

Reflective practice writing exercise

Aims of the session:

- explore an experience at work through writing and discussion
- reflect on the experience with reference to a reflective practice group

Expectations of working together:

- maintain an awareness of being in an open space and being new to each other
- respect each other's experience
- only share what you feel comfortable with
- in relation to confidentiality, the learning can be taken away but the details of what has been shared remain behind.

This is a brief reflective writing exercise for a group of individuals to do together. The session should take an hour and is best carried out in groups of five to twelve people. It is a participatory experience, the more you put into it the more you will get out of it.

This session has drawn on ideas from Bolton, G. (2010) Reflective practice: writing and professional development. Third edition. London: Sage Publications

1) We will start with a check-in, how do you arrive at this session?

2) Take a minute to think of something at work that has stayed with you. It may be an incident, an interaction, an event or something related to team dynamics. It may be with a patient, a patient's family member or a colleague. Don't try to think too much, go with the first things that comes to mind.

3) What's the feeling? Jot down two words on the line below. Then, turn your paper over.

4) Now, put your pen to paper and write for 10 minutes. Don't take the pen off the paper, keep writing about the thing you have chosen to think about.

Write about it in as much detail as possible:

- Who said what?
- What happened?
- Who else was there?
- What did it feel like at different points
- What did you think was going to happen. What did happen?
- What was the build up?
- What happened afterwards?

It doesn't have to be in order, don't worry about grammar or punctuation or spelling – just write!

5) Read what you have written:

- What do you notice about what you have written? What strikes you? What surprises you?
- Is it puzzling?

6) Move into pairs and talk to the person next to you. You are interested in the other person's writing, not them! Please ask questions of each other and see how far you get:

- What might the other characters in the narrative be thinking or feeling?
- What has been missed out of this story?
- Are there themes or patterns that relate to your working life?
- Do you have a question for anyone in your story? What is the question and what might they have replied?
- How might you understand the feelings generated in this story?
- Explore the area that puzzles you. What is it about this that puzzles you?
- How would a friend/colleague tell the story? What would be different?

Make sure you take it in turns to ask questions of each other.

7) How did you find the writing exercise?

8) What is the feeling now? Jot down two words. Are they different to your initial feeling about your event or incident?

9) What one thing will you take away; a thought, an action, a feeling?