Reflection: Using Gibbs' reflective cycle to reflect on your personal development during the process of making the group video. Weave in concepts of group work, Design Thinking and personal development into your insights to support your reflection.

This assignment is centred on a written reflection regarding the group task of developing a presentation that addresses a solution to a wicked problem, which are characterised as dysfunctional issues inside complex systems (Systems Innovation, 2019). Reflective practice is the process of learning from experience and acquiring new insights about oneself and one's actions essential for professional development (Finlay 2008, cited in BPS 2024), which is also a responsibility endorsed by the Educational Workforce Council (Wyn, 2023) and Teaching Standards in Wales (2019) for practitioners. For this assignment, I will employ Gibbs' reflective cycle, which consists of six stages, to assess and analyse my thoughts and feelings throughout the process in order to identify potential actions. Gibbs (1988, cited in Trimasse, 2024) posits that assumptions and ideas can be derived from the emotions and thoughts arising from reflective experiences, facilitating the effective management of future situations.

Initially, I felt apprehensive about the group assignment, as I am accustomed to working independently with logical and comprehensive approaches, which could be characterised by Gregorc as a concrete-sequential mind style (Bates, 2019). I was already acquainted with one team member, but I had not previously met the other in person. I was apprehensive about the group dynamics and frightened of the uncertainty. Carlton (2016) posits that this constitutes the core dread underlying neuroticism and anxiety, seen as a sense of threat. At our initial meeting, we acquainted ourselves, deliberated on our respective roles, exchanged narratives, and engaged in laughter, which, as

research indicates, stimulates dopamine and oxytocin, so reducing stress and enhancing connection (TISUK, 2024). Tuckman (1956, cited in Murphy, 2024) would describe this as the forming stage of the group process. At times, I believed we engaged in excessive conversation rather than concentrating on the task, nevertheless I acquiesced. Horney (1942, cited in Cherry, 2023) may characterise this as a neurotic need for people-pleasing to secure approval from others and the desire for acceptance, driven by the fear of rejection. This may be attributed to insecurities stemming from past events, which frequently influence our interactions with others (Thompson, 2021; Cherry, 2023). After selecting our wicked problem, we individually shared our experiences related to the topic and selected specific aspects to address depending on our strengths. I experienced compassion, like the others, over the issue that Strauss *et al.,* (2016, cited in Chan *et al*., 2022) delineates as a sympathetic concern coupled with a desire to alleviate it, which constitutes the initial phase of design thinking in generating a solution. Our mutual interest in the topic fostered a collective purpose, instilling in me a sense of belonging, which Maslow (Bates, 2019) posits as a factor in motivation. Ainley (2006, cited in Student Success, 2025, p. 57) posits that interest functions as both a motivation and an emotion, encompassing feelings associated with a subject and those cultivated by group cohesion, which is deemed crucial for learning and pleasant affect. Speight *el al*., 2018 (cited in Mebert *et al*., 2020, p. 31) posits that meaningful engagement transcends mere involvement and participation, serving as a crucial element in the attainment of objectives. The group dedicated considerable time to establishing both a collective and individual purpose, which is seen as a beneficial characteristic of successful teams (Parker, 2008). Nonetheless, my original emotions likely evolved into self-doubt, which affected my actions to conform. Awareness of emotions is

essential, and maintaining open-mindedness is crucial for critical reflection (Hanscomb, 2023); hence, cultivating a growth mindset and positively reframing my initial thoughts may facilitate overcoming this challenge in future.

During a team meeting, a member made a comment that made me uncomfortable, as it suggested differing attitudes and expectations regarding the assignment's standards. I thought our individual segments may lack coherence and felt angry although I dismissed it with laughter. I refrained from expressing my thoughts to avoid causing emotional distress to the other individual, as Leary (2021) suggests that feedback may be perceived as rejection and might diminish self-esteem, a situation I would find undesirable if I were in their position. I seemed to fear conflict. To alleviate stress and preserve group cohesion, I altered my expressions while without moderating my interior emotions (Van Kleef and Côté, 2021). This can be characterised as a Fawn response; mitigating the threat of conflict by repressing my emotions and engaging in people-pleasing to maintain group cohesion (Ryder, 2022). Thompson (2021) posits that the peril of groupthink arises when individuals conform to others to evade conflict, potentially stemming from a diminished self-worth or the perception that expressing one's views may be perceived as arrogance by others. Upon reflection, it seems the group bypassed the storming and norming phases of Tuckman's model (Murphy, 2024), which are characterised by risk-taking, expectation disclosure, and conflict management, and proceeded directly to the performing stage. Many scholars assert that evading conflict may be detrimental to a group's cohesion, while confronting it might facilitate team development by enabling participants to comprehend diverse perspectives (Brown and Jarldorn, 2023). Parker (2008) posits that teams failing to navigate the storming stage may not acquire the necessary

