


Reflective Practice & Leadership

John Bamborough
Program Coordinator
Social & Community Studies Team
Northern Melbourne TAFE



Overview

- Reflective Practice and its Relationship with Leadership in the Community Services Sector
 - Brief Introduction to the work of Donald Schon
 - Snapshot of the Reflective Practice Framework
 - Reflective Practice Success Stories
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So what is Reflective Practice?

Its a process that enables a person to examine the history, experience, values, knowledge, and beliefs they bring to an interaction and how these may impact on how they manage and perceive the same interaction

Relationship to Leadership: Learning Environments

Organisations with a strong “leadership” ethos are more often than not,

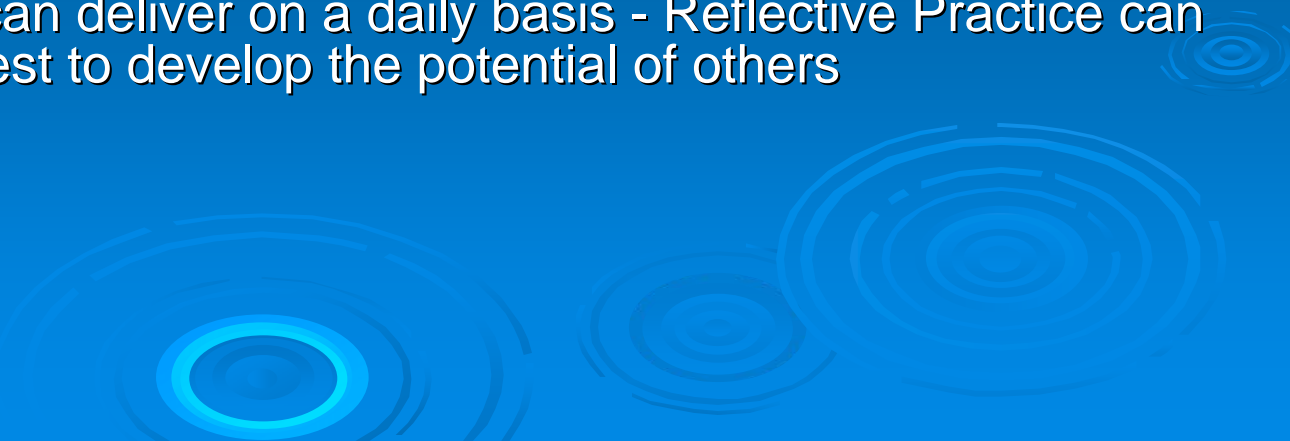
learning environments

which foster growth and development in response to an increasingly changing, challenging and complex service delivery landscape

Learning Environments:

- Support training and growth initiatives
- Support the transference of knowledge gained in training into practice
- Support workers to respond effectively to changing service delivery priorities
- Support a culture of learning as a *“life-long journey”*

Relationship to Leadership: Emotional Intelligence

- Reflective Practice requires us to examine the *feelings/emotions* we experience when interacting with individuals and/or groups
 - Effectively facilitating reflective practice sessions requires emotional intelligence
 - Artful practitioners have self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill – the Reflective Practice road can assist us to gain these emotional intelligence competencies
 - To support colleagues to really grow requires wisdom far beyond what most of us can deliver on a daily basis - Reflective Practice can help us in our quest to develop the potential of others
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Relationship to Leadership: Liberating Leadership

- Creating freedom for expression of self in a safe learning environment
 - Through insight and self-awareness, creating the pre-conditions necessary for growth in practice
 - Recognising and supporting the spiritual aspects of leadership and practice
 - Creating a culture of authenticity
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Relationship to Leadership: Action Learning

- As this problem solving term suggests, the process is about resolving workplace issues within an explicit learning framework
- Time for genuine reflection is reserved for every Action Learning meeting
- Emotionally Intelligent leaders are adept at coordinating Action Learning processes in a liberating manner

Relationship to Leadership: Managing Change

- Managing change process where influence prevails over control is a hallmark of emotionally intelligent leadership
- The ability to apply Reflective Practice in change influences the possibility for success
- Applying the 5 Emotional intelligence competencies is vital in change process:

*self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation,
empathy, social skill*



Relationship to Leadership: Leading & Developing Others

- Learning Opportunities
- Reflective Practice
- Influencing a culture of emotional intelligence
- Influencing a culture of life-long learning
- Cultivating liberating leadership
- ***Modeling a positive outlook and attitude in leadership***

The Work of Donald Schon

- During the 1970's Schon pioneered the concept of the ***“Reflective Practitioner”***
- Schon drew a distinction between knowledge gained through text books and conventional forms of learning such as schools and university, as opposed to the knowledge, insight and wisdom we gain through ***“our daily practice and life in general”***

The Work of Donald Schon

- This distinction relates to Epistemology which basically means *theories of knowledge*.
- In our society theories of knowledge are dominated by science – as such, they must be technical, rational and measurable:

Hence the common term “*technical rationality*”

The Work of Donald Schon

- Schon's work is directed against "technical rationality" as the grounding of professional knowledge and practice
- Schon identifies more powerful sources of knowledge as those we gain through reflecting upon "what we do in our daily practice and life in general"

Reflective Practice Framework

According to Schon there are two forms of Reflective Practice:

