

REFLECTION WORKBOOK

for youth workers

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1. INTRODUCTION

This workbook was created to support youth workers and youth leaders in making reflection a natural and meaningful part of their everyday work. Through this resource, we aim to:

- **Raise awareness** of the importance of reflection in youth work.
- **Offer practical tools** and models for self-analysis.
- **Encourage** the habit of reflection as a foundation for personal and professional growth.
- **Support** youth workers in understanding youth work.

It is part of the **Erasmus+** project “Reflective Youth Work,” a KA210 Small-Scale Partnership supported by Erasmus+. This transnational partnership brings together four youth organisations: **OUI** (Croatia), **Make it Happen** (Cyprus), **MTÜ Project Spirit** (Estonia), and **Young Folks LT** (Lithuania).



The collaboration aims to enhance the quality of youth work through self-development and reflective practice.

1.1. CONTEXT OF THE WORKBOOK

This workbook is grounded in the real needs of youth workers. It was co-created through:

Surveys and interviews with youth workers from Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia and Lithuania.

A seminar with international youth work professionals to understand who we are creating the workbook for.

Real-life experiences, challenges, and feedback from the field.

It reflects the reality that many youth workers want to reflect, but don't know where to start, don't feel confident doing it, or fear judgment and burnout.

The goal is to turn reflection into something accessible, empowering, and even enjoyable.

1.2. WHO CAN BENEFIT THE MOST FROM THIS WORKBOOK?

This workbook is designed for:

- Youth workers, youth leaders, and volunteers.
- People who are new to reflection, and those who want to understand it a little bit more.
- Individuals who feel like they don't have time, or aren't sure reflection is worth it.
- Teams that want to create a more supportive and reflective work culture.

1.3. HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This is not a traditional workbook with right and wrong answers. It is a companion for your learning journey. You can:



Read it from start to finish or jump to the chapters that interest you most.

Use the **reflection prompts** on your own, with a colleague, or in group settings.



Choose your preferred **reflection method**: writing, drawing, talking, music, or movement.



Come back to it **whenever you need** clarity, growth or a pause.

You'll also find:

- Clear reflection levels (surface to deep).
- Models and exercises tailored to youth work.
- Tools to help with sensitive emotions, peer support, and creating safe spaces.



2. WHAT IS REFLECTION AND WHAT IS NOT?

Reflection is the **conscious process of looking back** on experiences, whether personal, group-based, emotional, or practical, to understand situations better, make sense of what happened, and draw lessons that shape future actions.

In youth work, reflection helps young people and youth workers connect the dots between **what they did and what they learned**. It's about digging deeper, beyond surface-level activity, to gain insight, awareness, and personal growth. As people we often reflect in our mind, but we don't think about it as reflection.

Reflection helps answer questions such as:

- What did I experience?
- How did I feel about it?
- What did I learn about myself or others?
- How can I use this learning moving forward?

In non-formal education, it plays a key role. **Reflection transforms activities into learning**. Without it, even the most exciting workshop can end up feeling empty or disconnected from real life.



2.1. WHAT ISN'T REFLECTION?

Reflection is **not just a summary** of what happened. It's not about ticking a box, nor is it a test or a passive thing. It's not the same as feedback or evaluation, though they are related. Reflection **isn't meant to judge or rank** someone's performance. It's more about self-awareness than external approval.

It's also not always verbal or written. Some people reflect best through movement, art, silence, storytelling, or even music. So it's important to avoid thinking there's only one "correct" way to reflect.

2.2. REFLECTION, EVALUATION, AND FEEDBACK: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



These three terms often show up in youth work and sometimes get confused. So let's clarify:

- **Reflection** is internal and personal. It's about making meaning from an experience. It focuses on how something felt, what was learned, and how to grow from it.
- **Feedback** is usually external. It's when someone else gives you input, positive or constructive, about your actions or behaviour. It can be given or received, informally or formally.
- **Evaluation** is more structured. It's a process of assessing something based on goals or indicators. It's about measuring what worked well and what didn't, often from a more objective or collective viewpoint.

