
SRV MATTERS - 4

Reflective Practice

Are we using SRV well, and can we use it better?

As you know, SRV is a theory, based on many well researched areas of knowledge, it requires a values decision to use it. The values drawn on are commonly chosen because the person wants to see themselves and/or others get the good things of life.

If this is our reason, it makes sense that we want to become as competent as possible in the application of SRV. To do so we need to learn the theory and we need to try using it. Importantly, when we use it, we will improve, especially if we reflect critically on our efforts.

Reflective practice is the ability to reflect on our efforts, in a critical manner, and engage in a process of continuous adaptation and learning.

You might have come across colleagues who, on hearing of your enthusiasm for SRV, make a comment which tells you they really don't know what SRV is.

Reflective Practice often befalls the same fate. Many tertiary courses now include 'reflective practice'. Why the quote marks you ask. Well, usually, outside Social Work, Reflective Practice is often no more than an essay describing the experience of say a practicum, or a site visit, and so on. Although it does include people's reactions and even emotions, this is only one step in the Reflective Practice cycle.

The Reflective Practice cycle is usually comprised of six steps.

We do something realising it either went well or it didn't go as well as we wanted, then:

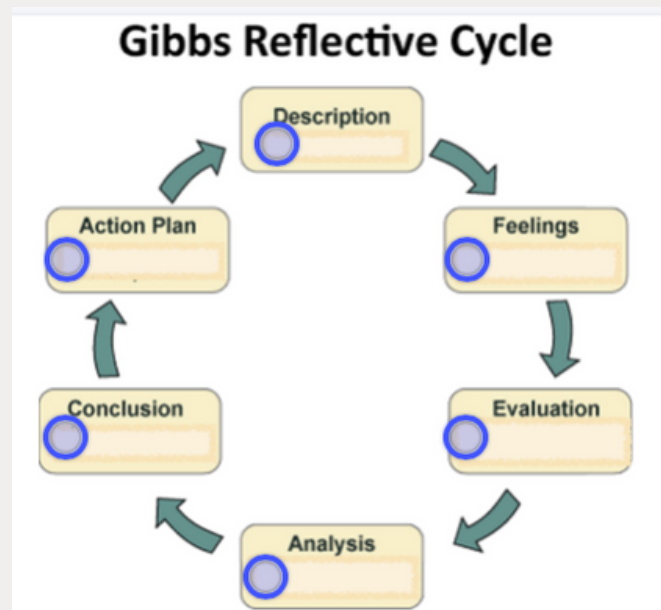
- 1) we describe how we felt in the situation
- 2) we ask ourselves what was good and bad in the situation
- 3) we stop and analyse what we think has occurred
- 4) we arrive at a conclusion then
- 5) ask what else could we have done, and
- 6) try again.

And, if appropriate, repeat!

To be successful in this, we need to open ourselves up to not being perfect and knowing we can improve. Then we need to ensure we set aside time to do it, be deliberate. Look for support; ask colleagues to join in some reflections, form a group, ask one's mentors. Get over any lack of confidence - describe one's skills and good intentions to oneself, celebrate successes. If motivation is tricky, set clear and realistic goals, recognise improvements, investigate the different styles of reflective practice for what best suits, at this time.

And stay focussed on why you're doing this.

[Check out Gibbs Reflective Cycle](#) in more detail



SRV Ideas: Improved SRV application