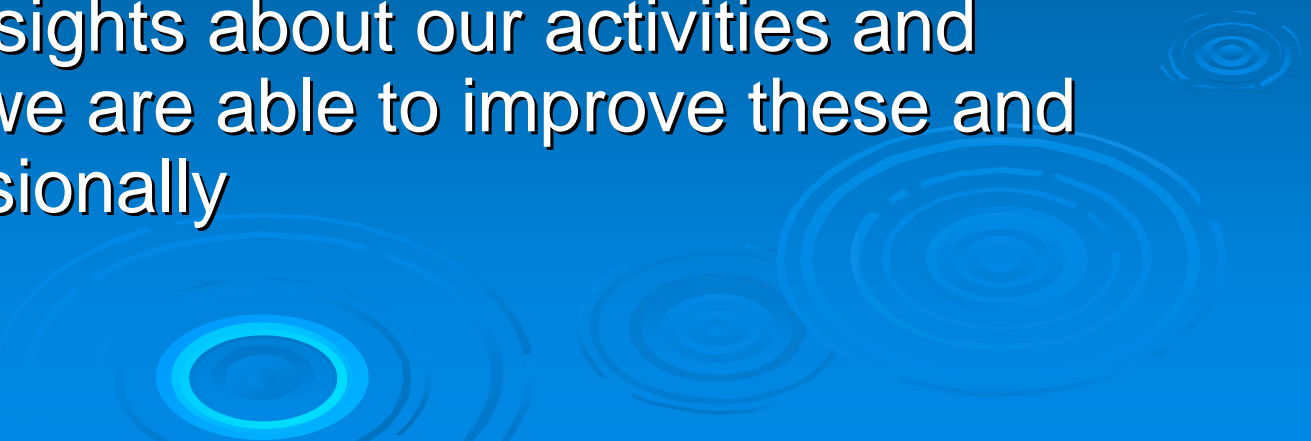
Reflection-on-Action



Reflection-in-Action



Reflection-on-Action

- Reflecting-on-action occurs after the event in group settings or supervision
 - The act of reflecting-on-action enables us to spend time exploring why we acted as we did
 - And in doing so we develop sets of questions, ideas and insights about our activities and practice so we are able to improve these and grow professionally
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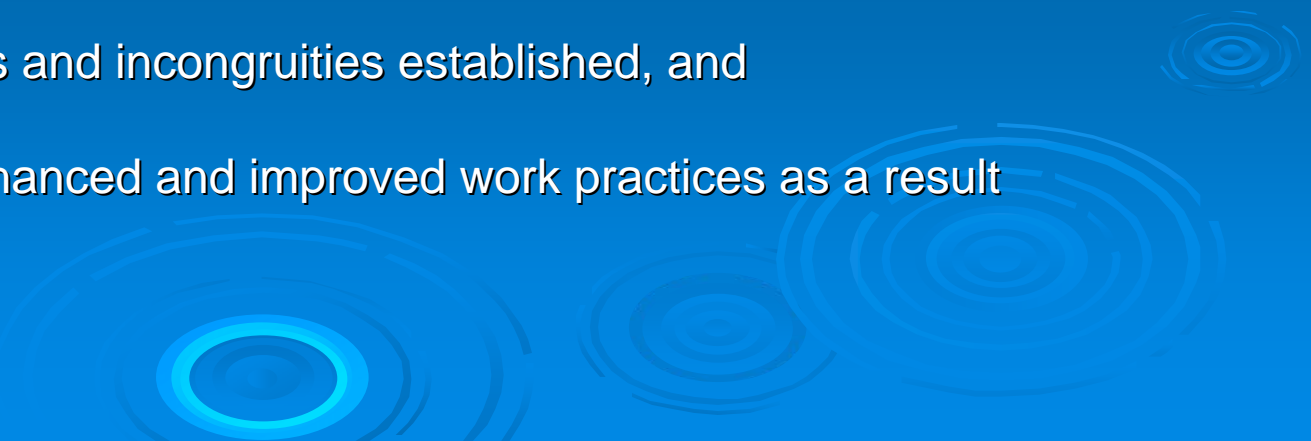
Reflection-in-Action

- Sometimes described as “thinking on our feet”
- This means that *in the moment*, we must look to our experiences, connect with our feelings/emotions, and trust these will guide us to manage the interaction we are in appropriately – we should then reflect-on-the-action and grow as a result
- While we have to think things through on our feet because every situation is unique, we can draw on what has gone before to inform our immediate actions

The Three Dimensions of the Framework

- *Espoused Theory*, or, what you say you would do
- *Theory in Action*, or, what you actually do
- *Governing Variables*, or, the values, beliefs and attitudes which guide our work practice in any situation

How the Framework Operates

- Brief description of interaction
 - Description of what they say they would do (espoused theory)
 - Description of what they actually did (theory in action)
 - Governing variables in play (values, beliefs, attitudes)
 - Identifying incongruities
 - Feelings and emotions associated with the experience
 - Insights into actions and incongruities established, and
 - Self-awareness enhanced and improved work practices as a result
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Reflective Practice Success Stories

- Partnership with Neami
- Partnership with HomeGround
- Partnership with MHCC's LDU
- Partnership with New Horizons
- Partnership with Aftercare