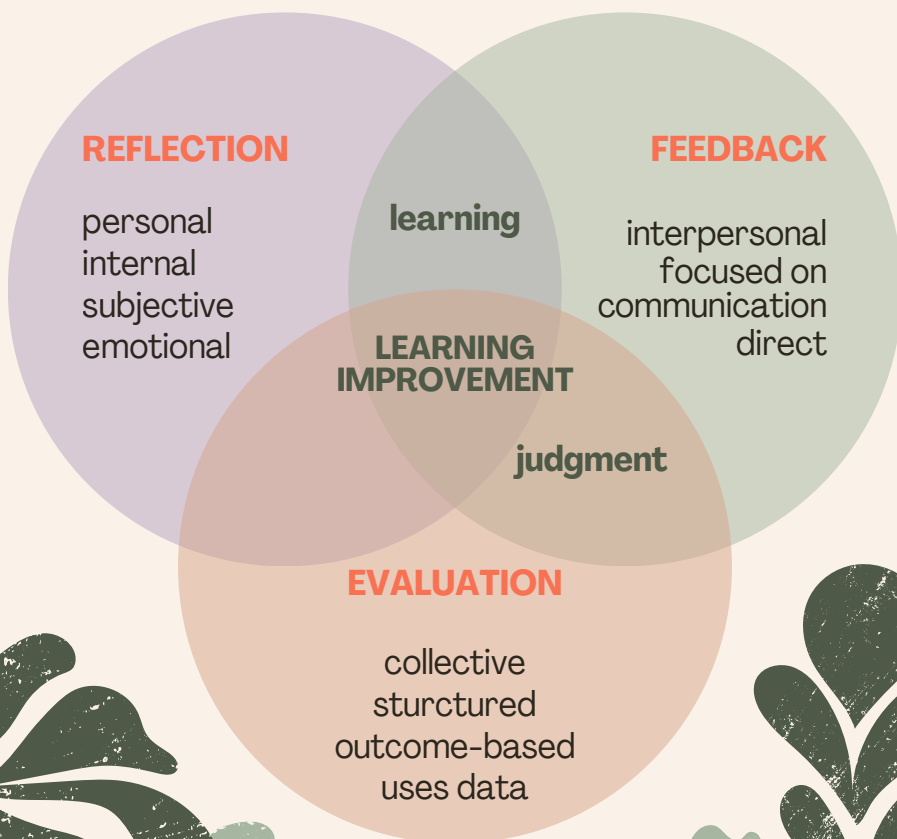
Here's how they are linked:

- **Reflection** helps individuals learn on a personal level.
- **Feedback** helps others understand how their behaviour is perceived.
- **Evaluation** helps improve projects, activities, or systems based on overall outcomes.

2.3. VENN DIAGRAM

This is not a traditional workbook with right and wrong answers. It is a companion for your learning journey. You can:

- **Reflection** (circle 1) – personal, internal, subjective, emotional, growth-focused.
- **Feedback** (circle 2) – interpersonal, communication-focused, direct, includes praise and constructive criticism.
- **Evaluation** (circle 3) – collective, structured, outcome-based, uses data and analysis, often tied to objectives.



Overlap between Reflection and Feedback: Both involve learning and improvement. Reflection can include thinking about feedback received. Feedback, when given well, can prompt meaningful reflection.

Overlap between Feedback and Evaluation: Both may involve judgement or analysis. They often aim to improve something. Evaluation might use feedback as part of its data.

Overlap between Reflection and Evaluation: Both look back at experiences. Both ask “what worked” and “what could be better.” But reflection is more personal; evaluation is often collective or systemic.

All three together: At their best, they all contribute to better learning, stronger practice, and improved youth work.



When used together, they create a **full learning loop**:

Questions you should ask for yourself:

- How do you define reflection?
- Do you often reflect or evaluate or make feedback?
- What is not a reflection for you?

3. WHY DO I REALLY NEED TO REFLECT?

3.1. PERSONAL BENEFITS OF REFLECTION

Reflection **helps you grow** as a person and as a youth worker. It gives you space to pause, breathe, and understand what's working and what's not. Youth work often involves difficult situations that need reflection. Reflection helps us learn, grow, and make better decisions.

One of a youth worker's tools for self-development is reflection, which helps them better understand the **purpose of their work** and analyse different situations.

For you, reflection can help to:

- **Reduce stress and overthinking** by giving space to process experiences.
- **Bring greater clarity** to your values, role, identity, and professional direction.
- **Boost** your confidence in decisions.
- **Help you** recognize and celebrate your growth and achievements.
- Increase self-awareness by identifying behaviour patterns and developing analytical thinking.
- **Strengthen** your ability to solve problems both effectively and creatively.

3.2. ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS

Reflection isn't just a personal practice, it influences how your entire team and organisation functions. When reflection becomes **part of the organisational culture**, it supports healthier communication, clearer purpose, and stronger collective impact.

Organisations that reflect regularly, for example, by having small team talks, simple method reflection, or simple check-ins, are more flexible, caring, and ready to learn from what happens.

For your organisation, reflection can lead to:

- Stronger team **communication** and **understanding**.
- Better **project planning** through lessons learned.
- Early **identification of problems** or signs of burnout.
- A healthier, more supportive **work culture**.
- **Improved quality** and effectiveness of work.

3.3. VALUES. THE HEART BEHIND THE WORK

Reflection helps you better understand your values and whether your work aligns with them. When your reflection connects with your values, it becomes more than a routine, it becomes a compass.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE: Values Alignment

1. Write down **the values that guide you** as a youth worker.
2. Find your **organisation's values** or the national values of youth work in your country.
3. **Compare them:**
 - Where do they match?
 - Where do they differ?
4. **Reflect:**
 - Does your daily work align with your personal values?
 - If not, what small changes could bring them closer together?



