

HOW TO REFLECT

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Intended learning outcomes

Are that you will:

- Start talking about reflection
- Know how to reflect to enhance your mood & job satisfaction
- Know how to reflect to improve your work performance

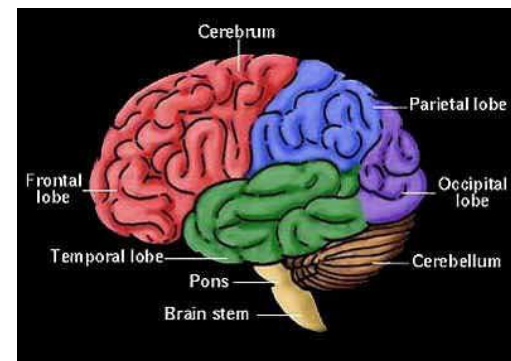
Signposting the session

1. Consider why we need to reflect & its benefits
2. Critique a real written reflection (adapted for privacy)
3. The evidence for reflection
4. How to reflect
5. Challenges
6. Reflect on the session & perhaps revisit our critique

The human brain

- Name the causes of lower abdominal pain
- For which are there more words – words beginning with r or words with r in the middle of them?

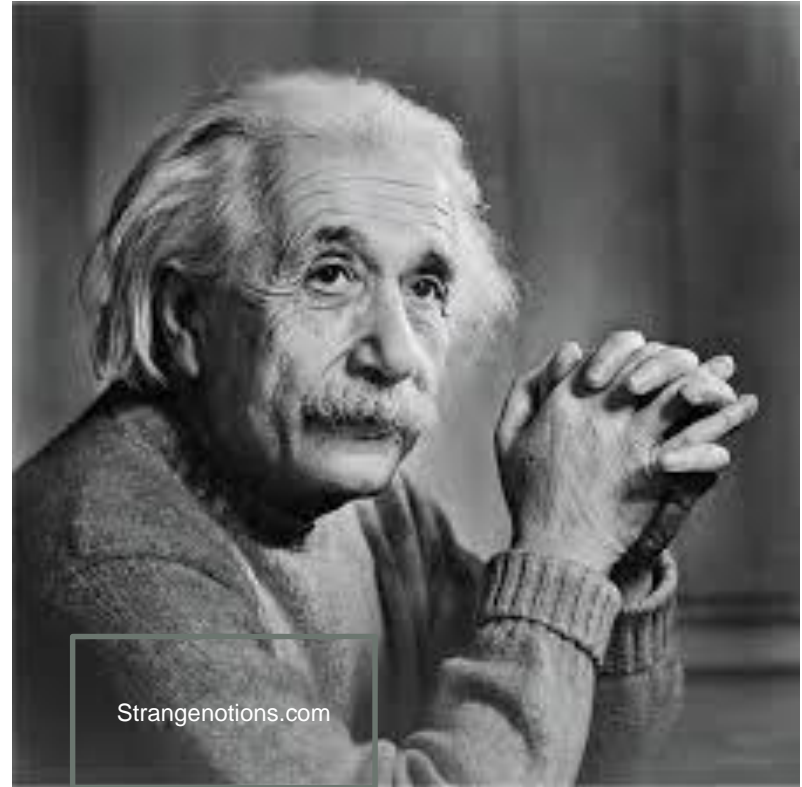
• www.criticalthinking.org



Readanddigest.com

Albert Einstein 1879 - 1955

“Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think”



Reflecting on a complaint

The complaint...has been thought provoking and confidence sapping. I cannot help feeling slightly aggrieved that it was taken to the level it was...

