



# Reflecting on Reflection

## Establishment of a reflective practice group within a new rehab service

Rehab for Kids Conference

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# Plan

- What is reflective practice?
- Why our new rehab team wanted to prioritise reflective practice
- Setting up a reflective practice group
- Lessons learnt and next steps



A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding environment. Two large, moss-covered rocks are partially submerged in the water. In the background, a range of rugged mountains with patches of snow and green vegetation rises against a clear blue sky. The overall scene is peaceful and serene.

**What is reflective practice?**

# What is reflective practice

- Different to every professional
- No unified definition, numerous models

## Reflective practice

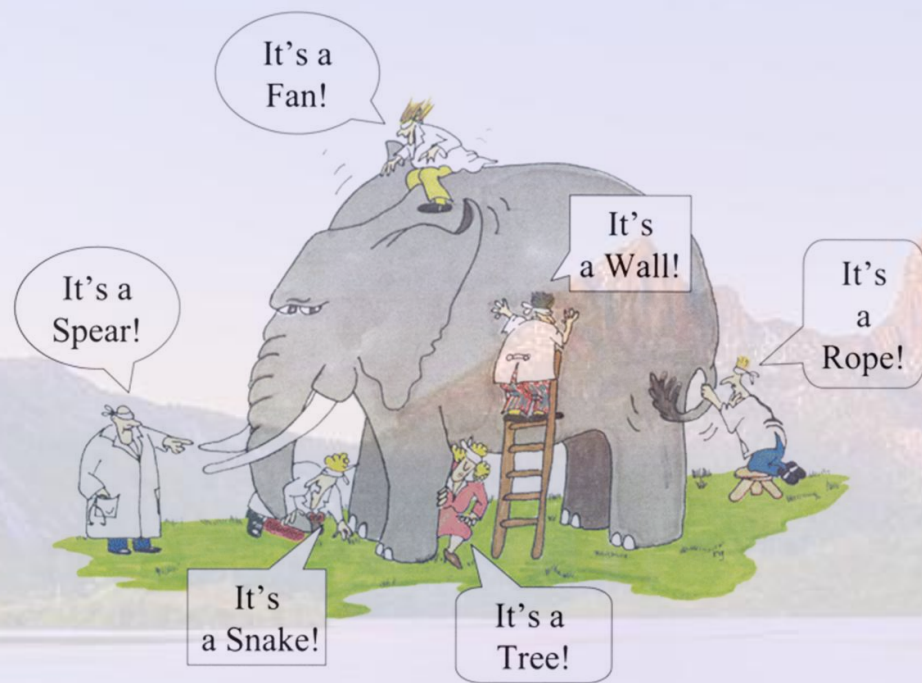


*Reflective practice (RP) is critical and deliberate inquiry into professional practice in order to gain a deeper understanding of oneself, others, and the meaning that is shared among individuals. This can happen during practice and after the fact, and can either be done alone or with others (Forrester, 2010; Peters, 1991; Schön, 1983).*



# What it can provide

- An invitation to step out of 'problem-solving' mode
- Opportunity to pause
- Be with each other without trying to fix, judge, win affection, affect outcome
- Consider multiple perspectives
- Curiosity encouraged!



# What it is not

- A solution to stressful or dysfunctional workplaces
- Meeting a 'self-care' checkbox
- Personal therapy or EAP





**Why bother with reflective practice?**



# Context and Motivation

## **Why we wanted to prioritise reflective practice**

- Formation of a new service: lots of change, uncertainty, and establishing new ways of working
- Diverse experiences and perspectives within the team
- Focus on developing team communication and functioning
- Awareness of pressures and tendency in rehab to always be 'doing'
- Desire to make reflective practice a core part of our new team's culture

