

## Life is a Circus; Let reflection guide you through the madness

### Lesson Plan

A workshop style session to engage students to consider reflection as an integral part of life, rather than a tick box exercise. Suitable for 20 – 30 students per session.

#### Learning Objectives:

By the end of the session students will have improved understanding about:

1. What is reflection?
2. How can reflection help you to maintain a healthy life?
3. Apply models to aid reflection
4. Appreciate that valuable reflection can take different forms

#### Overview

As facilitator you will be guiding students through exploring the importance of reflection in both a professional and a personal context. Students should be guided through activities encouraging them to think about how their own personal health and wellbeing can be improved and maintained by reflection; specifically focusing on managing their time well and avoiding burnout.

They will be in small groups to consider and reflect upon on a prewritten scenario; firstly, with little guidance and then with the aid of a reflective model. They will then be given a chance to use what they have learnt to apply to a innocuous scenario of their own, only if session is to be extended beyond the original 20 minutes.

The plan below provides a basic structure and information on how the activities relate to the provided resources.

Duration	Resources	Activity
5 mins	1) Resources 1-5	Prep: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lay table cards out (Resource 1) on tables - spread out so groups have enough space</li><li>• Shuffle clown cards (Resource 2)</li><li>• Familiarise self with scenario, lesson plan and slides</li></ul>
1 min	1) Resource 1 – Table Cards 2) Resource 2 – Clown Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give each student a clown card from a shuffled pile as they enter to form the groups they will be in for the session. This will ensure that groups are varied and not made up of friendship groups.</li><li>• There should be 5 groups containing 4-6 students per group</li><li>• Ask them to sit on the table with the corresponding coloured tent</li></ul>
2 mins	1) Whiteboard & projector 2) Resource 5 - PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction from facilitator – name + role</li><li>• Briefly state that we will be exploring reflection as necessary to health and wellbeing</li><li>• Go through aims with students – Slide 2</li><li>• Slide 3 - Define Reflection as per the GMC document, Achieving Good Medical Practice, <b>'Reflection is thinking about what you've done, what you did well and what you could do better next time. To do this, you need to think about what effect your actions have on yourself and on others...across all aspects of your education and training.'</b></li></ul>
2 mins	1) Whiteboard & projector 2) Resource 5 - PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask students to suggest aspects of life that they are juggling e.g. exams, social life etc.</li><li>• Discuss how taking on too many responsibilities can lead to other things falling by the wayside.</li><li>• Eg. So previously, when you had a manageable load and the juggling was relatively easily, but the more balls you add, the harder it is to keep it up and the more likely it is that you end up dropping everything.</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show slide 4</li> <li>• Stress increases as you add ball, until there is a burnout</li> <li>• Explain that reflection can help them to balance these aspects and make the work load more manageable to avoid burnout.</li> </ul>
3 mins	1) Resource 3 - Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand out scenario to groups</li> <li>• Ask students to use their own interpretation of reflection to discuss and analyse the scenario</li> <li>• Facilitator to prompt students if stuck, avoiding any mention of reflective models.</li> <li>• Prompts to be generalised and could include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 'Consider what happened and why?'</li> <li>○ 'What next?'</li> <li>○ 'What could have prevented this?'</li> <li>○ 'Any Positives of this experience?'</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
1 min	1) Whiteboard & projector 2) Resource 5 - PowerPoint 3) Resource 4 - Gibbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain there are reflective models to help structure analysis and there are many available, signpost to website with a summary of multiple reflective models – Slide 5</li> <li>• Hand out Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Resource 4)</li> <li>• Ask students to develop previous discussion using the reflective cycle</li> <li>• State that each group will be asked to present an aspect of the cycle after discussion</li> </ul>
3 mins	1) Whiteboard & projector 2) Resource 5 - PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student discussion with Gibbs' reflective cycle</li> <li>• Show slide 6</li> <li>• Allocate groups to each aspect of the reflective cycle as detailed below.</li> <li>• Note that the suggestions for discussion are not to be shared with students but are a guideline for the facilitator to ensure the key points have been covered – prompt if students get stuck or become tangential in discussion</li> <li>• Facilitator to circulate amongst groups to assess progress</li> <li>• <b>Blue</b> group to consider 'Feelings' aspect of reflective cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What are/were the emotional responses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stressed?</li> <li>▪ Upset at the prospect of letting down a friend/ not making the team?</li> <li>▪ Worried about impact of grade?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Orange</b> group to consider 'Evaluation' aspect of reflective cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What was good? