

3.3.1 Introduction to reflective learning



The previous modules provided you with the necessary guidelines and tools to implement small group and case-based learning sessions. This module will prepare you to implement reflective learning in a CE session. Note that reflective learning can be integrated as a component within small group or case-based learning sessions.

Key Terms:

Brave Space: enable a safe learning environment, where learners engage authentically with their peers in challenging discourses [53-54].

Critical Reflective Inquiry (CRI): this model enables care providers to learn from their experiences and evaluate by exploring the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes ingrained in clinical practice settings [51].

Why facilitate reflective learning?



In a rapidly evolving healthcare system with continued importance on lifelong learning, it is critical for clinicians to **continuously update** their knowledge and reflect on their clinical practice [56]. Reflective learning provides an opportunity for healthcare practitioners to deliberately think about their clinical environment; subsequently, this educational intervention plays an influential role in **promoting practice change** [55]. Reflection encourages healthcare practitioners to examine their daily actions and the nature of their work routines, which is imperative in ensuring the **quality of healthcare provision**. Reflective learning offers a pragmatic avenue to advance CE practices [52].

Case scenario

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased burden on the healthcare system and a rapid shift in clinician workload. At a hospital, there has been a shortage of staff and high turnover. The staff are very stressed with all of the required work and are reporting high levels of burnout. Aliyah, an education coordinator, has been tasked with creating a CE program to promote wellness and principles of resilience among clinicians. The planning committee is considering incorporating ways to reflect on practice to encourage self-awareness and a commitment to lifelong learning.



5.1.2 As Aliyah is developing a reflective learning session, she considers the following:

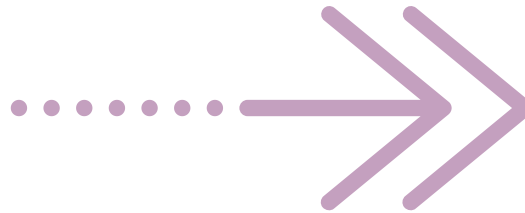
1	Why should I consider adding reflection into the learning plan?
2	How would I integrate reflective learning into the CE session to promote the wellbeing of clinicians?
3	How would I ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment for discussion?
4	How would I encourage learners to participate in reflective learning?
5	How would I integrate reflective learning within a virtual context?
6	How do I assess reflections, follow-up and give feedback to ensure the integrity of the activity?

Key enablers

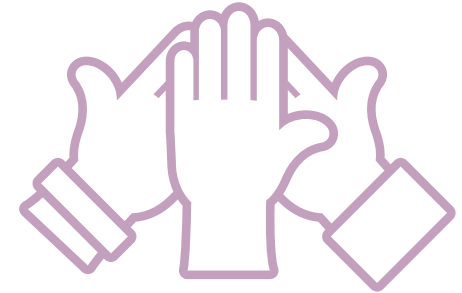
INTERVENTION INTRODUCTION



Identify learning
needs and practice
gaps



Create a supportive
and continuous
learning process



Establish a brave
space for
learning

Identify learning needs and practice gaps

It is critical to identify learning needs and practice gaps as reflection is based on reconceptualization of past experiences that lead to further reflection and inform new experiences [57].

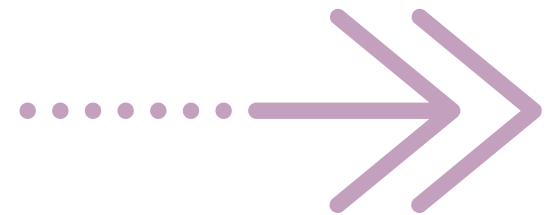
Using a structured approach helps to transform the practice experiences of care providers into tacit—rather than only explicit—knowledge. This leads to increased self-awareness and identification of gaps in knowledge and skills, thereby improving practice change and patient care delivery [51].



Supportive and continuous learning process

Reflective learning is a process rather than a single-time event. To do this well, facilitators should act as guides to learners, supporting them through the process of reflection [57-59].

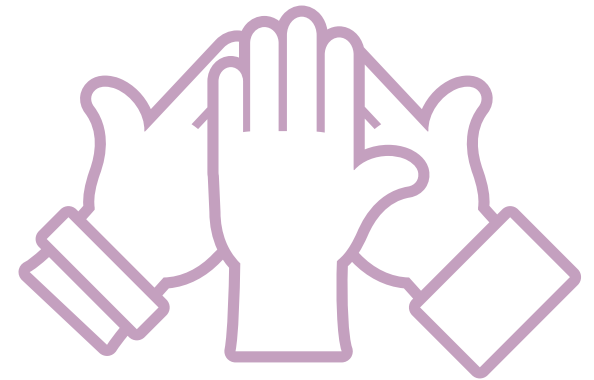
Framing and reframing, open dialogue, and helpful feedback encourage learners (and facilitators) to identify gaps, reflect on new material, situate it into their own personal contexts, and encourage continual learning and practice change [57-59].



