Librarian in the Mirror: Using Reflection for Professional and Personal Wellbeing

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Presentation goal

My goal is to share my experience with reflection, so you feel comfortable reflecting, with the benefit of increased wellbeing.
Outline

1. Why Reflective Practice?
2. Reflection for Wellbeing
3. Models of Reflective Practice
4. Methods of Reflection
Justin 2019

Justin 2022
My Background

Do you ever let your personal interests or passion leak into your work?
Quick poll!

Go to https://www.menti.com/89tk77bvmg or menti.com and enter 50 54 72 8
Think about a time when you were troubled by something at work.

How did it affect your wellbeing? What did you do?
Why Reflective Practice?
Correlation between self-reflection and insight, corresponding to positive wellbeing (Harrington & Loffredo, 2010).

Self-reflection allows for the potential resolution of professional and personal issues (Haarhoff, et al., 2015).

Increases self-awareness, allowing for increased confidence and greater control over your life.
Voicing Our Emotional Response to Others

“The passage of time is...essential to helping us manage our emotional lives, especially when it comes to processing upsetting experiences. When we identify someone to talk to off-line, we often have to wait until we see the person or until they’re available to chat.

While one waits for that person, something magical happens: Time passes, which allows us to reflect on what we’re feeling and thinking about in ways that often temper our emotions.

Indeed, research supports the common idea that ‘time heals’ or the advice to ‘just give it time.’”

-Ethan Kross, Chatter (2021)
How does reflection help your librarian practice?

- Establish teaching, research, reference, and relational styles.
- Explore power and positionality as a librarian.
- Create connection and build community with those you speak with.

Models of Reflective Practice

- Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle (1988)
  - Description; Feeling; Evaluation; Analysis; Conclusion; Action Plan

- Brookfield’s Four Lenses (1995)
  - Autobiography; Students; Colleagues; Literature

- Driscoll’s What Model (2007)
  - What? So what? Now what?
The What Model
MODEL OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle
MODEL OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Example Questions & Prompts
Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle

1. What were your thoughts and feelings?
2. What happened?
3. What was good and bad about the experience? How do the facts and your thoughts impact each other?
4. What sense can be made of the situation?
5. What else could you have done? What will be your focus to improve?
6. If it happened again, what would you do or need?
7. Evaluation
8. Conclusion
9. Analysis
10. Feeling
11. Action Plan
12. Description
Example Questions & Prompts

Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle

- **Description**
  - What happened?

- **Action Plan**
  - If it happened again, what would you do or need?

- **Conclusion**
  - What else could you have done? What will be your focus to improve?

- **Analysis**
  - What sense can be made of the situation?

- **Evaluation**
  - What was good and bad about the experience? How do the facts and your thoughts impact each other?

- **Feeling**
  - What were your thoughts and feelings?
Job searching example using Gibbs

1. Description
   I’ve been working on a two-year term position at my library and I want to find a continuing position. I’m having trouble getting interviews and when I do, I’m not selected for the position.

2. Feeling
   I feel tangled up that I can’t get a position. I am also impatient in that I want to get to the next stage of my career.

3. Evaluation
   What am I putting on my cover letter and my CV? How can I better position myself to get an interview? Is there anyone who can give me advice?
4. **Analysis**
Continuing positions don’t just come up all the time; there’s a limited number of librarians at my institution. My colleagues have told me sometimes you just have to wait; that’s the way it goes.

5. **Conclusion**
I will continue to gain experience as a term librarian, make connections, and do good work; it’s only a matter of time. My work continues to be rewarding, so focus on what I can control.

6. **Action**
Moving forward, I am going to temper my expectations of being handed a permanent position and remember to have patience.

*n.b.: I did do this while job searching throughout 2020 and 2021, and this year I accepted a continuing position at the U of M as a science librarian.*
Methods of Reflection

**Individual**
- Reflective writing
- Formal performance review
- Journaling
- Taking time to think on your experience

**Group**
- Team meetings
- Speaking with colleagues or friends
- Journal clubs
- Peer observation
- Community of practice or co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996)
Reflective Writing

Reflective writing is not just descriptive, it’s analytical.

Form
Short- or long-form; free-form or structured.

Type
Journaling; blog/social media; template; reports.
Reflective Writing

“My daily writing practice opens a space for me to check in with myself, refine my ideas, and hold...myself accountable to my core values.”

Christopher P. Long,
“From Productivity to Meaningful Work”

Available from https://cplong.org/2021/04/from-productivity-to-meaningful-work/
Reflective Writing Exercise
Reflective Writing Practice


Think about your reflection in terms of our models.

• 2 sentences: What happened?
• 3 sentences: What did you learn?
• 4 sentences: What would you change moving forward?
Integrate reflection into your daily life.

Don’t think of it as a set exercise, but more of a philosophy.
Thanks for attending!
References


References


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Thanks!

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