# Desired potential benefits of an RPG

## Systems Focus

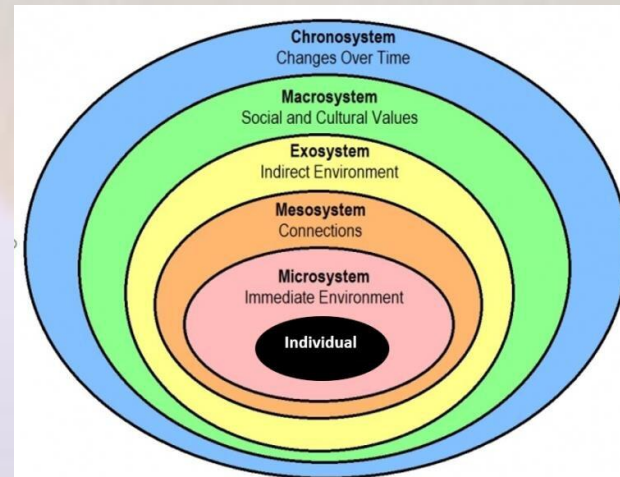
- Enhance team communication
- Developing a shared understanding of the workings of the team
- Anticipating challenges of a new team/service
- Build understanding of each person's skills, experience and knowledge
- Team development – particularly to aid in enhancing service delivery outcomes

## Clinical Focus

- Clinical case reflection
- Improve quality of care

## Individual Focus

- Development of our reflective practice and professional growth
- Opportunity to 'pause' - stop and think
- Help ourselves 'get out of doing mode'
- Encourage continuous learning and professional growth



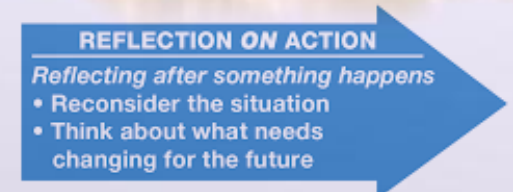
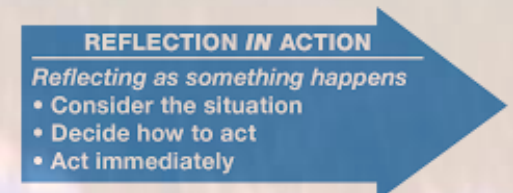
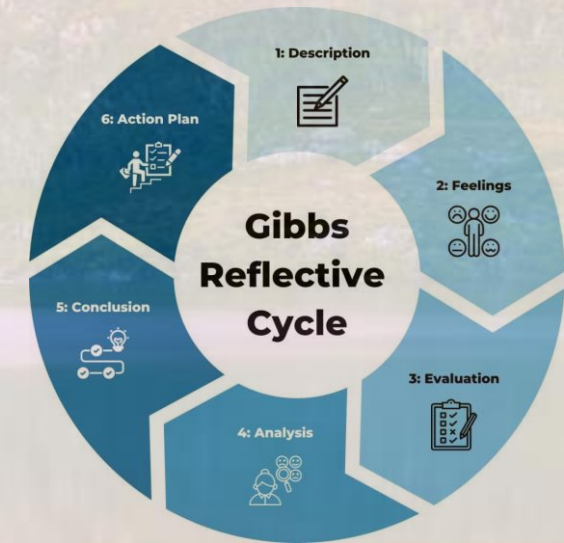
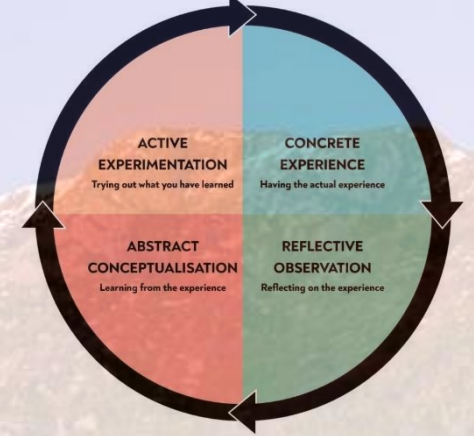


A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding environment. Two large, moss-covered rocks are partially submerged in the water. In the background, a range of rugged mountains with patches of snow and dense green forests stretches across the horizon under a clear blue sky. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

# **Setting up a reflective practice group**

# Models evidence base

- Kolb 's experiential learning cycle (1984)
- Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1998)
- Schoen's (1983) Reflective Practitioner





# How we went about it



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LITERATURE – VARIABLE FROM  
DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES  
AND SETTINGS

OUR OWN EXPERIENCE OF  
REFLECTIVE PRACTICE GROUPS

ADAPTING THIS FOR OUR TEAM AND  
SETTING, TO COME UP WITH OUR  
OWN APPROACH

# About the reflective practice group (RPG)

## Schedule

- Monthly – scheduled time
- All members invited with attendance 'encouraged'
- Off site, unique space separate to clinic work environment

## Establishing group foundations

- Facilitated by psychologist/social worker within the team
- Each member brought with them various experiences of 'reflective practice'
- Ground rules established as a team– expectations set.