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Honouring commitments – trustworthiness and dependability are transferrable skills</li> <li>▪ Prioritising life outside of medicine – decreased likelihood of a burnout</li> <li>▪ Did not give up one work – asked for an extension</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ What was bad? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Too many commitments impacting on work – leading to stress and inability to do everything.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Green</b> group to consider 'Analysis' aspect of reflective cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Why did this happen?</li> <li>○ What resources could help you make sense of this situation?</li> <li>○ What could the medical school do to support you?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Red</b> group to consider 'Conclusion' aspect of reflective cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Summarise the different aspects of the reflective cycle and begin thinking about how to move forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acknowledge failure in organisational skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identified a feasible solution – deadline extension</li> <li>▪ Realisation that change is necessary to avoid similar situations in the future</li> <li>• <b>Yellow</b> group to consider ‘Action Plan’ aspect of reflective cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set deadlines for yourself or start doing the work earlier</li> <li>○ Incorporate regular commitments (i.e. sport, music) and one-off events (i.e. birthdays) into scheduling</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2-4 mins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Whiteboard &amp; projector</li> <li>2) Resource 5 - PowerPoint</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slide 7 - Description</li> <li>• Slide 8 - Feelings (<b>Blue</b> group to present brief summary)</li> <li>• Slide 9 – Evaluation (<b>Orange</b> group presents brief summary)</li> <li>• Slide 10 – Analysis (<b>Green</b> group presents brief summary)</li> <li>• Slide 11 – Conclusion (<b>Red</b> group presents brief summary)</li> <li>• Slide 12 – Action Plan (<b>Yellow</b> group presents brief summary)</li> <li>• Facilitator to prompt further ideas from other groups after the allocated group has presented.</li> <li>• Summarise the activity by stating that through discussions, learning points have been shared and students may have been introduced to perspectives that they may not have considered before.</li> </ul>
2 mins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Whiteboard &amp; projector</li> <li>2) Resource 5 - PowerPoint</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator to state that reflection is commonly carried out through written or verbal communication</li> <li>• Ask if students can think of any other means of reflection – Slide 13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Poems</li> <li>○ Paintings</li> <li>○ Narratives</li> <li>○ Interpretive Dance</li> <li>○ Song writing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Essentially anything that enables you to process an incident is a form of reflection</li> <li>• Show excerpt of poem and a picture used as reflection - Slides 14 &amp; 15</li> <li>• Emphasise that informal reflection, i.e. a chat with your friends in the kitchen, can be just as useful as a formal reflective piece of writing in terms of processing different scenarios</li> <li>• Perhaps, reflection through means that are not considered the norm, such as poetry or painting may even be a more effective method of destressing, as its far from the reaches of medicine – maintenance of creative extracurricular can be cathartic.</li> </ul>
2 mins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Whiteboard &amp; projector</li> <li>2) Resource 5 - PowerPoint</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the idea that reflections on both positive and negative experiences should be explored to enable development of self and others. Everyone can learn from the negatives and perhaps add the positives to their practice</li> <li>• Add that it is necessary for future practice to promote professionalism - Slide 16 and 17</li> <li>• Highlight that GMC expects all registered members to complete reflection on all aspects of practice for annual appraisal and revalidation – so good to get into the routine now</li> <li>• Also, reflection in general can help you to identify what works for you and what does not – a better understanding of self, can help you to prioritise.</li> <li>• Going back to the analogy of juggling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reflection helps you to understand your limits, so you don’t add more balls until you are ready and at your own pace, so</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<p>everything becomes more manageable, or to put a ball down until you feel ready to take it on again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclude with the idea that everyone reflects in their day to day lives, the more you become aware of it, the easier it is to hone and perhaps it will become the norm for you</li> <li>• Take home messages – Slide 18 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflection can be what you want it to be, not just written</li> <li>2. Find a way to reflect that works for you as soon as you can, it <b>will</b> be useful throughout your career</li> <li>3. Life is a circus; think of reflection as the safety net when you walk a tight rope trying to juggle your hectic schedule – if you fall, it's not the end of the world. You can get back up and have another go, with an action plan to make sure you don't fall the same way twice.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
--	--	--