Reflection supports value-based work by helping you:

- Act in line with your principles.
- Make intentional, rather than reactive, decisions.
- Understand what matters to you and to the young people.

3.4. DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF REFLECTION

Reflection has **different layers**:



Emotional: understanding your feelings and reactions.

Professional: learning from your work and decisions.



Social: seeing how your actions affect others and relationships.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE: Zoom In / Zoom Out

Try this short reflection **after your next activity**:



Zoom In. Personal

What did I feel or think during this activity?

What worked well for me?



Zoom In. Organisational

How did our team handle this?

Were we clear, supportive, and well-prepared?



Zoom Out. Field

What did this show me about youth work in general?

What's changing in our field?

4. HOW? FAIR ENOUGH, NAVIGATE ME THROUGH TOOLS

“I want to reflect... but where do I even start?” — If this sounds familiar, you’re not alone. This chapter gives you practical, simple, and flexible tools to build a reflection habit that works for YOU.

Now that you understand the value of reflection, let’s look at how you can build this into your everyday practice.

4.1. LEVELS OF REFLECTION. HOW DEEP CAN YOU GO?

Reflection doesn’t always happen at the same depth. Sometimes we describe what happened, other times we go deeper and explore why it mattered, or what it says about our values.

In this workbook, we use the model by Max Van Manen, because it is especially useful in the context of youth work.



1. Technical Reflection. The Surface Level

This is the most basic level of reflection. It usually includes:

- A simple description of what happened
- A short or general opinion (e.g. "It went well.")
- Little or no analysis of causes or results

2. Dialogical Reflection. The Thinking Level

This level goes deeper. You start to:

- Analyse goals and results
- Question your assumptions, expectations, and beliefs
- Notice your feelings and reactions

3. Critical Reflection. The Deepest Level

At this level, you reflect not only on yourself, but also on the bigger picture:

- What social norms, systems, or power structures are influencing your work?
- What values and ethics are guiding your decisions?
- Are your actions aligned with your deeper beliefs?

Why This Matters

Understanding the different levels of reflection helps you:

- Know where you are in your reflection process
- Gently deepen your insight over time
- Connect your daily work to your values and the world around you

You don't need to start at the deepest level. Every level has value. Start where you are and be curious about going one step further.

Want to go deeper?

Different reflection models can help you move through these levels step by step. You'll find them at the end of this workbook.



4.2. BUILDING A NEW HABIT: START SMALL

When developing **a new habit**, like reflection, it's important to begin with small, simple steps.

Think of it like starting a fitness routine. You **don't begin with a marathon**. You start by putting on your shoes and taking a 5-minute walk. Once that becomes part of your routine, you can gradually build up to more.

Reflection works the same way. You don't need to write a long journal every day. Start with **simple steps**, and over time, take bigger steps to reflect more deeply.

Firstly change your mindset about habits

The first step in building a new habit isn't action, it's mindset. It's not "I have to do this," but "**I get to do this.**" That one word shift changes your entire perspective.

Know your WHY

Before you start practicing a new habit like reflection, take a moment to ask yourself:

- *Why do I want to build this habit?*
- *What will it give me in the long run?*

Understanding your motivation **gives your habit purpose** and power. You're not just doing something new, you're making a change that supports who you want to become.



Inner work comes first

Every new habit starts with a small identity shift. Before we act, we often go through a quiet, **inner change**:

*"I'm someone who reflects regularly."
"I care about how I grow, not just what I do."*

This inner work lays the foundation for long-term, meaningful change.

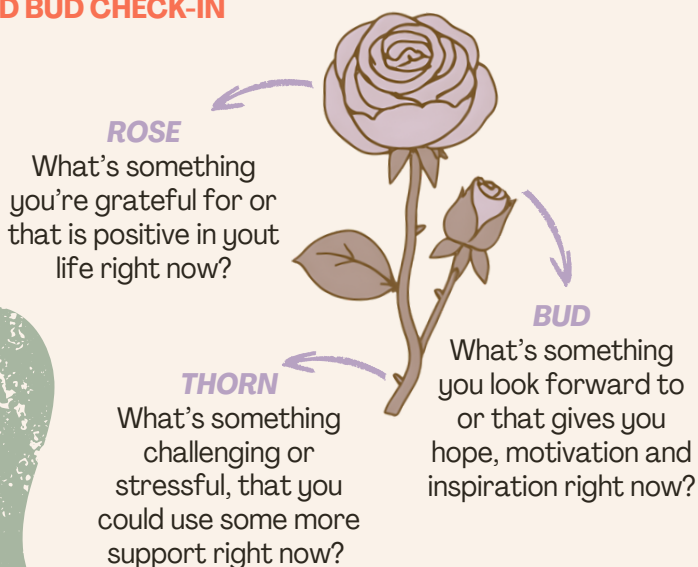
4.3. TRY THESE SIMPLE STARTERS

These simple reflection methods don't take much time and are **easy to use** — perfect for building a habit, even on busy days.

