

Changing Futures Programme Sussex:

Being a Reflective Practitioner - a short guide to journaling

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***We do not 'store' experience as data, like a computer:
we 'story' it.***

(Winter 1988)

Reflective Practice can enable you to learn from experience about yourself, your work, and the way you relate to home and work, significant others and wider society and culture. It can be regarded as a method for continuing your own professional development

Keeping a reflective journal can provide a safe and confidential way to explore and express experiences otherwise difficult to communicate. Journaling generally captures your reflections after something has happened and can be a regular or as required activity.

It can help with exploration around areas such as:

- What you can change in your context; how to work with what you cannot
- How to value the perspective of others, however different they are to you
- Considering how others perceive you, their feelings and thoughts about events
- Understanding why you become stressed, and its impact on life and practice

Ways to frame a journal entry

Description

What happened?

Recall events and write them descriptively. Write them in as much detail as you remember, including who was involved, perhaps even who wasn't, the location and time and so on.

Interpretation

How do you feel? (sometimes referred to as the 'so what' bit)

Take your time to reflect on the events and evaluate what has happened, considering your own positioning. This is where you can think about how you felt before, during and after the event and about your spontaneous reactions. This may be an opportunity to consider similarities and differences with other events/days, any associated activities or times when you felt similar.

Outcome

What is the impact? (sometimes referred to as the 'what now' bit)

A chance to notice potential impacts, on yourself, your work and anyone else involved. Think about how things could have been different and what that may have looked like. Consider if you intend to take any action, or make any changes or if there is something that you have learnt. Consider then how might the lesson learnt change your future actions/reactions.