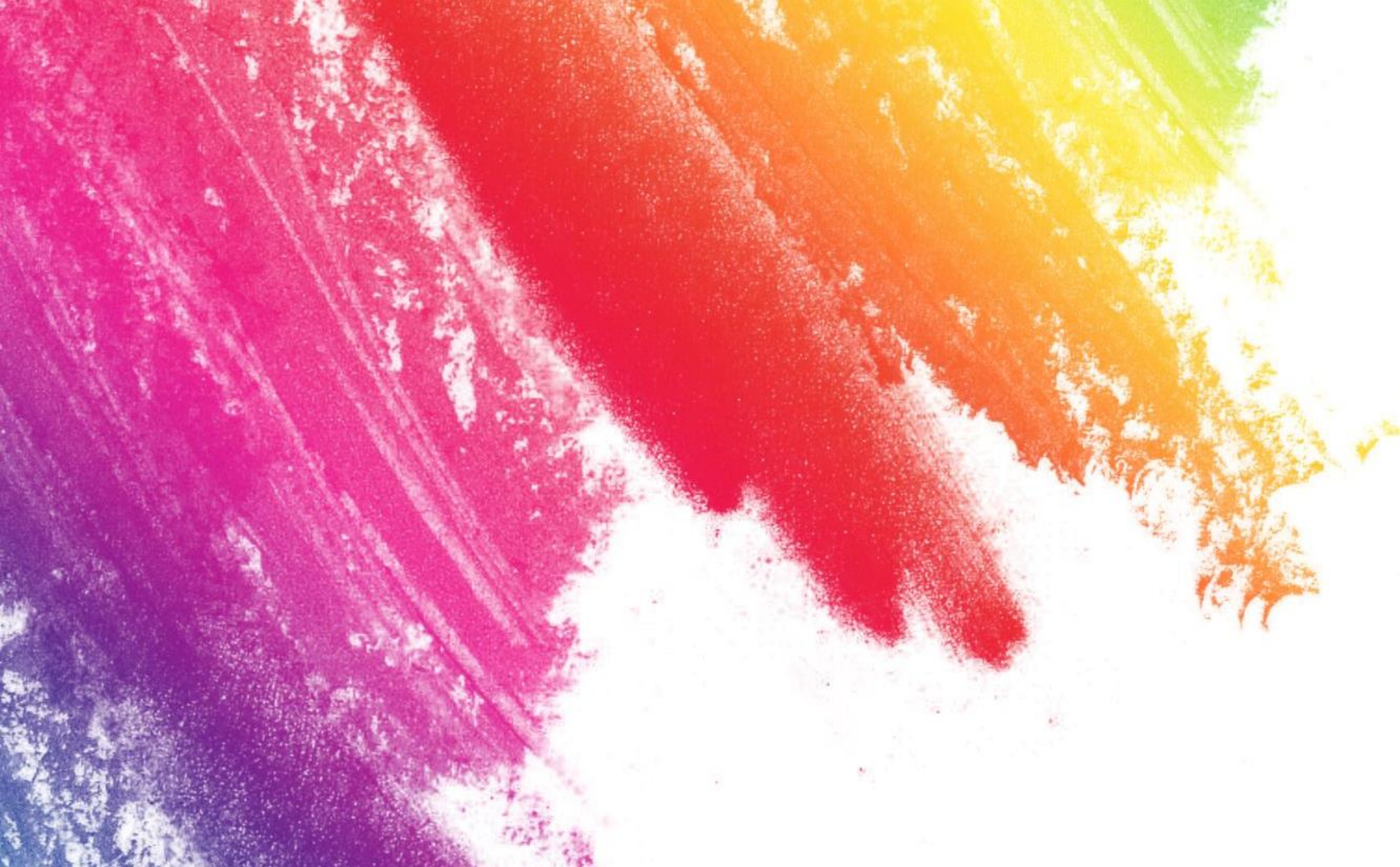




Influences on Positioning and Perspective

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Influences on Positioning and Perspective

This poster will critically reflect on experiences, opportunities and influences both personal and professional that contribute to an individual's personal development. Cottrell (2017, p.187) believes that it is possible to lose one's perspective or position, with future learning being compromised, if consideration is not given to critically reflecting on one's diverse experiences, opportunities and influences. Helyer (2015) states that by implementing effective and purposeful reflective practice, continuous personal and professional learning will occur, and consequently, progress towards goals and objectives will be achieved.