JOURNALING: Write for 5 minutes after a session. Start with prompts like:

- What went well today?
- What felt challenging?
- What would I try differently next time?

ROSE, THORN AND BUD CHECK-IN



DIXIT CARDS: Pick a card that represents how you felt during an activity. Use it as a starting point for personal or group reflection.

BLOB TREE: Choose a character on the tree that matches how you feel in your role. Explain why. Great for visual thinkers!

REFLECTION CIRCLE: Sit with colleagues or friends and share one thing that made you think today. Keep it short and supportive.

4.4. GOAL-ORIENTED REFLECTION. CONNECT WHAT YOU DO WITH WHY YOU DO IT

Reflection becomes more meaningful when it's linked to your goals. Are you moving in the direction you want?

How are goals connected to reflection?

Goals give you direction. Reflection helps you check if you're on track and adjust if needed.

Make better goals with the S.M.A.R.T. method

Specific - clear and results-oriented

Measurable - it is clear whether the goal has been achieved

Achievable - attainable and not merely a dream

Relevant - personally important and clearly defined

Time-bound - it is clear when the goal should be achieved

Use the “What? So What? Now What?” model

- **What happened?** – Describe the event.
- **So what?** – Why does it matter? What did I learn?
- **Now what?** – What can I do next time? What changes will I make?



4.5. FIND YOUR OWN WAY. REFLECTION ISN'T ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL

Not everyone likes to write. That's okay. Try different methods and choose what works for you.



WRITING

Method examples: journals, short notes, blogs



SPEAKING

Method examples: voice notes, peer conversations, group debriefs



VISUAL

Method examples: drawings, mind maps, mood boards, Blob Tree



VIDEO

Method examples: personal vlogs, video diaries



CREATIVE

Method examples: theatre, crafts, movement



MUSICAL

Method examples: reflect through songs, playlists or lyrics

Questions you should ask for yourself

- How do you like to reflect?
- What level of reflection do you usually do (technical, dialogical, critical)?
- Are you ready to build a new habit, a reflection habit?

5. WHY IS IT HARD TO START REFLECTING?

LET'S TALK ABOUT A SENSITIVE TOPIC

Reflection isn't always easy. Sometimes, it brings up feelings we'd rather avoid, like fear, shame, self-criticism, or judgment. These emotions are completely normal. In fact, they are part of being human, especially when we care deeply about our work and want to do our best.

This chapter is here to help you name and understand these emotions, not to fix or push them away. By approaching sensitive topics gently, we can begin to reflect in a way that is honest, kind, and safe.

You don't need to dive into anything you're not ready for. Start where you are. Go slowly. Use the tools and tips here to build courage, clarity, and compassion. One small step at a time.

We chose to talk about fear, judgment, self-criticism, shame, and resistance because these are often the main reasons people avoid reflection. By naming them, we hope to create space for honest conversations and show that you're not alone in feeling this way.



5.1. FEAR

Fear is one of the most common barriers to reflection.

- *“What if I realise I did something wrong?”*
- *“What if others don’t like what I say?”*

Reflection can feel like standing in front of a mirror, but you get to choose the light.

Try this:

- Start with small questions that feel safe: “What went well?”
- Remind yourself that reflection is not punishment - it’s an opportunity
- Reflect alone or in trusted company

5.2. JUDGMENT. FROM OTHERS OR YOURSELF

Many youth workers worry about being judged by others and themselves.

Internal judgment might sound like:

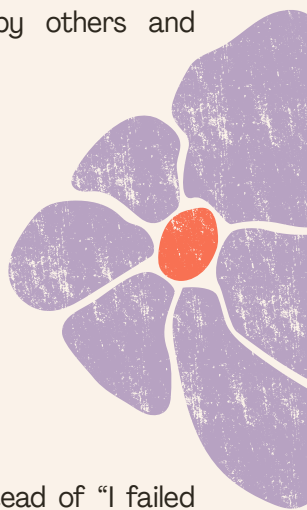
- *“I should have known better.”*
- *“I’m not good enough at this.”*

External judgment might sound like:

- *“What if I share and they think I’m weak?”*

What helps:

- Use non-judgmental language (e.g. “I noticed...” instead of “I failed to...”).
- Create agreements in group reflections: “We speak with care. We listen with respect.”
- Reflect in spaces where feedback is supportive, not evaluative.



5.3. SELF-CRITICISM

Many of us are our own harshest critics. Reflection can become an inner monologue of blame if we're not careful.

Signs of self-criticism in reflection:

- Only focusing on what went wrong.
- Dismissing your own efforts.
- Holding yourself to impossible standards.

Shift toward self-compassion:

- Reflect on what you did well before naming challenges.
- Use the “I’m learning...” frame instead of “I should have...”.
- Celebrate small wins, not just big changes.

