

# Reflection

## **Why is reflection so important?**

Reflection is a key part of service work. Studies have shown that reflection has a significant impact on learning (Mabry, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999, as cited in Cress & Collier, 2013). Reflection leads to greater understanding of the issue area and perspectives, and new applications of service and information.

## **Reflection should cover the 4 Cs:**

Continuous – Reflection should happen over the course of the service. Different days may have different tasks and learning, so it is important to provide space each day to identify and reflect upon what was learned.

Challenging – Service sites may provide new perspectives or information novel to participants. Reflection is a space for the internalization of that information and learning, which may push against existing boundaries for that participant.

Connected – It is important for reflection to be grounded in the service that was completed that day, and expanded into academic areas.

Contextualized – The histories and ecological forces that shape a community are what build an area's needs and agencies.

## **Models of Reflection:**

What? So What? Now What? Discuss the actions, implications, and future directions of service.

Deep Reflection – This model is heavily based on observation “as well as the personal connection between the individual and the experience” (101). The three components are 1) the observations, 2) the personal relevance, and 3) the connection between the two.

DEAL Model – Describing, Examining, Articulating, and Learning make up the acronym in Ash and Clayton's model (1956). This linear model may be helpful for resolving conflict with a site. The first stage is to describe what is going on, and analyze it. The second stage is to examine the day from various perspectives, and finally disseminate one's insights to the group in the third stage.

## **Sample Questions:**

- What did we do today that was new?
- What did we learn about the area?
- Whose stories did we hear today? Whose were absent?
- How does this change your perceptions of the issue area? Of the region?
- How did the work in which we participated assist the community?
- What was the impact on the community?
- What was the impact on me?
- What will I take away from this experience?