Create a brave space for learning

Brave spaces enable a safe learning environment, where learners engage authentically with their peers in challenging discourses [53-54]. Although brave spaces can create discomfort for learners, they provide resources and support to those who are most sensitive and facilitate a deep and extensive conversation [53-54]. Support is intended to enhance and not draw away from participation and learning opportunities [53-54].

The best reflections come from being in a position of discomfort; thus, educators who wish to stimulate more meaningful reflections need to be willing to be provocative, sometimes profoundly so. Thus, they need to create not only safe spaces, but brave spaces.



Formula for success

1

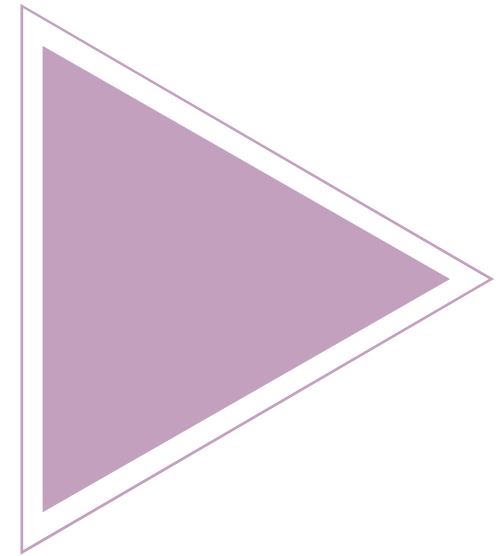
Develop contextual and situated reflective learning activities.

2

Facilitate with clear guidance and practical goals, ensuring continuous integration into context.

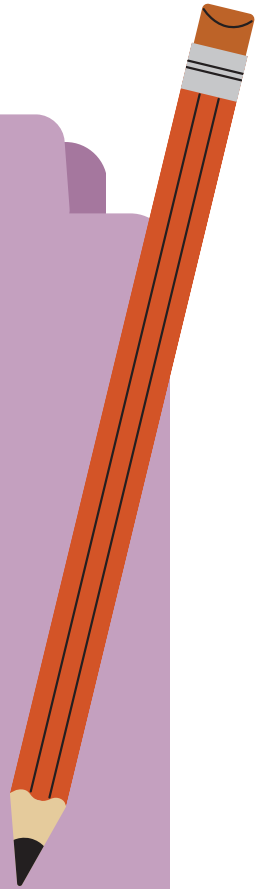
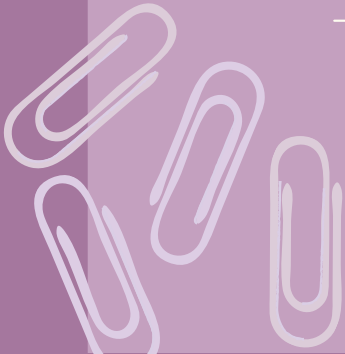
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Evaluate with the learner's end goals in mind, providing feedback in a safe and productive way to help identify gaps and integrate new knowledge into practice.



Reflective learning

3.3.2 FRAMING THE PROBLEM AND PREPARATION

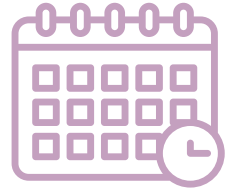





Determine learning goals for reflective learning

When determining learning goals, CE leaders or educators should consider the following guiding questions:

- ✓ Are there any gaps in **knowledge, skills, and attitudes** that should be addressed [57]?
- ✓ How can reflective learning be used to help **integrate** care providers' new learning with existing knowledge and past experiences and incorporate it into current or future practice [57]?
- ✓ Is the aim of reflective learning to identify practice needs or focus on learning [57]?

When to use reflective learning



-  Reflection can take place at any point of an event or situation: before, during and after [59].
-  Reflection prior to an encounter can contribute to self-development and lifelong learning. This allows learners to challenge their perceptions or approach a situation with a specific learning objective [59].
-  Reflective learning can be integrated within a larger CE intervention to maximize the learning experience [57].

