

Introduction

In this assignment, the student will discuss the value of reflective practise for professionals, its importance, the necessity of fully reflecting on everyday events, the benefits of reflection, and the lessons that can be drawn from it. Several sources will be used to support this, and then a conclusion will be drawn.

What is reflective practice?

Simple examples of reflective practice include thinking about or reflecting on what has been done, it is strongly related to the idea of learning from experience in that you reflect on what was done, why it was done, what occurred and make decisions based on that about what could be done differently in the future, Skills you need.com (2022).

Reflection practice makes it possible to identify and value positive experiences and more clearly pinpoint ways to enhance both professional and service delivery. When you have encountered more difficult situations, it might be helpful in processing them and by putting strategic action plans in place whereby lessons can then be learned from them.

The University of Cambridge (No date) goes on further to say that reflection is very subjective, and various people will have different definitions of it. Consider that there is not one "ideal" definition of reflection or method for performing it, because a lot will rely on one's unique situation, to expand further upon this it is worth considering that no matter what issue is being reflected on there is no perfect way of doing it, there may always be flaws in any process of reflection that is used and that is why as professional practitioners one must be continuously learning to be better prepared for any future occurrences, flexibility and adaptability are key skills that would potentially be beneficial in helping to support any changes needed.

Why is reflection important and what is reflection in professional practice?

According to Brock, Avril. (2014. p. 1) Reflection is not a novel practise; in fact, it can be traced back to the Greek thinkers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, whose philosophical argument was built on reflection and critical thought.

Health and care professions council (2021) Defines reflection by critically analysing any aspect of your professional practise, reflection is a technique that aids in gaining understanding into it. The knowledge gained and the lessons learned can be used to uphold best practises while also creating advancements and improvements for both the practitioner and the clients they serve.

Various professional practitioners enhance their knowledge in various ways, so while one beneficiary may find it most valuable to concentrate on a circumstance, they found difficult, another practitioner may find it more useful to dwell on a happy conclusion. Reflection on a method that works best for oneself in order to get the most benefits would be better suited.



The image provided demonstrates a simple reflection model which may be used.

cambridge-community.org.uk

Why is reflective practice important within early years setting?

Consider that reflective practice may assist in maintaining and continuous improvement, by looking at any mistakes made, what worked or didn't work and what was most efficient.

Professional practitioners may gain from the process as well since they will be able to observe changes in an early year setting practice whilst gaining confidence in the high calibre and ongoing improvement of the care that is being offered.

Evans (2010) was a useful source of information stating that the significance of early Years practice must be delivered effectively, therefore practitioners must make observations and modify their practices as a result, whether they are assessing the children or their own performance. Brock, Avril. (2014a, p. 2) goes on further to state the importance of reflection along with reading, researching, and gaining professional, practical, and personal experience, the reflective process produces information and abilities that enable comprehension, empathy, and professional practise that can benefit children and families, reflecting on one's practise can provide ideas for practise improvement, To expand upon this one must consider that all children learn in various ways and can also be taught in many different forms hence the importance of good reflection practice in order to understand what is needed to find the best solution, One can also learn from mistakes or take positives from any good that has been done, There will also be greater understanding, experience and knowledge which can only enhance oneself as a professional practitioner in an early years setting.

The educational neuro science.org.uk (No date) goes onto say that more broadly, we are aware that every child is unique, and at this moment education is heavily focused on customising educational curriculum. As children make decisions about their own learning, changes in how technology is used in the classroom are expected to make personalised learning more feasible. However, significant research is developing at the same time about the kinds of adjustments that may be made in classrooms to enhance everyone's learning, such as lowering auditory noise levels.

Reflective Models

Valloton, 2021 states that one set of practices that has gained increasing attention in early care, education and early intervention settings is reflective practice. "At its heart, reflective practice is about understanding one's own and others' mental states (e.g., our thoughts, feelings, intentions and goals, desires and needs.)". Whilst one has established what reflective practice is and how important this is in early years settings it is important to remember that there are many reflective theory models in which one can learn from.

In Schon's (1991) reflective model professional practitioners can separate reflection into two individual categories, reflection in action and reflection on action. Practice professionals can modify the situation or task they are working on during the process by continuously evolving through a technique known as reflection in action, this is especially helpful in real-world scenarios like teaching or nursing, where you may need to be flexible and try new approaches when something isn't working as planned. Professional practitioners can get a handle on that part of reflective practise by using Schön's framework.

By approaching one's professional practice with a questioning attitude by adhering to Schon's model of reflection. Individuals will reflect on both why and how situations could be different.

Professional practitioners may consider thinking about early years strengths and potential growth areas, analysing why teaching strategies might be this way and thinking about how to improve them. As a result, every action taken will be well thought out, supported by research and prior knowledge, laser-focused, and motivated by reason. Like every reflective model, it's crucial to go through the cycle again to ensure that learning is retained, progress, growth and continuous professional development is made.

Touching upon the image provided shows a small break down of how Schön's (1991) reflective model works, seen is the considerations for reflection in model and the considerations on action or in simple terms reflection after something has happened, Now consider this for an early years setting where by finding oneself thinking as it happens and having to be adaptable to changes is a common theme, reflection in hindsight can then be used and applied.



NursingAnswers.net.

Gibbs (1988) approach to reflective model could also be a helpful process. This might be a singular encounter or a recurring scenario, like regular meetings amongst other professional practitioners within the same early years setting. Although Gibbs (1988) initially recommended using this reflective model in circumstances that would recur, the stages and concepts remain the same for singular encounters. If an action plan is then created for a standalone event, it could become more relevant and focus on how it might be used as a conclusion moving forward.

In order to assist experience learning, Gibbs (1988, p.49) developed his "organised debriefing." It can be used to reflect on a single experience as well as a continual cycle of improved performance for a recurrent experience. The recognition of the significance of feelings in reflection is one of Gibbs' fundamental findings. Additionally, Gibbs breaks down evaluation into what worked and what did not. Using the image provided from mind tools.net it shows the 6 stages of Gibbs reflection model theory in a simple form: -



Step 1: Description – A short brief explanation of what happened, consider who? What? When? Where? And why?

Step 2: Feelings – Consider what feelings were felt at this point, why did one experience this feeling? What did the other person feel? How did one feel after? Mind tools.net

Step 3: Evaluation – Consider the outcome objectively and think about what worked and what did not work.

Step 4: Conclusion – Once evaluated a conclusion can now be thought about pulling all information together.

Step 5: Action – Now an action plan will be put in place to work towards changing anything necessary.

Conclusion

The argument presented suggests that it is best practice for professional practitioners in the early years settings to consider adopting a reflection model which best suits the practitioner, using a reflective model will better develop oneself as a reflective practitioner and enhance many skills, this combined with experience, versatility in knowing when to possibly adopt a different reflective model when one is not working and honesty in regards to what is working and what is not working during the reflective cycle process, if there is no honesty with oneself during the cycle then there is potential for the reflective model to fail.

In an early year setting a good reflective model process adopted would potentially bring the staff or team closer together and help overcome any barriers or issues put in the way, continuous professional development can also be obtained furthering one's knowledge, professional practitioners could therefore utilise reflection models within early years settings to better understand children, their educational requirements, or even to determine their personal preferences in order to help with long term planning.

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