5.4. SHAME

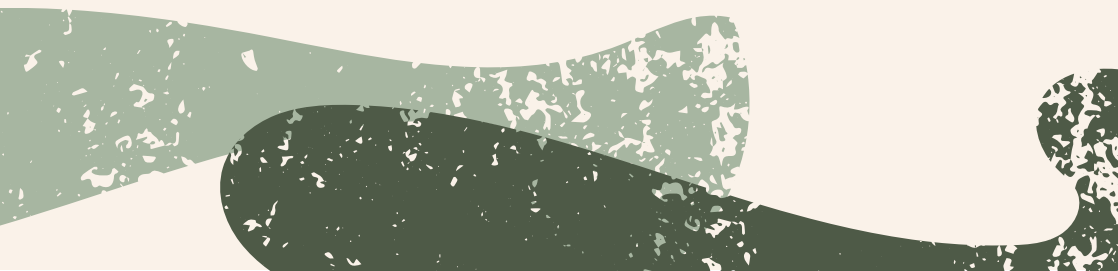
Shame tells us “I am bad,” not just “I did something wrong.” It disconnects us from others and can silence us completely.

Shame often shows up when:

- Reflection brings up past mistakes.
- You feel you’re not living up to your values.
- You fear being exposed or misunderstood.

What helps:

- Use private reflection tools first (e.g. journaling, drawing).
- Choose supportive peers or mentors who hold space, not judgment.
- Remind yourself that feeling shame is okay, and gently ask: “How can I move forward?”



5.5. RESISTANCE

Sometimes we just don't want to reflect. That's okay. Resistance can be a sign of:

- Overload or burnout.
- Fear of discovering something uncomfortable.
- Feeling like reflection is another task on a long to-do list.

What helps:

- Give yourself permission to take breaks.
- Choose lighter reflection tools (e.g. music, drawings, one-word check-ins).
- Reflect on why you're resisting. That's a reflection too.

Reflection is not always easy, but it's worth it. The goal is not perfection. The goal is growth. Approach your reflection with the same care you give to others. You deserve that kindness too.

Question you should ask for yourself

- What is your sensitive topic that makes you feel that you should not reflect?



6. TIPS AND TRICKS

6.1. FACILITATING GROUP REFLECTION

"Group reflection can feel awkward at first, but with the right tools and mindset, it becomes one of the most powerful learning experiences in youth work."

This chapter gives you simple and supportive tips for facilitating meaningful group reflection. Whether you're leading a short debrief or a deeper conversation, this guide helps you do it with confidence.

Creating a Safe Space

Trust is the foundation of group reflection. Without safety, people hold back. Here's how to make space where people feel free to speak, listen, and grow.



DO

- Set ground agreements together (e.g. "Respect all opinions", "No interrupting", "Confidentiality").
- Model vulnerability by sharing something personal first.
- Allow people to pass or stay silent. Silence is also a voice.
- Use warm-ups like Blob Tree or one-word check-ins to ease into the session.



AVOID

- Forcing participation.
- Correcting or judging what someone shares.
- Making it too serious too fast - laughter and play help build safety.

6.2. TIME MANAGEMENT FOR REFLECTION

Reflection doesn't need to be long. It just needs to be focused.

How long should it be?

When to reflect:

- After an activity or project.
- At the end of the day or week.
- During team meetings or check-ins.
- After conflict or strong emotion.
- When you feel like it.

Short reflection:

5–10 min
debrief or one-question circle.

Medium reflection:

20–30 min
session with some model.

Deep reflection:

45–60+ min with
activities or
discussion models

6.3. PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT

Sometimes the most meaningful reflection happens in conversation, just two people sharing thoughts, questions, and experiences.

Try these formats:

- Buddy Talks: partners reflect together after sessions.
- Walk & Talk: go for a short walk and reflect casually.
- One-word exchange: share one word about how you feel and why.

Benefits:

- Builds trust and reduces fear of judgment.
- Helps people verbalize thoughts without the pressure of a group.
- Encourages mutual growth and insight.

Questions you should ask for yourself

- When and where could I start using group reflection?
- When I feel I need to reflect?
- What would make my space feel safer for me and others?
- Who could I partner with for peer reflection or mentoring?

7. SIMPLE GUIDE. HOW TO START?

As mentioned before, **choose a moment** when you're calm, not rushed. Pick a quiet place or do something comforting, make tea, light a candle, play music. **Find yourself a safe place.**

7.1. CHOOSE ONE SIMPLE QUESTION

Reflect when you feel ready and don't start with huge steps. Start with what makes you feel safe.

For example choose just one question to begin:

- What went well today?
- What did I learn about myself?
- What would I do differently next time?
- How did this moment make me feel?
- What am I proud of, even a little?

If you'd like to go deeper, go to the next chapter, where you'll find more methods.