## Session structure

- Initial sessions focused on socialising team to concepts of reflective practice, communication and collaboration
- More recent sessions shifting to team-led clinical topics for discussion – including exploration of case review





# **Lessons learnt and next steps**

# What is the state of play now

- Running monthly since July 2024 – to continue
- All members of the team make active attempts to attend – this includes the introduction of new staff to the team
- Now a base shared understanding of the group's purpose exists, conversations are delving deeper
- Discussions now more clinically focused – allowing reflection specifically around improving client care



# Feedback from the team

Survey created for anonymous team feedback

- Shared understanding of purpose of RPG
- Seen as opportunity for shared reflection
- Has assisted in helping build safe, open and constructive communication
- Helpful in hearing other perspectives and providing insights into what guided other ways of thinking
- Team eager to delve deeper
- Call for more structure and more specific clinic case discussions

# 'Reflections' from the process so far...

## Positives

- Exposure to different disciplines ways of working – including insights and approaches to practice
- Improved sense of team collaboration – stronger working relationships
- Opportunity for the team to have 'different', less pressurised conversations
- Improved communication throughout the team

## Challenges

- Managing competing demands – protecting the space
- Facilitation
- How much structure
- Focus/topics
- Getting stuck on systemic problem solving
- Navigating having these discussions with all team members present e.g. having coordinator/consultant present

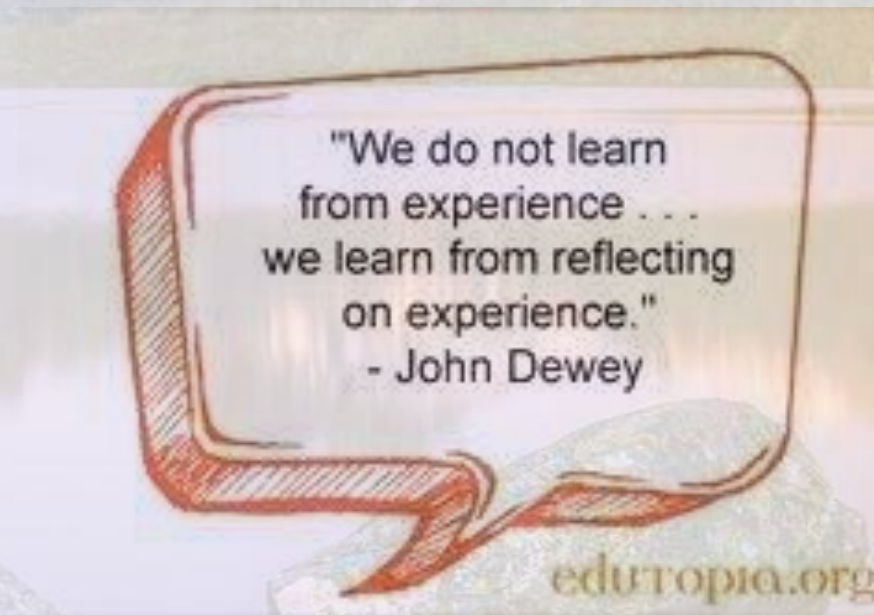


# Take home messages

- Fosters collaboration and open team communication
- Encourages multiple perspectives and shared understanding
- Supports the team in managing stress and valuing contributions
- No one-size-fits-all approach; many factors influence success
- Creating the right structure and safe space is key
- Reflective groups are adaptive and evolve with the team

# Helpful resources

- Kurtz, A. (2019). How to run Reflective Practice Groups: a guide for healthcare professionals. Routledge.





A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding environment. In the middle ground, there are several large, dark, mossy rocks protruding from the water. The background is dominated by a range of rugged mountains with snow-capped peaks and steep, rocky slopes. The sky is a clear, pale blue, and the overall atmosphere is serene and peaceful.

Any thoughts, questions or ‘reflections’?

# References

- Gibbs, G. 1988. Learning by Doing. A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods. Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development. 2013. Oxford Brooks University. Oxford. UK. ePub Version.
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- Schön, D. A. (2017). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Routledge.
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