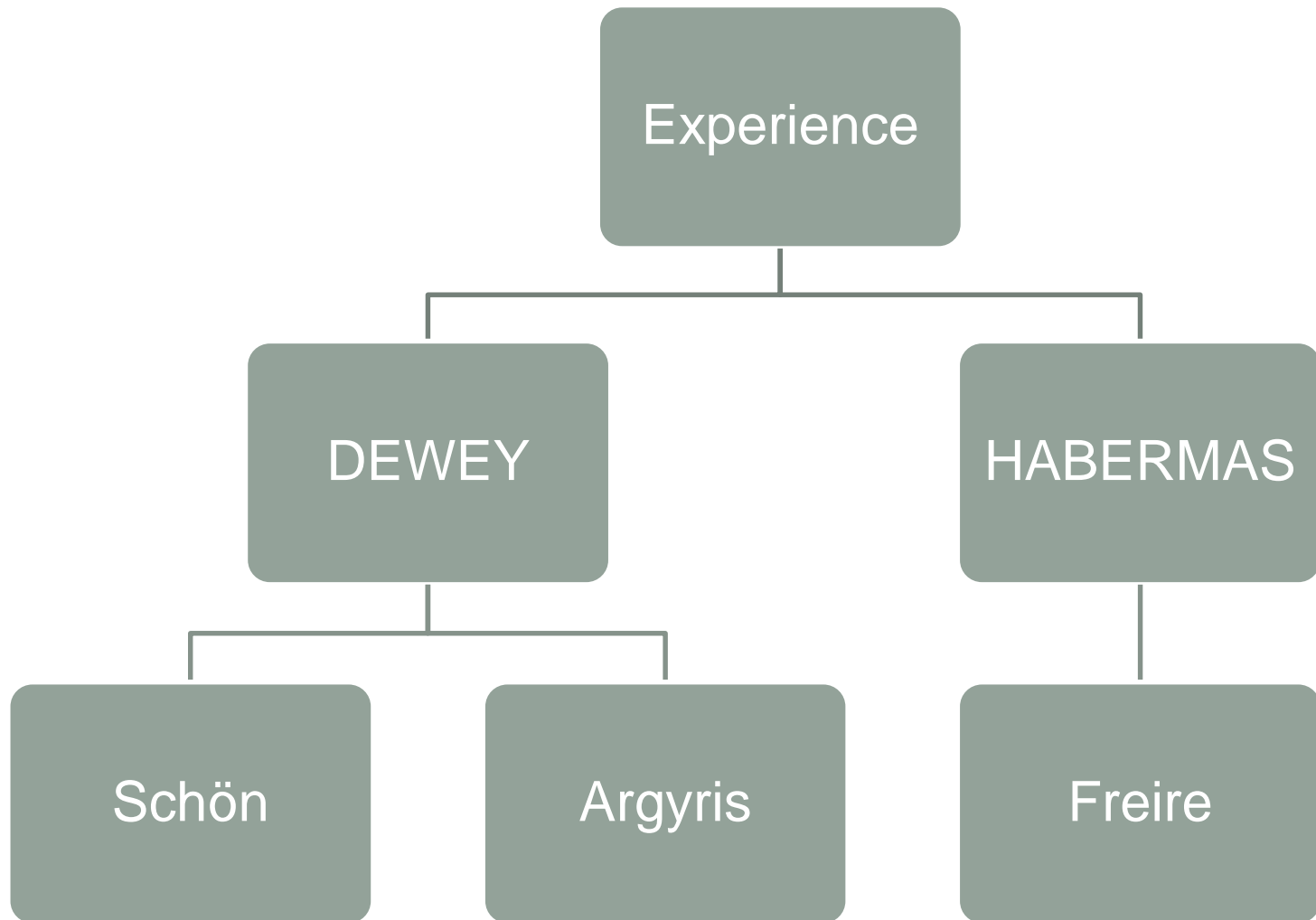
I will definitely record more detail in the patient's notes including records of brief telephone calls and emails. The complaint snowballed from nothing and although I immediately apologized to the patient, despite my inner feelings that there was nothing to apologize for, the patient became increasingly irritated and made further complaints...

What is the point in reflecting?

Benefits of reflection

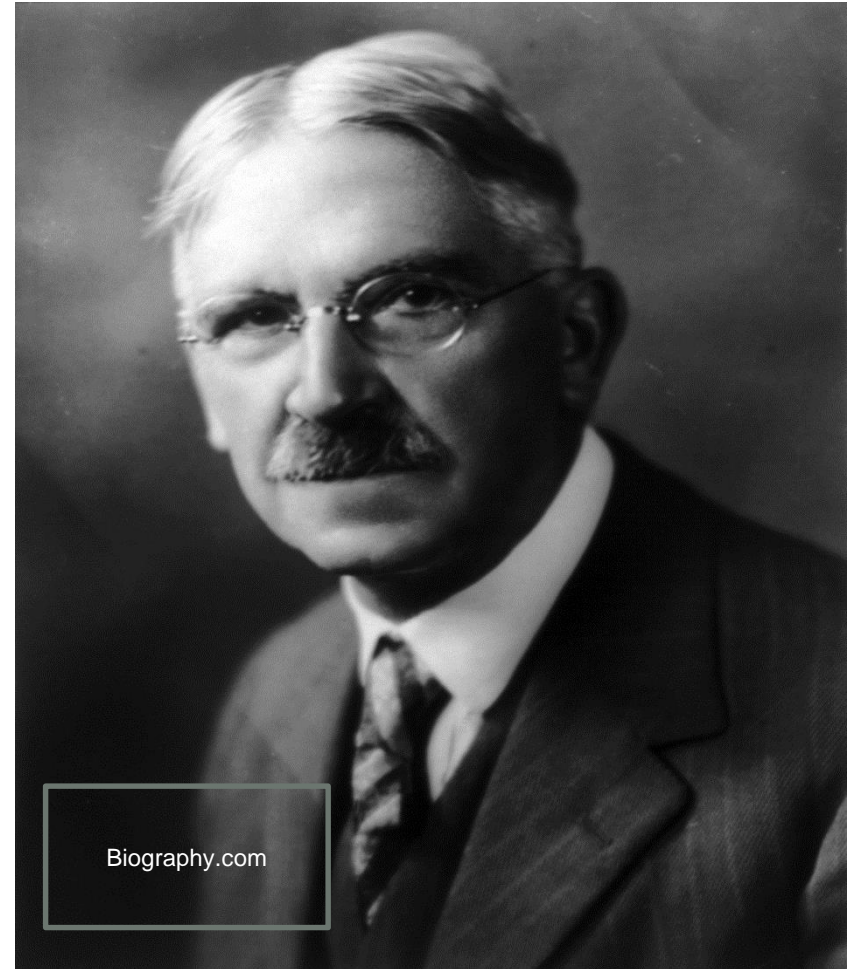
- Emotional (self-awareness/management, increased resilience)
- Improved health
- Improves our interpersonal skills
- Enhanced thinking
- Adapt habitual patterns of behaviour
- We can understand or even shape our surroundings