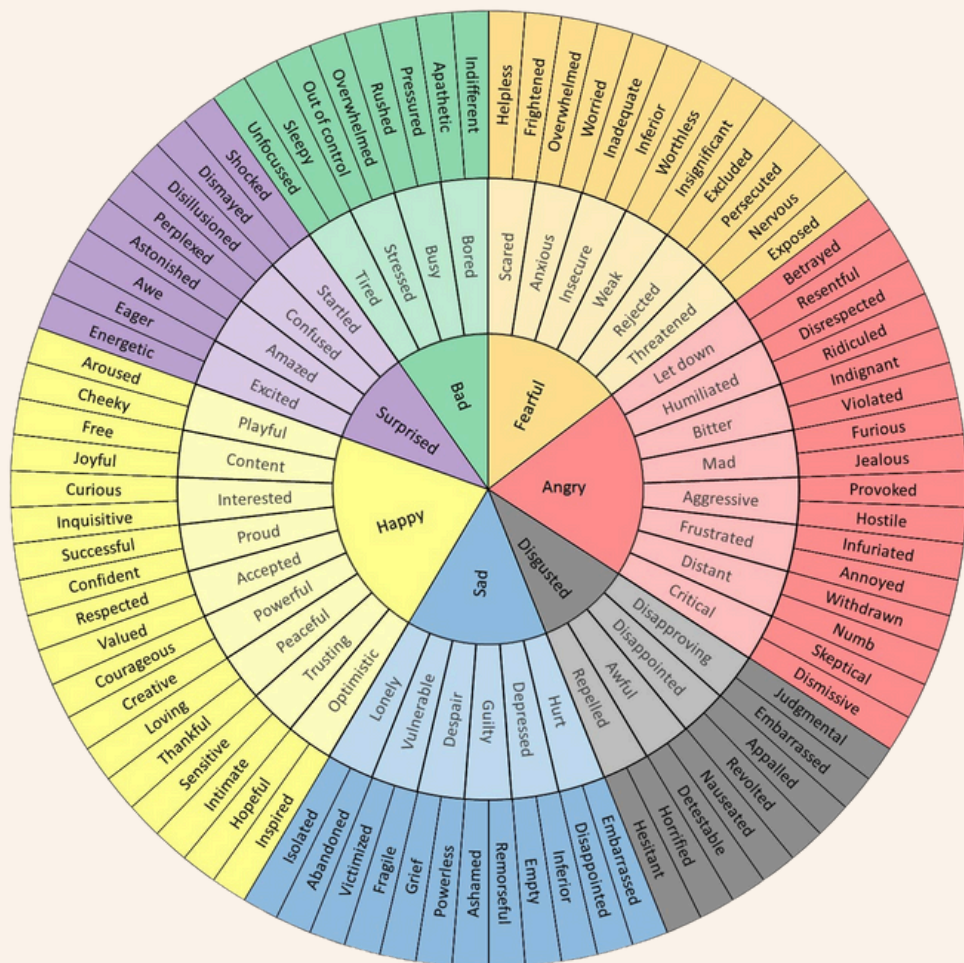
7.2. BE KIND TO YOURSELF AND EXPRESS DIFFERENT FEELINGS

It's easy to become your own worst critic. Try to reflect like you're speaking to a friend.

Instead of:

- "I failed." → **Try:** *"That was hard. I'm still learning."*
- "I should've done better." → **Try:** *"I did my best with what I knew."*


If you're not sure how to express what you're feeling, try using this **emotion wheel** to help you find the right words.



7.3. CELEBRATE TINY WINS


Even short reflections matter. Even noticing one feeling is progress. You don't have to fix everything, you're learning to notice more, and that's powerful. If expressing emotions feels difficult, try using an emotion wheel to name what you're feeling.

PLEASE REMEMBER, THAT...



...there's no **right or wrong way** to reflect!

...it's **okay** to go slow!



...you are **allowed to feel!**

...you're **not alone!**



...if you feel you need help, **ask for help!**



...feeling uncomfortable during reflection is okay – **move through it!**

8. DIFFERENT TOOLS THAT YOU CAN USE

In the following chapter, you will discover **six practical tools** designed to support meaningful reflection. Each tool includes clear **instructions** and ready-to-use **worksheets** to help you create space for deeper insight, dialogue, and growth.

Methods covered on pages 16-17:

- Journaling
- Rose, Thorn & Bud check-in
- Dixit Cards
- Blob Tree
- Reflection Circle



Gibbs' Reflective Cycle is a **step-by-step guide for deeper reflection**, developed by Graham Gibbs in 1988. This model helps structure your reflection by guiding you through six key stages. It works well after an activity, situation, or challenge, whether it went well or not.

1. Description. What happened?

Just the facts, be specific and objective.

- What was the situation?
- Who was involved?
- What did I do?

2. Feelings. What were you thinking and feeling?

Be honest, no judgment.

- How did I feel at the time?
- What did I think before/during/after?
- What made me feel safe or uncomfortable?

3. Evaluation. What was good or bad about the experience?

This includes both outcomes and processes.

- What worked well?
- What didn't go as planned?
- What were the reactions of others?

4. Analysis. Why did things happen the way they did?

Look deeper at patterns, reasons, and context.

