

Reflection

Taking time for reflection is essential to developing self-leadership, leadership and just developing oneself. Reflection means to proceed with intentionality about the intended outcome, to seek understanding and to actively desire to make sense of what is happening, what has happened and to have purchase on the impact that one makes. Reflection may be taking a pause before starting and calling on insights and intentionality, during and at the close. Adopting a reflective stance is to give consideration to what next and to move into the next phase again with intentionality, maybe modifying or refining an approach or developing a different perspective.

There is a desire to be more deliberate, to have a wider perspective and understanding and to be responsible to self, others and wider environment impacts.

Reflection, like any practice, takes the development of 'muscle' and capacity.

Starting a reflective practice, like starting any practice such as mindfulness or meditation is best done small.

So, set a timer, take 5 minutes or 10 to reflect on your day, an event, meeting or encounter of which you were a part, or set yourself a question and see what emerges. From such nascent activity you can build up. Reflection is very much looking at the role that you played if it is to be a tool to develop your self-leadership, your self-insights and self-awareness.

Before you start get grounded, so take a few moments to focus simply on breathing. Follow your breath in and out and if your mind wanders, note that and go back to following your breath. A few minutes of sitting and breathing should bring you to a place of greater centeredness. This is the place from which to start reflecting.

Reflection does demand that you enter the process without a fixed idea of outcome, that you are prepared to not be defensive about yourself or actions and open to explore where things might be changed or developed in future. Reflection is like a net that you throw out and maybe you'll catch something unexpected.

Quick start questions:

What was my role in?

Was the outcome I wanted necessarily the best one?

What could I have done to better support the process of ...?

What did it do to hinder or to slow getting to...?

What is my least enjoyable interaction at the moment...what am I contributing to this?

What am I doing to get in my own way?

What could I do to get out of my own way?

What have I not thought of yet?

What have I not tried yet?

Themes to explore:

A meeting/ important phone call

A lesson or training

Your moods or assumptions of the day

Reflection can be undertaken by writing, doodling or talking. The focus is staying on the chosen matter and following it where it leads, however surprising. Reflection can be undertaken with someone else, a mentor or sounding board. Reflection may lead to requests to others for some help. Developing self-leadership may well involve the help of others.