This session can be extended in the following ways:

- 1) Addition of an ice breaker activity after a brief introduction to the topic, facilitator and aims.  
*A way to get students thinking about what reflection is by reflecting informally. Getting students thinking about simple everyday scenarios will help them to dissect more complicated scenarios i.e. academic and clinical incidents.*
  - Ice breaker (2 mins):
    - Ask students to identify one 'innocuous' experience in pairs (i.e. forgetting an umbrella on a rainy day, wearing shoes without grips on an icy day etc.)
    - Students should be instructed to use their own understanding and interpretation of reflection to discuss and analyse these scenarios
    - Facilitator to circulate and offer encouragement to explore the situation as best they can.
    - Instruct students to wrap up discussion around the 2-minute mark
    - Group discussion as to what they think reflection is following that activity.
    - Display slide 3 with definition and continue with lesson as normal
- 2) Instead of one pre-written scenario to be discussed by everyone, groups **Red** and **Yellow** to discuss one scenario (Resource 3) and groups **Blue**, **Orange**, and **Green** to discuss the other pre-written scenario (Resource 6) – will add a further 2-4 mins.  
*Additional scenario provided is a positive experience to emphasise the importance of reflecting on both positive and negative experiences. Also, this highlights the importance of sharing reflections to further own and others' learning.*
  - Session to progress as detailed above until the Gibb's Reflective Cycle is introduced.
  - Following introduction of the reflective cycle:
    - **Red** group to consider 'Feelings' and 'Evaluation' aspects of the reflective cycle
    - **Yellow** group to consider 'Analysis', 'Conclusion' and 'Action Plan' aspects of the reflective cycle
    - **Blue** group to consider 'Feelings' and 'Evaluation' aspects of the reflective cycle
      - Feelings:
        - ❖ Is this a positive or negative experience?
        - ❖ Are the associated feelings positive or negative?
      - Evaluation:
        - ❖ What went well?
          - Result of competency
          - Stress as a good motivator
          - Work ethic
          - Collaboration
        - ❖ What could be improved?
          - Not allowing stress to dominate
          - Reflection on previous competencies - identifying issue last time

- Orange group to consider 'Analysis' and 'Conclusion' aspects of the reflective cycle
  - Analysis:
    - ❖ Why did this happen?
    - ❖ What might be some helpful resources?  
Looking at the mark scheme
    - ❖ Where might you find support?  
Clinical skills tutors/ Academic tutor  
Other students
  - Conclusion:
    - ❖ Summarise the different aspects of the reflective cycle and begin thinking about how to move forward
    - ❖ Acknowledge the positive result of the scenario!
    - ❖ Note that even though the result was excellent, the process could be improved to help reduce stress
- Green group to consider the 'Conclusion' and 'Action Plan' aspect of the reflective cycle
  - Conclusion:
    - ❖ Summarise the different aspects of the reflective cycle and begin thinking about how to move forward
    - ❖ Acknowledge the positive result of the scenario!
    - ❖ Note that even though the result was excellent, the process could be improved to help reduce stress
  - Action Plan:
    - ❖ Schedule study time and don't think about the exam outside of that time
    - ❖ Learn by teaching others/helping others study
- Note that the suggestions for discussion are not to be shared with students but are a guideline for the facilitator to ensure the key points have been covered – prompt if students get stuck or become tangential in discussion
- Session to progress as normal from that point with the exception that Resource 3 is discussed first, and Resource 6 is discussed next
- Facilitator to prompt further ideas from other groups after the allocated group has presented, especially the groups which did not have the scenario being discussed by the whole class.