- What helped or blocked the outcome?
- Were there assumptions or biases involved?
- What does this say about my values or working style?

5. Conclusion. What could you have done differently?

This is about learning, not blaming.

- What did I learn?
- What would I do differently next time?
- What strengths did I use?

6. Action Plan. What will you do next time?

Turn your reflection into real change.

- What steps can I take to improve?
- What support or tools do I need?
- How will I apply this learning in future situations?



WORKSHEET: GIBBS' REFLECTIVE CYCLE



Action Plan

What will you do next time?

Description

What happened?



Conclusion

What could you have done differently?

Feelings

What were you thinking and feeling?



Analysis

Why did things happen the way they did?

Evaluation

What was good or bad about the experience?



8.2. HEAD—HEART—HANDS

This model is a light, flexible reflection tool that helps you look at an experience from three different angles.

This method is **easy to use in almost any situation**, whether alone or in a group. It supports youth workers in connecting their **thoughts, emotions, and actions**, making it especially helpful after activities, workshops, or conversations with young people. It's a **great tool for everyday use**, though it may not lead to very deep reflection on its own.

- **Head.** What did I learn or think?
- **Heart.** What did I feel during the experience?
- **Hands.** What action will I take now?

WORKSHEET: HEAD–HEART–HANDS

Head

What did I learn or think?



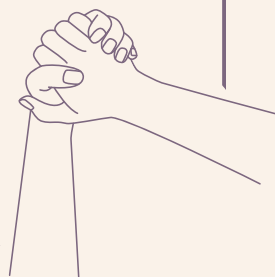
Heart

What did I feel during the experience?



Hands

What action will I take now?



Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle is developed by **David Kolb** in 1984. This model is built around the idea that we learn best through **experience**, especially when we take time to reflect on what happened, make sense of it, and try again with new insight.

It's a cycle with **four stages**:

1. Concrete Experience

You do something – for example lead a workshop, run an activity, or deal with a difficult moment.

2. Reflective Observation

You step back and reflect.

- “What went well? What didn't?”
- How did I feel?”
- “What did I notice about others?”

3. Abstract Conceptualization

You think about the learning and make sense of it.

- “Why did things go this way?”
- “What does this teach me about youth work?”
- „What does this teach me about myself?“
- “What would theory or experience say about this?”

4. Active Experimentation

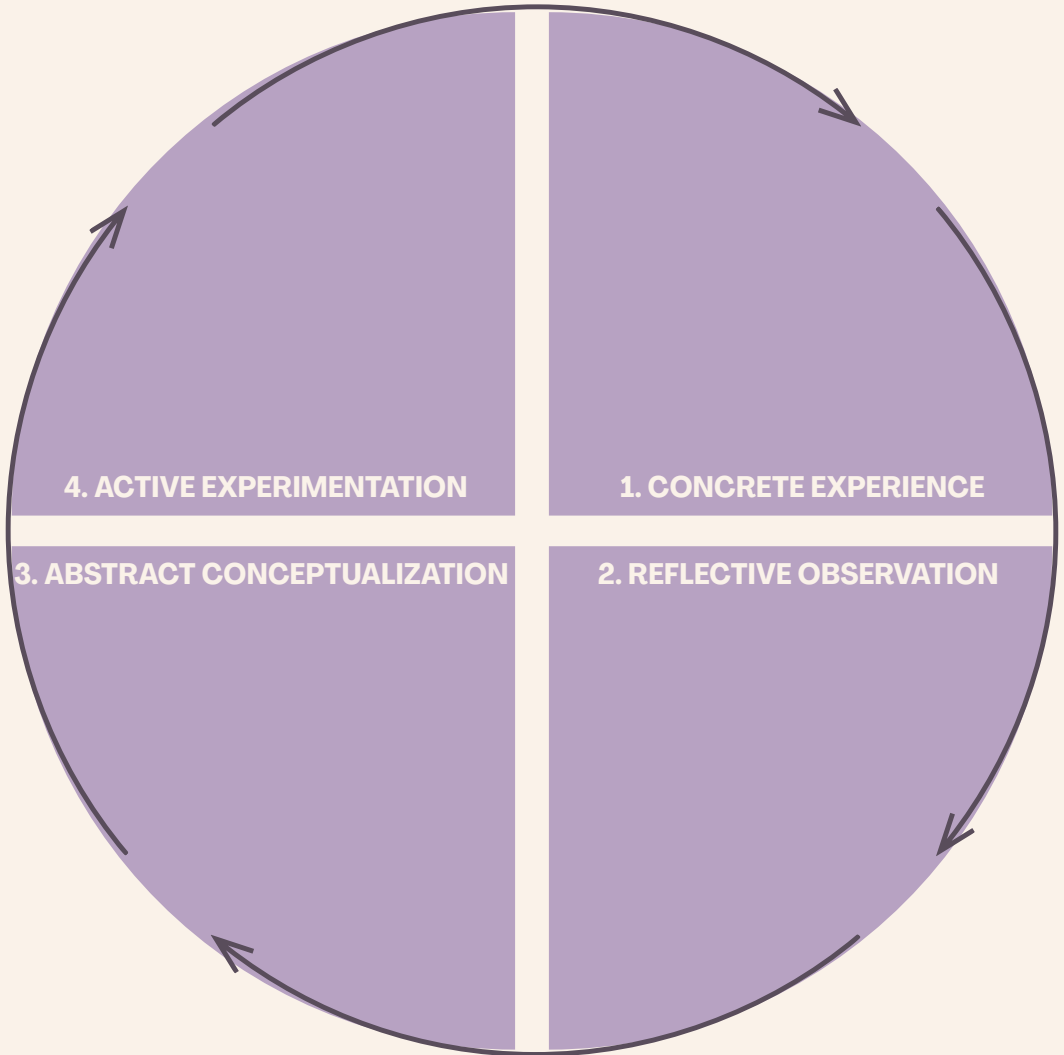
You take what you learned and try something new next time.