Importance of facilitator's role in reflective learning

HOW TO PREPARE

01

Promote Deeper
Reflection

Encourage learners to consider their scenario beyond what was initially presented. This level of self-awareness will enable learners to understand how they can make positive changes to practice [52,55,60].

02

Create Brave
Spaces

The presence of a brave space in place of a safe space encourages a positive view of critical reflection. This can shift learner mindset in seeing reflection as a necessary part of small-group learning [53-54].

03

Facilitate
Discussion

Learners can present their narratives to analyze in a small group using the critical reflective inquiry model [51]. Learners can act as peer facilitators in reflective analysis and discussion.

What is brave space

BRAVE SPACE

- Brave spaces are necessary for creating reflective learning since the learning stimulus can be necessarily provocative. Brave spaces can be established through creating **classroom guidelines** and **etiquette** [61].
- An emphasis is placed on **social justice**, thereby creating a space that is equitable and inclusive of all social identity groups [61].
- Key principles that promote brave space include controversy with civility, owning intentions and impact, challenge by choice, and respect [61].

HOW TO PREPARE

ENGAGE
LEARNERS

1

Engage the learners in co-creating ground rules or amending existing rules [61].

OPEN
DIALOGUE

2

Facilitate an open dialogue by sharing diverse viewpoints respectfully [61].

CREATE A
SPACE

3

Provide an equitable and inclusive space to share stories and thoughts [61].

Create a brave space for learning

HOW TO PREPARE



CONTROVERSY WITH CIVILITY

Different views are encouraged. Learners work to understand the cause for conflicting perspectives and collaboratively work together to identify a common solution [53-54].



OWNING INTENTIONS AND IMPACT

Facilitators foster a safe learning environment that encourages learners to engage with less fear and greater honesty [53-54].



CHALLENGE BY CHOICE

Learners have the choice to determine the activities in which they would like to engage. During a challenging conversation, facilitators can probe learners to stimulate discussion [53-54].



RESPECT

It is imperative to show respect to one another and understand the various cultural values and beliefs individuals bring with them [53-54].

Framing the problem and preparation checklist

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN PREPARING REFLECTIVE LEARNING

- Determine learning goals for reflective learning.
- Determine when to integrate reflective learning with your CE intervention.
- Plan the stimulus that will activate the learners, create engagement and generate reflective thinking.
- Create a brave space for learning.
- Plan for how to record and retain the reflection(s) from each learner.
- Plan for how to use the recorded reflections to facilitate and encourage behavior or practice change.



Reflective learning

3.3.3 IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Stages of critical reflective inquiry model (CRI)

Use the CRI model to facilitate reflective learning [51].

DESCRIPTIVE

- Consider whether to ask learners to draft a written narrative of a practical situation they wish to analyze using reflection [51].
- These narratives should include all characteristics of the scenario, including how the learner felt, thought and acted [51].

REFLECTIVE

- Assist learners in examining their narratives using reflective analysis to compare their feelings, thoughts and behaviors to [51]:
 - scientific knowledge/ethical standards
 - their own intentions
- This process will facilitate self-awareness among learners on how they deliver care and how they can improve their own practices [51].

CRITICAL

- Encourage learners to critique their own practices to remove inefficiencies and incorporate new developments where necessary [51].
- Facilitate dialogue for learners to examine disparities between their own [51]:
 - beliefs vs practice, intentions vs actions, patient needs vs learner actions.

Applications of the critical reflective inquiry model

- ✓ **Knowledge creation:** Reflective analysis of narratives can add to current best practices and applications of knowledge to practice. It can be used to guide learners' own practice [51].
- ✓ **Improving practice:** Encourages continuing professional development of learners [51].
- ✓ **Knowledge transfer:** This model can be used in group settings such as conferences to analyze and discuss practice scenarios. Learnings can be applied to individual practice [51].
- ✓ **Personal action plan:** Action plans can be created by learners to help them reach their goals.

