

REFLECTIVE THINKING

This type of thinking is essential in counselling, social work and other community service fields

Gibb's (1988) framework of reflective learning is a useful starting point.



There are different situations where you may be asked to think reflectively. Here are some examples:

Example 1 - Counselling

Reflect on your practice counselling session

Firstly, you need to have an overview of the theories and frameworks studied in this course and know the basic counselling skills studied. To help you reflect on your counselling session, write down some questions based on Gibb's framework that you can ask yourself, for example:

Experience: What happened in the counselling session? What skills did I apply?

Feelings: How did I feel in the session? How do I feel now?

Evaluation: What did I do well? What could I improve?

Analysis: How did the theories or frameworks apply to the client or to me? (How does this apply to the session?)

Conclusion: What would have worked better? What else could I have done differently?

Action Plan: What would I say or do with this client in a future session? What would I do in a similar situation in the future? What did I learn about myself?

Example 2 -Social Work/Counselling

Reflect on the influence of your family system on your development

Firstly, you need to understand family systems and stages of development. To help you reflect on these topics, write down some questions based on Gibb's framework that you can ask yourself, for example:

Experience: What were my family's systems?
How did I fit in my family's systems? What stage of development am I at currently?

Feelings: How did I feel then and now, about my family system and at this stage of my development?

Evaluation: How did my family system influence my development?

Analysis: How does my experience fit the theory and what does not? Does the theory match my reality?

Conclusion: Does my experience and examples support or refute the theory?

Action Plan: Does this make any difference to how I will live my life or how I understand my life or other people's lives?

Example 3 - Psychology

Reflect on research participation

Firstly, you need to understand the research you have participated in. To help you reflect on this, write down some questions based on Gibb's framework that you can ask yourself, for example:

Experience: What was the topic and the research method used?

Feelings: How did you feel about participating in the research?

Evaluation: Were there any ethical issues and how were they managed?

Analysis: What were the potential consequences of these issues?

Conclusion: What did you learn and how could potential issues be dealt with appropriately in the future?

Action Plan: How will this experience affect you in your future practice?

Example 4 - Criminology

Reflect on your view of justice

Firstly, you need to understand the what your view of justice is. To help you reflect on this, write down some questions based on Gibb's framework that you can ask yourself, for example:

Experience: What do you understand justice to be?

Feelings: How do you feel about the state of justice in today's society?

Evaluation: How do your views match or differ from any formal or academic definitions of justice?

Analysis: What or who has shaped your views of justice?

Conclusion: How has your perspective on justice changed?

Action Plan: How will this understanding influence your decision making moving forward?

Reflective Writing Resources

- [Reflective Essay Page](#)
- [Reflective Writing Guide](#)
- [Webinar: Being Critical, Critical Reflection and Reflective Writing](#)

References

Williams, K., Woolliams, M., & Spiro, J. (2012). *Reflective writing*. Palgrave Macmillan.