



# The practice of reflection for, and in, Action Research







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Action Learning Action Research Conference  
7-8 November, 2024  
Sydney, Australia

# An acknowledgement

A thick, hand-drawn style orange line underlining the text.

# The Reflection for Learning Circle

Dr Greg Walkerden, Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Macquarie University		Honorary Associate Professor Anne- Louise Semple, Macquarie University	
Dr Kathryn McLachlan, Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Macquarie University		Professor Kate Lloyd, Macquarie University	
Honorary Associate Professor Marina Harvey, Macquarie University		Professor Agnes Bosanquet, Torrens University	

# Workshop Aims

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Participants will

- Explore what we mean by reflective practice
- Consider the research underpinning good reflective practice
- Experience different approaches to practising and documenting reflection
- Review and evaluate appropriate reflective practices for their action research context
- Apply the eight principles of reflective practice to their action research

# Reflection is dangerous



- It can challenge the comfortable areas/ parts of your professional and personal life.
- It can evoke a range of emotions and bodily responses.
- Reflective practice relies on your mind (cognition) as well as your attitudes e.g. open minded, responsible, whole-hearted (Dewey).

<http://logo-kid.com/caution-sign-template.htm>



“We do not  
learn from  
experience...we  
learn from  
reflecting on  
experience.”  
—John Dewey

John Dewey 1922, 'The analysis of reflective thought',  
The Journal of Philosophy, 19(2):29-38.

<http://www.mjgds.org/21stcenturylearning/?cat=3>

# The practice of reflection for, and in, Action Research

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Reflective practice is part of the 'structured framework' (Hase, 2014, p.677) of the Action Research process: Plan, Act, Observe, and *Reflect*. While we cannot assume that all Action Researchers have developed a capacity for reflective practice, we do know that reflective skills can be scaffolded and taught (Coulson & Harvey, 2012). As action researchers we have a responsibility to develop our own reflective practice knowledge and skills and scaffold the reflective practice of our colleagues, community and project members.

# What is reflective practice?

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Think about what reflective practice means





# Reflection activity #1. Fortune cookies

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<http://www.myfortunecookie.co.uk/>

<http://www.fortunecookiemessage.com/>

<https://www.online-fortune-telling.com/free-fortune-telling/fortune-cookie>

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# What is reflective practice?

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Read definitions of reflection and decide on your favourite

# Vote - What is reflective practice?

1. A deliberate and conscientious process that employs a person's cognitive, emotional, and somatic capacities to mindfully contemplate on past, present, or future (intended or planned) actions in order to learn, better understand, and potentially improve future actions (Harvey, Coulson & McMaugh, 2016, p. 9).
2. Deliberately thinking about action with a view to its improvement (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p.34);
3. The ability to think about what one does and why – assessing past actions, current situations, and intended outcomes (Richert, 1990, p.525).
4. Reflection helps students make stronger connections between theoretical perspectives and practice. We view reflection as a skill that can assist students in making sense of their service learning experience (Correia & Bleicher, 2008, p.41).
5. An active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge (Dewey, 1933).
6. Critical reflection is taken to mean a deliberate process when the candidate takes time, within the course of their work, to focus on their performance and think carefully about the thinking that led to particular actions, what happened, and what they are learning from the experience, in order to inform what they might do in the future (UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in King, 2002, p.2).



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# How can we reflect?

## Activity #2

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Practice reflective writing with the Minute paper

In one minute, answer the 2 questions below in 1 or 2 brief sentences.

- What was the most significant [useful, meaningful, surprising, etc.] thing you have learned at the start of this workshop (class, project or experience)?
- What question(s) remain in your mind at this point in the workshop (class, project or experience)?

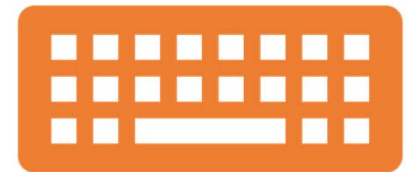
*"How do I know what I think until I see what I say"*

*(attributed to/ adapted from E.M.Forster, Aspects of the Novel, 1927)*

# How can we reflect?

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- There are many ways for Action Researchers to reflect and there exist many tools to support reflective practice.
- Identify ways, modes and tools for reflective practice.
- What is your favourite mode of practicing or documenting reflective practice as an Action Researcher?