Experiences There are a variety of life experiences that will influence an individual's values, morals, behaviours and personalities. These experiences essentially make us who we are. Experiences such as love, loss, work and parenthood can all impact our ability to navigate life and influence personalities (Buhler <i>et al.</i> 2023). Career Choices Choosing and/or embarking on a career can be difficult at any age, but this is more challenging in adolescence due to indecision and confusion (Dumitru and Bersan, 2016). Adolescence is a time of exploration and discovery with regard educational and career options; however, Edwin <i>et al.</i> (2022) believe that establishing clear educational and career aspirations is challenge for adolescents to establish due to life and personal challenges. Parenthood Becoming parent can be a time of fulfilment, change and new responsibilities for many, this can result in a period of contemplation, reflection and re-assessment of careers (Curominds, 2023). Widening Access The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (1998) highlighted that higher education institutions should target individuals with a desire for life-long learning and that a flexible approach, offering a variety or entry and exit points at any stage of life would benefit mature students. According to UCAS (2024) studying as a mature student is an excellent opportunity to develop new skills, improving career opportunities.	Learning Opportunities Professional learning is a key factor in supporting continuous development of one's knowledge, skills and understanding. Learning opportunities and personal and professional development can support individual's acquisition and/or improvement of skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes which can improve professional practice (Nguyen, 2018) Professional Learning experiences Carpenter and Linton (2016) believe that the key to self-improvement is professional development. Research from Poljašević and Todorović (2021) demonstrates that there is a significant link between engaging and meaningful opportunities for professional development and job satisfaction. Research Learning Opportunities Research informed practice defined by Barends and Rousseau (2018) as decision making through rigorous and considered use of the available evidence, which should be sought from a wide range of sources to increase the likelihood of favourable outcomes. Using research to inform practice can be transformative for the researcher, practitioners, professionals, students, children and families. Opportunities to share research ideas to improve children's experiences and outcomes is key in professional practice. Personal Learning Opportunities According to Gamage, Dehideniya and Ekanayake (2021) values that are adopted and adhered to as a result of lived experiences can influence a person's character and personality and, as such, can impact success in other areas of life. Therefore, personal learning experiences have considerable value alongside more formal learning.	Influences There are a variety of influences that can affect an individual's perspective and positioning in life Personal/ Familial Parents/ Grandparents, partners, children, siblings and friends are some of the individual characters in an individual's life. These characters will influence one's life in a range of ways. Community Thinking about Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and how the systems around the individual and the way in which they interact, can significantly influence and impact and individual's development and consequently their quality of life (Sadownik, 2023). Professional Professional relationships have potential to influence one's development and advancement or stagnation. Effective and meaningful relationships have the power to encourage, motivate and nurture. Negative relationships have the power to hinder, reduce or limit career success and progression. Mentors can support mentees to develop self-efficacy, confidence, self-belief, skills and much more. Therefore, the mentor relationship is more than a mere transaction, it can be transformational (Kram, 1988). Academic/ Theoretical Social Learning Theory approaches to learning places an emphasis on collaboration and the social and cultural context (Rannikmäe, Holbrook and Soobard, 2020). The likes of Vygotsky and Bruner who's approaches are influential in learning in contemporary society (Mohamed and Kinyo, 2020).
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What does this mean?

Glück and Bluck's (2013) 'MORE' life experience model theorises that it is life's challenges and difficulties that can be a catalyst for future learning, providing individuals employ a variety of resources to support them. These resources are **M**astery; a strong capacity to deal with challenge, **O**penness; being open to other perspectives, **R**eflectivity: the willingness to look at the complexity of issues rather than attempting to simply them and **E**motion; modelling compassion for the emotions of others. These life experiences can be powerful catalysts in not only changing the way one thinks about themselves but also the way the think about the world around them (Visser, 2023).

Being a reflective individual can facilitate deeper learning, personal growth and the capacity to be agents of change (Holdo, 2022). According to Holdo (2022) Dewey's 1933 reflective model provides a theoretical model to explore various factors in an event/ situation, providing opportunities for transformative learning through a thoroughly reflective lens.

Positionality

Holmes (2020, p.1) define the concept of 'positionality' as both an individual's view of the world and the position adopted in relation to research. Masood (2022) adds that 'positionality of how an individual's class, race, gender or other factors such as self-identification, experiences, privileges and challenges influence's ones approaches as a researcher. Exploring and deciding on one's positionality takes time (Holmes, 2020).

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