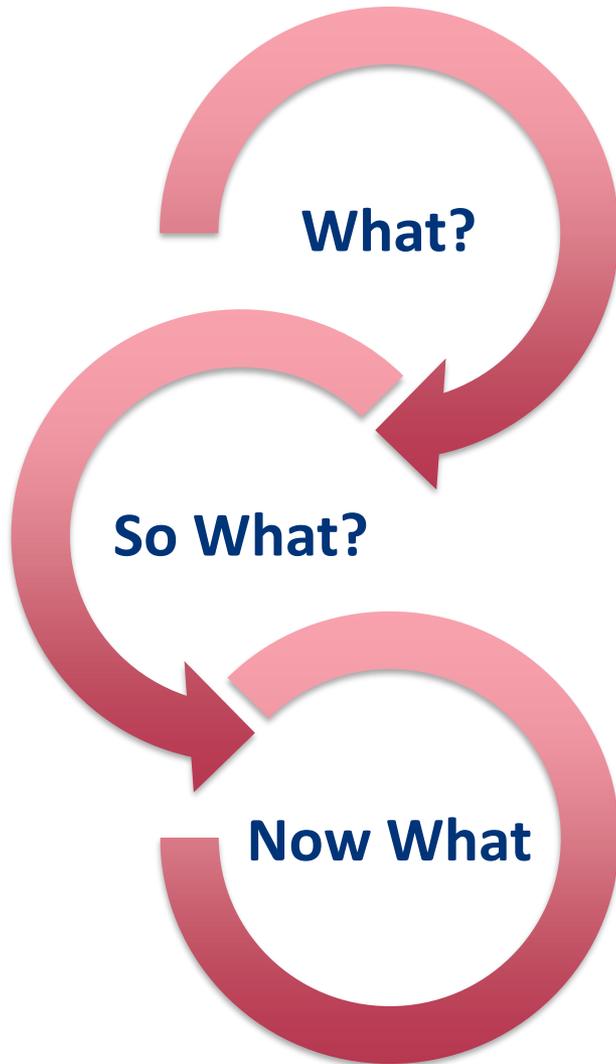
# The process of reflection – stripped back



- What Happened?
- Description, facts
  
- What did the experience mean?
- Interpretation
- The feelings
- Involved
- What was learned
  
- What are the next steps?
- Seeing the bigger picture
- Applying the lessons learned
- Planning future action



# Your turn! Give an example

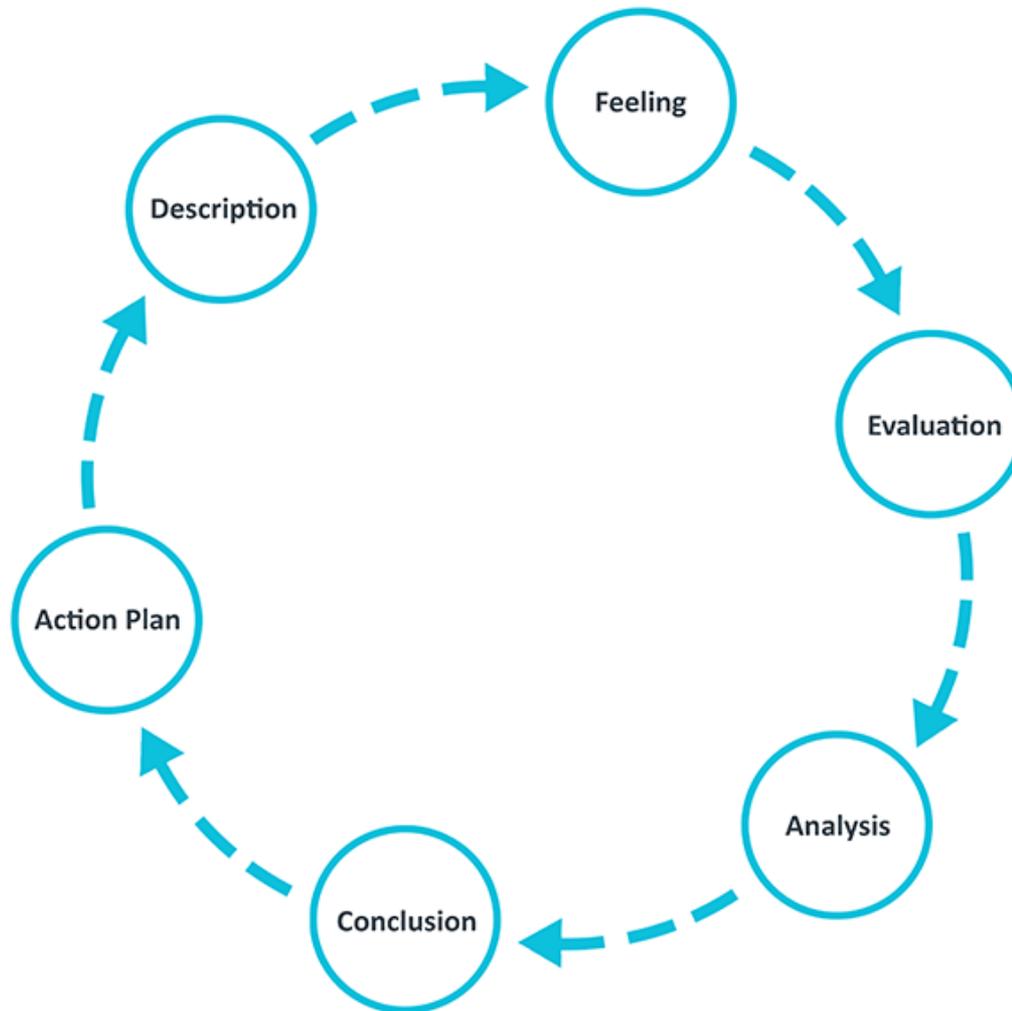


- **What Happened?**
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- **Seeing the bigger picture**
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INTS

# Gibbs' reflection cycle



**“It is not sufficient simply to have an experience in order to learn.**

**Without reflecting upon this experience it may quickly be forgotten, or its learning potential lost. It is from the feelings and thoughts emerging from this reflection that generalisations or concepts can be generated. And it is generalisations that allow new situations to be tackled effectively.”**

**(Gibbs 1988)**



# FUTURE GOALS



# Questions?