

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

- “Reflection gives us the time and space to make better decisions, to appreciate the complexity of the problems we are facing and to understand the ways in which we influence and affect others.” (Parlakian & Seibel, 2001)
- Reflective practice is an opportunity to slow down and deconstruct something – a situation, an experience, a conversation – to better understand what happened, to see how I affected the situation and to see what my next steps are.
- The benefit of Reflective Practice is that when you lose your bearings, it helps you to find them again.
- In reflective practice we step away from the constant motion of our lives to pause and purposefully look back in order to better understand significant situations.
- Reflection enables us to stop and digest our experiences so that we can learn and grow from them.
- Reflective practice involves developing an awareness of how our past experiences, values, cultural background and beliefs affect our perceptions within a relationship, which in turn can affect our actions and responses within the relationship.
- It is the process of examining, with someone else, the thoughts, feelings, actions and reactions evoked in the course of our work.
 - It assures quality work.
 - It replenishes the reserves needed to do our work.
 - It can reduce stress and burnout
- Reflective practice is about being truly present for someone, genuinely accepting who they are and actively encouraging the quest to see the world more clearly, without distortions and assumptions.

“We don’t see things as they are. We see them as we are”. ~ Talmud
- If you feel supported – truly seen and heard – you are more available to others. This is called the Parallel Process.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND...

- “Stress makes us forget everything we already know.”
~ Victor Bernstein
- Circle of concern: wide range of concerns.
VS
Circle of influence: concerns we can do something about.
Where are you putting your attention?
- Frustration means your agenda is different than my agenda.
- Disagreeable vs Unacceptable (V. Bernstein)
- Turn **Activation** into **Exploration**
- Blame is a defense, used to protect us from feeling powerless and guilty.
- Strong emotions are the erasers of role boundaries. (V. Bernstein)
- The need for rapid change - “hydroplaning” (Mary Claire Heffron).
This is skimming over the surface of an issue with a tendency toward rapid action.
The impulse to find and implement a solution right away.
This may be b/c of fear of someone’s safety or well being
This may be b/c of our own need to be right
This may be b/c of our own concern of the other having the ability to figure it out on their own.
- “Keeping a lid on Pandora’s box” (Mary Claire Heffron)
Out of our own fear, we avoid, downplay or cover up serious issues, troublesome feelings or potential problems.
This happens in our work with consumers and in our work with each other.
We may be afraid of their big reaction/feelings or feel worried about our own ability to handle it.
- There is also the concept of the “Cheerleader stance” where one focuses rigidly on the positive side of everything and ultimately dismisses the feeling state of the other.