# The spectrum of approaches to reflection

(Harvey & Vlachopoulos, 2020, p.380)

Technical/Analytical	Personalistic	Critical	Creative
<i>epistemological development from traditional to contemporary</i>			
Aims to generalise for wider population	Aims to answer questions that matter to us, at that current time	Aims to develop commitment towards change (organisational, societal, political) towards well being	Aims to express the inexpressible
Uses analytical statements and technical rationality	Use of emotions, personal narratives and emotional rationality	Use of critical rationality and emancipatory statements	Use of “childlike” rationality and various form of art to liberate the mind
<i>Indicative theorists &amp; researchers</i>			
Kolb (1984) Valli (1992)	Cowan (1998); Moon, (1999)	Brookfield (2005) Mezirow (2003)	Harvey, et al. (2012, 2016) McIntosh & Webb (2006) <sup>4</sup>

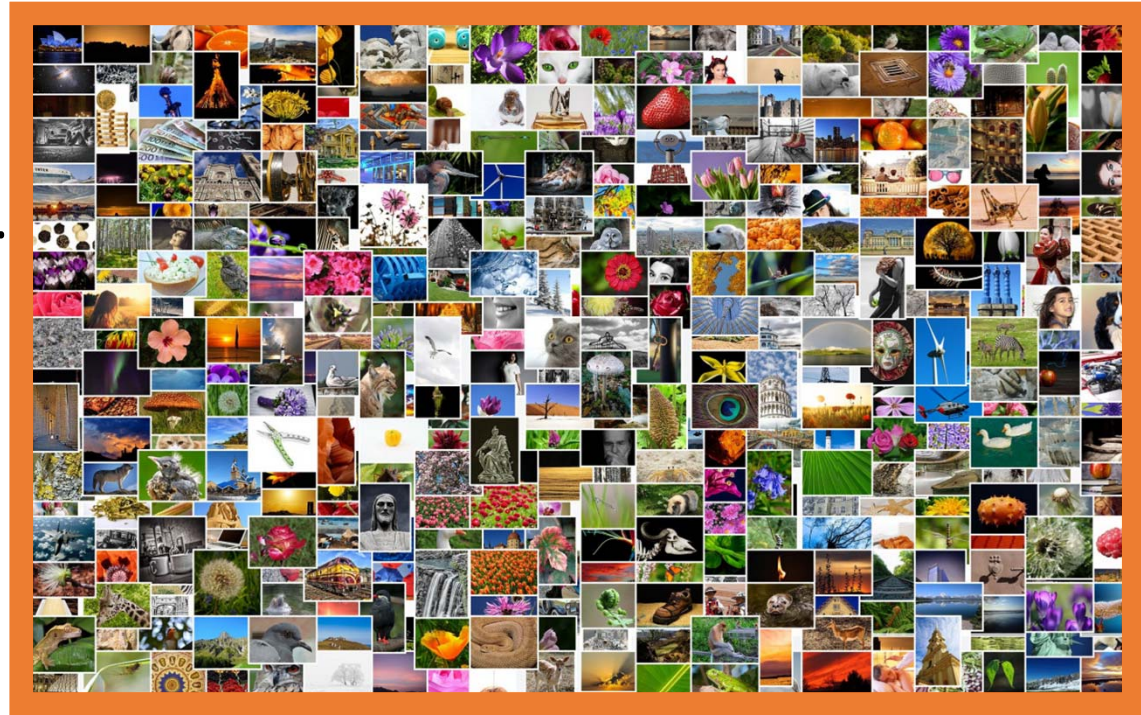
## Reflection activity #3. Time for a drink.



# Images as reflective prompts #4

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- For those online - go to padlet
  - Select an image that resonates
  - with you.
- 
- Reflect on how your chosen image relates to your conceptualisation of reflection.
  - [https://padlet.com/dr\\_marina\\_harvey/qsaaos2mmnc407b1](https://padlet.com/dr_marina_harvey/qsaaos2mmnc407b1)





# Developing reflective practice

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As Action Researchers we need to support and scaffold the reflective practice of our colleagues, community and project members.

We can do this by enacting the eight principles for reflective practice

# Eight principles for reflective practice



# Enacting the principles

- Each group will focus on one principle.
- How will you enact your principle in your Action Research project?

**Learn how (to reflect)**

**Make time (to reflect)**

**Set the scene**

**Scaffold**

**Practice and experiment**

**Offer multiple modes**

**Assess with care**

**Be scholarly**

# Adaptive management: practice case study

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4:45

# Key tips: reflective practice for Action Research

01

Make time to reflect

02

Scaffold reflective practice for all participants

03

Experiment with creative approaches to reflection



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To explore diverse ways of practising reflection you can access our [scholarly resource](#) or view the Youtube videos at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAJdd5OiuH6PdoOvmx2luZQ/videos>

# Key references

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