- “What can I do differently or improve in the future?”

Then the cycle begins again, helping you become a **more intentional, confident, and adaptable youth worker**.



WORKSHEET: KOLB'S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE



8.4. ALACT REFLECTION MODEL

A structured tool for practical improvement(Korthagen & Vasalos, 2001)

The ALACT model is especially useful when you want to improve **how you handle specific actions** or situations. It encourages **clear steps** that lead from experience to new behaviour.

The name comes from the **first letters** of each stage:

1. Action.

Start by describing a specific situation.

- “What did I do? What happened?”

2. Looking Back.

Reflect honestly on what worked and what didn't.

- “How did I feel?”
- “What were the results of my actions?”

3. Awareness of Essential Aspects.

Dig deeper: What were the key factors influencing this situation?

- “Why did I act this way?”
- “What beliefs, habits, or values were behind my choices?”

4. Creating Alternatives.

Think about what you could do differently next time.

- “What other strategies or behaviours could I try?”

5. Trial.

Apply your new ideas in practice and start the cycle again.

WORKSHEET: ALACT REFLECTION MODEL

1. Action

Start by describing a specific situation.

2. Looking Back

Reflect honestly on what worked and what didn't.

5. Trial

4. Creating Alternatives

Think about what you could do differently next time.

3. Awareness of Essential Aspects

Dig deeper.



8.5. THE 5 WHYS

The **5 Whys** is a simple but powerful reflection tool that helps you explore the **root cause** of a challenge, thought, or reaction. It works by asking "Why?" multiple times, each answer leads to the next layer.

This method helps move beyond surface-level reflection and discover what's really going on under the experience. Whether it's about your decisions, emotions, or patterns of behaviour.

How to use it:

1. Ask **Why** did this happen?
2. Keep asking "**Why?**" until you reach the underlying cause (typically 5 layers deep).

WORKSHEET: THE 5 WHYS

Why?



Why?



Why?



Why?



8.6. METAPHOR BASED REFLECTION (WEATHER CHECK-IN)

A simple, metaphor-based way to reflect on how you feel. The **Weather Check-In** uses weather as a **metaphor** to help you identify and express your current emotional state. It's a quick and creative tool that allows you to tune into your feelings, especially when words are hard to find.

Metaphors like **sunny**, **rainy**, or **stormy** can make it easier to **recognize emotions** without pressure, and they open the door to meaningful reflection alone or in a group.

How to use it:

1. **Choose a weather symbol** that describes your current mood or energy.
2. **Explain why you chose it.** What happened? How are you feeling?

You can also use other metaphors, like colours, food, drinks, or elements from nature.

WORKSHEET: WEATHER CHECK-IN



**How are you
feeling?**



CONCLUSION

This workbook is one of the main outcomes of our collaboration and we hope it becomes a trusted tool in your journey as a youth worker, youth leader, or volunteer.

Reflection isn't about having all the answers. It's about making time to ask questions that matter: to pause, notice, and learn from the everyday moments that shape you as a youth worker and a human being.

This workbook was never meant to tell you what to think or feel. Instead, it was designed as a supportive companion to help you build your own way of reflecting. That is honest, safe, and sustainable.

We hope that along the way, you've discovered:

- That reflection doesn't have to be time-consuming or complicated - it can be light, playful, emotional, or practical
- That your experiences, even the messy or difficult ones, carry insights worth exploring
- That your growth matters, not just for the young people you support, but also for your own confidence, motivation, and well-being
-

You may still feel uncertain or resistant at times. That's completely normal. In fact, it's a sign that you care. Reflection is not about doing more, it's about doing things more **consciously**, more **aligned with your values**, and with more **care for yourself and others**.

So what's next?

Keep going at your own pace. Revisit the tools that speak to you. Share what you learn with colleagues. Build reflection into your practice in ways that feel natural and real.

Thank you for taking this time to reflect!

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