Implementation checklist

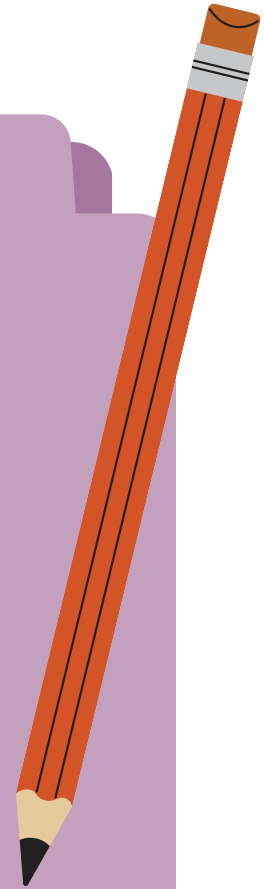
THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN USING REFLECTIVE LEARNING

- Encourage learners to create a plan of action based on their practice situation.
- Encourage learners to compare their situation to standard practices.
- Support peer facilitation and creation of brave spaces for dialogue.



Reflective learning

3.3.4 KEY CONSIDERATIONS



Key principles for facilitation of reflective learning

1

Clear guidance



Provide learners with clear guidance on critical reflection [57].

2

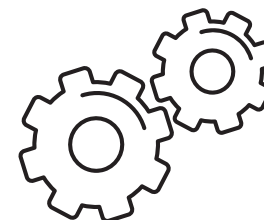
Practical goals



Frame reflection as a practical goal (e.g., enhancement of patient care) [62].

3

Integration



Integrate reflective learning into existing curricula and design of competency-based assessments [63].

Considerations for facilitating reflective learning



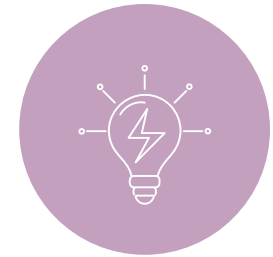
✓ Identify learning needs

Identifying learning needs based on a critical reflection of one's experience and practice is vital [64]. Focus on integrating new learning with existing knowledge and stimulating cognitive experience [57].



✓ Understand values

It is critical for practitioners to understand their personal beliefs, attitudes, and values. Reflection provides an explicit approach to their integration [64].



✓ Active learning

An active approach to learning is important for creating an integrated knowledge base that leads to the consolidation of new and existing knowledge [64].

Challenges with reflective learning

LACK OF TIME

Acquiring time away from clinical practice can pose a challenge to participation in reflective learning sessions. Additionally, time to complete reflection exercises and portfolios may potentially hinder participants from actively participating [51,56,64].

MINIMAL ENGAGEMENT

Learners may be guarded and reluctant to be transparent when asked to share their gaps in knowledge and/or deficiency in skills. Reflective learning was perceived to decline among clinicians who have been practicing for several years [59].

DIFFICULTY WITH ASSESSMENT

Assessing reflective learning is challenging due to the absence of validated tools, insufficient resources, and the uncertainty of the learning objectives. In addition, assessment length can contribute to fatigue and learners may not be honest during reflective activities [56].

Using reflective practice within a virtual learning context

Aliyah considers the following examples for delivering the CE session virtually:

Digital storytelling

1. Learners take photographs to express emotions before, during, and after a clinical scenario [59].
2. Learners reflect on experiences [59]:
 - a. How they dealt with the situation.
 - b. What they would do differently next time.
3. Learners present their digital story (e.g., MS Powerpoint/MS Photostory) [59].
4. Learners can also create an ePortfolio with a collection of stories [59].

01

Virtual expert panel

1. Activity is presented with an image and guiding questions [65].
2. Chat functionality can be used to facilitate and engage in discussions with panelists [65].
3. In this way, participants can reflect on diverse perspectives of the same situation [65].

02

Sample: Reflective practice

Topic you are reflecting on:

How would you describe this event (describe your feelings)?

1

What happened

Question 1: Provide a brief description of the situation. How did you respond? How did you feel during and after the event?

2

Looking back

Question 2: Do you think you have achieved your learning goals? Why or why not? Are you satisfied with how you handled the situation?

3

Looking forward

Question 3: What lessons did you learn from this scenario? What is one thing you want to remember or change from this activity? What do you plan to do differently now?

Sample: Personal action plan

1. What changes do you want to make as a result of attending this CE session? Aim to define at least two specific and measurable changes.

2. How important is it for you to achieve your stated learning objectives for this session on a scale from 1-5? (1=least important, 5=most important)

1 2 3 4 5

3. How confident are you that you can achieve your goal(s) on a scale from 1-5 (1=least confident, 5=most confident)

1 2 3 4 5

4. Define a timeline for your strategy. When do you plan to start, assess, and finish the process?

Start Date:

Assess Date:

Finish Date:

5. How will you know that you have reached your goal? What and how will you measure it?

6. What barriers will you encounter? What strategies could you employ to address them?

7. What resources do you have or need to achieve your goal?