2 backbone philosophies of reflection (Moon, 2000)



The 1st philosophy: John Dewey (1859 – 1952)

“How we think” (1910 & 1933)



John Dewey's metaphorical forked road (1910, 1933)



Schön's swampy lowlands (Schon1984)



Argyris and Schon 1974: 2 theories of practice

1. **Theories-in-use** (tacit)
2. **Espoused theories** – what we say if some asked me how I'd behave

Double loop learning/critical reflection/reflexivity - to unearth theories in use

The 2nd philosophy: Jürgen Habermas (born 1929) (Moon, 2000)

- Achieve empowerment and political emancipation
- Recognise dominant and hegemonic ideologies



Hegemony (Stephen Brookfield 2012)

- Critically reflect to uncover & challenge power dynamics that inform behaviour
- Western work ideology
- Hegemony – colluding in our own oppression by acting in ways we assume to be in our best interests because they are part of the dominant culture (but are indeed harmful).

The role of emotion in reflection (Bolton, 2014)



Choosing a method of reflection (Sandars 2009)



Using metaphor to reflect (Bolton, 2014)

Why did the new Swiss Bank, Sofia choose this metaphor?



Reflecting through metaphor (Bolton, 2014)

- If your work were an animal what would it be?
- What if it was a food? Or a season?
- What does this tell you about your work?

Using narrative (stories) to reflect (Bolton, 2014)

- Our values and principles- in -use are embedded in our stories
- We don't narrate things as they are because we see things as we are.
- Look for the motivations, beliefs, values & assumptions in our stories
- Compare the experience with previous experiences to look for dominant ideologies
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Single loop reflection (Argyris & Schon, 1974)

- Problem solving
- What? So what? Now what? Then return to what?
- Develops awareness and more appropriate actions (but it ignores theories in use)

Double loop reflection (reflexivity): the Mobius Strip (Argyris & Schon, 1974)

- Why? Why? Why?
- To question our own and our organisation's values in use
 - Challenge assumptions & values in practice
 - Look for dominant ideologies



Youtube.com

Tips on reflective writing (Bolton, 2014)

- Your writing precedes your thinking
- The first experience that comes into your mind
- Write without thinking
- Only content matters
- Describe what happened (in detail)
- Describe your emotional reaction
- Respect & be kind to yourself, avoid being judgemental
- Date & keep it safely
- Suspend your disbelief
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Ideas (G.Bolton, 2014)

1. Letters you don't send
2. Letter to an imaginary mentor and the letter he/she writes back to you
3. Something went wrong? Rewrite the story of it going right
4. Patient complaint? Write the story from the patient's perspective (to perceive their perspective)
5. Trouble with a colleague? Write the story from the colleague's perspective
6. Feeling upset? Write the experience from the perspective of your mug
7. Writing fictions can help us explore, eg. we can change gender in our stories.

What stops us from reflecting?

- The medical conceptualization of reflection
- Over valuation of science and rational thought
- Over valuation of “doing” & concrete achievements over thinking/imagination
- Organisational mind-sets of control rather than reflection
(Ref: Senge’s Learning organisations)
- It makes us feel vulnerable or threatened
- Medico-legal concerns

Overcoming the personal challenges to reflection

- Our own fears and inhibitions
- Being risk averse
- Fearing incompetence or ridicule
- Lack of time
- Reflection can reveal embarrassing, even shameful issues
- Assessments control us
- Lack of time
- It can involve loss of identity, an element of what makes us who we are.

Missed diagnosis of cancer

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Revisiting the intended learning outcomes

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References

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