skills to manage disagreements, leading to the emergence of passive resistance. It is suggested to address conflict with an analytical and adaptable mindset, referring to it as a "healthy discussion," which can strategically enhance conflict-resolution abilities that I will employ in future situations (Parker, 2008, p. 39). According to psychodynamic theory, perceptions are founded on assumptions, frequently at an unconscious level (Jaques and Salmon, 2007). Considering this perspective, it is plausible that the other team member's comment sprang from personal struggles, external issues, or a lack of comprehension regarding the project, leading to feelings of inadequacy. Consequently, as indicated by studies, possessing self-awareness and comprehension of social dynamics, as well as embracing risks and participating in disagreements, may be uncomfortable yet vital for development (Cottrell, 2024). The Johari Window model serves as an efficient instrument for augmenting interpersonal awareness, as dialogue during the storming phase may facilitate individuals in revealing their concealed aspects, thereby cultivating self-awareness and promoting more transparent communication (Jaques and Salmon, 2007). Parker (208) suggests that positive communication can facilitate an individual's development. I thought to achieve success, we must all aspire to the same elevated standards. Hamachek (cited in Chufar, 2013, p. 117) would characterise this as perfectionism, in which I upheld elevated standards and endeavoured for excellence, investing significantly more time into the assignment, which was my presumption. In future group work, I will advocate for approaching the storming stage and fostering open dialogue with heightened self-awareness. The Pygmalion effect, through varying expectations, can assist individuals in improving performance and envisioning their potential selves through elevated expectations, fostering support rather than undermining (Kumar, 2019). Frost (1990, cited in Karolina

Kwarcińska *et al*., 2022, p.99) posits that the emergence of perfectionism may stem from parental criticism and the necessity to attain perfection for the sake of receiving approval from others, hence safeguarding one's fragile self-esteem which corresponds quite accurately to myself. Upon reflection, it seems that the suppression of my views and opinions has ensnared me in my own drama triangle (Lac and Donaldson, 2020). Lencioni (2024) assumes that the evasion of conflict constitutes a dysfunction within a team, and that members must exhibit vulnerability; else, they risk becoming passively devoted to a goal. I aspired not only to achieve personal achievement but also to excel as part of a successful team. Upon reflection, it is evident that my avoidance of articulating my thoughts and my pursuit of perfectionism adversely affected my well-being, resulting in heightened tension and anxiety, since I frequently prioritised tasks over interpersonal interactions.

In conclusion, applying the Gibbs model to reflect on my group experience has facilitated the development of self-awareness regarding my thoughts and emotions. As noted by Jaques and Salmon (2007), personal needs can occasionally distort our perceptions, leading to a misinterpretation of information that may be overlooked. By adopting a reflexive position, as suggested by Dewey (1910, cited in Thompson, 2021); closely examining thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and their consequences, we might cultivate new understandings and methodologies. Confronting problems and pursuing personal development can lead to a sense of contentment and purpose (Song, 2024). According to Parker's (2008) model of roles that contribute to a team's success I appear to take on a more contributor role, characterised by setting high personal standards, bringing extensive study notes to gatherings, approaching tasks with intensity, and believing that effective execution of tasks is crucial for a successful team, which appear to be my strengths. In the future,

I aspire to incorporate a more challenging and communicative role, unafraid to express my authentic feelings in order to foster open and constructive dialogue. Brown and Jarldon (2023) advocate for this method, asserting that integrating conversations about conflict into the group's norms is a beneficial and productive component of group dynamics. Furthermore, such an approach can potentially aid in the development of conflict management skills that can be integrated not just into my academic life but also into my personal and professional endeavours. Additionally, enhancing the confidence to engage in the ideate component of the design thinking process of future problem-based assignments.

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