Reflective Practice in the Learning Cycle

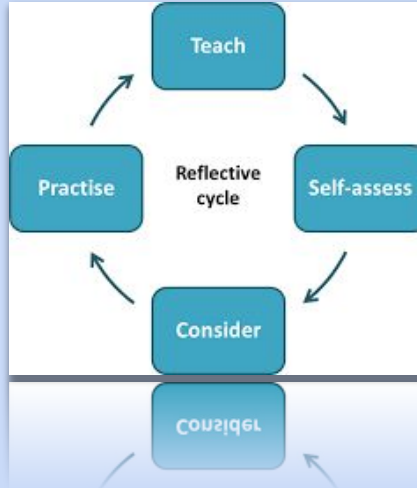*"You don't learn from experience, you learn from reflection on experience"* - Tony Saddington

Overview: Reflection is the process in which we question and/or build upon established connections in learning. Reflection allows us to go back on our learning and consider what has been assumed, articulate what was unspoken, and clarify the meaning and extent of new knowledge. (Taylor & Marienau, 2016)

Examples: During reflection on a unsuccessful event a learner might complete three steps in a reflection process:

1) What WAS…. What did you say and do? What were you trying to do?

2) What MIGHT HAVE BEEN… What could you have done differently to improve the outcome?

3) What COULD BE…Create a list in your head of what areas of development need improvement in order to meet a future event with more success (Taylor & Marienau, 2016).

Relevance:
- Reflection allows learners to expose their actions to critical assessment to discover values and assumptions that are underlying their practices
- Reflection allows for learners to be more conscious of contradictions between what they do and what they HOPE to do (Imel, 1991).

Pros:
- Positively affects professional growth
- Promotes development of new knowledge
- Broadening of understanding of problems that affect practice

Cons:
- Time consuming
- Highly personal (Imel, 1991)

Founders & Proponents: With Piaget's focus on the origin of meaning through experience, the stage was set for educators to begin asking exactly *how* we develop meaning through experience. In 1984, David Kolb published his experiential learning cycle as his personal exploration of this process. The cycle was defined by reflection, and echoes of it's logic exist in most reflective practices today (Allan, 2016).

Analysis
- Reflection is an essential part of the learning process because it results in making sense of or extracting meaning from experience
- Involves thinking about and critically analyzing one's actions with the goal of improving one's professional practice (Imel, 1991)

References

Allan, B. (2016). Emerging strategies for supporting student learning : A practical guide for librarians and educators. ProQuest Ebook Central https://ebookcentral.proquest.com

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Taylor, K., & Marienau, C. (2016). Facilitating learning with the adult brain in mind : A conceptual and practical guide. ProQuest Ebook Central https://ebookcentral.proquest.com