

## Reflective Writing – An Introduction

In many ways, reflective writing is simply writing down the reflective process that we all go through during supervision. It is important that we are aware of what happens during our interactions with other people and reflect on these encounters, in order that we can learn from our experiences and develop our skills. Many of the skills used are those we use when exploring a breastfeeding situation with a mum.

One model often used is Borton's (1970) framework for guiding reflective activities.

What?	So What?	Now what?
This is the <i>description</i> and <i>self awareness</i> level and all questions start with the word what	This is the level of <i>analysis</i> and evaluation when we look deeper at what was behind the experience.	This is the level of <i>synthesis</i> . Here we build on the previous levels these questions to enable us to consider alternative courses of action and choose what we are going to do next.
<b>Examples</b> <b>What:</b> ...happened? ...did I do? ...did others do? ...was I trying to achieve? ... did I see/do? ... was my reaction to it?	<b>Examples</b> <b>So what:</b> ...is the importance of this? ...went well? ...could have gone better? ...more do I need to know about this? ...have I learnt about this?	<b>Examples</b> <b>Now what:</b> ...could I do? ...do I need to do? ...might I do? ...might be the consequences of this action?

If you would like to read more about reflection there are lots of resources available.

Please ask if you would like to see a booklist for further reading.

Cue Questions for reflective writing

### 1. Description of the experience

- Phenomenon – describe the here and now experience
- Causal – what essential factors contributed to this experience? I think!
- Context - what are the significant background factors to this experience?
- Clarifying – what are the key processes for reflection in this experience?

### 2. Reflection

- What was I trying to achieve?
- Why did I intervene as I did?

- What were the consequences of my actions for:
  - Myself?
  - The patient / family?
  - The people I work with?
- How did I feel about this experience when it was happening?
- How did the patient feel about it?
- How do I know how the patient felt about it?

### 3. Influencing factors

- What internal factors influenced my decision – making?
- What external factors influenced my decision – making?
- What sources of knowledge did / should have influenced my decision – making?

### 4. Evaluation: Could I have dealt with the situation better?

- What other choices did I have?
- What would be the consequences of these choices?

### 5. Learning

- How do I now feel about this experience?
- How have I made sense of this experience in light of past experiences and future practice?
- How has this experience changed my ways of knowing
  - Empirics – scientific
  - Ethics – moral knowledge
  - Personal – self awareness
  - Aesthetics – the art of what we do, our own experiences