



Learning to Coach: a reflective process

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What I intend to cover:


- **what I mean by reflection**
- **discuss the complexity in learning to coach;**
- **summarise some ways in which coaches learn to coach;**
- **consider the role of reflection in these**
- **indicate that the reflection often needs to be deep and not superficial**
- **give examples of deep and superficial reflection**

And describe an exercise that demonstrates what reflection looks like and how to shift from superficial to deeper reflection



Reflection...and its vocabulary..

- **reflection is a constructed term**
- **reflection and reflective learning are synonymous**
- **reflection and the representation of reflection**
- **We learn from the process of representation**



\ Harry stared at the stone basin. The contents had returned to their original silvery white state, swirling and rippling beneath his gaze.

“What is it?” Harry asked shakily.

“This? It is called a pensieve”, said Dumbledore. “I sometimes find - and I am sure that you know the feeling - that I simply have too many thoughts and memories crammed into my mind.”

“Er”, said Harry, who couldn’t truthfully say that he had ever felt anything of the sort.

“At these times”, said Dumbledore, indicating the stone basin, “I use the pensieve. One simply siphons the excess thoughts from one’s mind, pours them into the basin, and examines them at one’s leisure. It becomes easier to spot patterns and links, you understand, when they are in this form”.




Some more words....

- **Material of teaching and material of learning**
- **External experience and internal experience**
- **Variation**



Sources of variation between internal and external experience

- **Mediated learning** –the material of learning is externally provided (eg through instruction)
- **Unmediated learning** – we select the material of learning
- **Internal learning** We re-examine what we know in order to learn more or differently from it



A graduated senario exercise on reflective learning is designed to facilitate:

- **Learning how to write reflectively**
- **Learning how to deepen that reflective learning and thereby to improve the learning from it.**

(I show extracts from 'The Park' from Moon, 2004)

Method for using graduated scenarios

- **Materials – the texts**
- **The students work in groups, reading each text and then discussing how reflective it is in their group**



An exercise to facilitate reflective learning – eg The Park

- **Account 1**

I went through the park the other day. The sun shone sometimes but large clouds floated across the sky in a breeze. It reminded me of a time that I was walking on St David's Head in Wales – when there was a hard and bright light and anything I looked at was bright. It was really quite hot – so much nicer than the day before which was rainy. I went over to the children's playing field. I had not been there for a while and wanted to see the improvements. There were several children there and one, in particular, I noticed, was in too many clothes for the heat. The children were running about and this child became red in the face and began to slow down and then he sat. He must have been about 10. Some of the others called him up again and he got to his feet. He stumbled into the game for a few moments, out ...(continued)



Account 2

I went to the park the other day. I was going to the supermarket to get some meat to make the chilli that I had promised the children. They were having one of their end-of-term celebrations with friends. I wonder what drew me to the playground and why I ended up standing and watching those children playing with a rough old football? I am not sure as I don't usually look at other people's children – I just did.

Anyway there were a number of kids there. I noticed, in particular, one child who seemed to be very overdressed for the weather. I try now to recall what he looked like - his face was red. He was a boy of around 10 – not unlike Charlie was at that age – maybe that is why I noticed him to start with when he was running around with the others. But then he was beginning to look distressed. I felt uneasy about him – sort of maternal but I did not do anything. What could I have done? I remember thinking, I had little time and the supermarket would get crowded. What a strange way of thinking, in the circumstances! (continued)

Account 3

The incident happened in Ingle Park and it is very much still on my mind. There was a child playing with others. He looked hot and unfit and kept sitting down but the other children kept on getting him back up and making him play with them. I was on my way to the shop and only watched the children for a while before I walked on. Next day it was reported in the paper that the child had been taken to hospital seriously ill – very seriously ill.....

.....Reading the report, I felt dreadful and it has been very difficult to shift the feelings. I did not stop to see to the child because I told myself that I was on my way to the shops to buy food for a meal that I had to cook for the children's party – what do I mean that *I had to* cook it?. Though I saw that the child was ill, I didn't do anything. It is hard to say what I was really thinking at the time – to what degree I was determined to go on with my day in the way I had planned it (the party really was not that important was it?). Or did I genuinely not think that the boy was ill – but just over-dressed and a bit tired? (continued)



- Account 4

- It happened in Ingle Park and this event is very much still on my mind. It feels significant. There was a child playing with others. He looked hot and unfit and kept sitting down but the other children kept on getting him back up and making him play with them. I was on my way to the shop and only watched the children for a while before I walked on. Next day it was reported in the paper that the child had been taken to hospital seriously ill – very seriously ill. The report said
-It was the report initially that made me think more deeply. It kept coming back in my mind and over the next few days - I began to think of the situation in lots of different ways. Initially I considered my urge to get to the shop – regardless of the state of the boy. That was an easy way of excusing myself – to say that I had to get to the shop. Then I began to go through all of the agonising as to whether I could have mis-read the situation and really thought that the boy was simply over-dressed or perhaps play-acting or...continued....


Method for using graduated scenarios

- **After discussing the four scenarios, the participants discuss what it is that has changed between the first, very descriptive scenario and the fourth much more reflective scenario**
- **And they are asked, as a group, to represent the changes graphically in some way.**



When they have done the graphical representation.....

- **I draw from the groups, one by one the changes between the descriptive and deeper accounts**
- **....and show my list of changes from the descriptive to deep accounts**
- **Then they are show the Generic Framework for Reflective Writing**



The Generic Framework for reflective learning – the four 'levels'

- **Description**
- **Description with some reflection**
- **Reflection 1**
- **Reflection 2**

A generic framework for reflective writing

Descriptive Writing

- This account is descriptive and it contains little reflection. It may tell a story but from one point of view at a time and generally one point at a time is made. Ideas tend to be linked by the sequence of the account / story rather than by meaning. The account describes what happened, sometimes mentioning past experiences, sometimes anticipating the future – but all in the context of an account of the event.
- There may be references to emotional reactions but they are not explored and not related to behaviour.
- The account may relate to ideas or external information, but these are not considered or questioned and the possible impact on behaviour or the meaning of events is not mentioned.
- There is little attempt to focus on particular issues. Most points are made with similar weight.....

and so on



The generic framework for reflective writing

Reflection (2)

- **Description now only serves the process of reflection, covering the issues for reflection and noting their context. There is clear evidence of standing back from an event and there is mulling over and internal dialogue.**
- **The account shows deep reflection, and it incorporates a recognition that the frame of reference with which an event is viewed can change.**
- **A metacognitive stance is taken (ie critical awareness of one's own processes of mental functioning – including reflection).**
- **The account probably recognises that events exist in a historical or social context that may be influential on a person's reaction to them. In other words, multiple perspectives are noted.**

Resources

Resources available on CEMP website:

www.cemp.ac.uk/research/reflectivelearning

www.cemp.ac.uk/research/learningjournals

www.cemp.ac.uk/research/criticalthinking