

# REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

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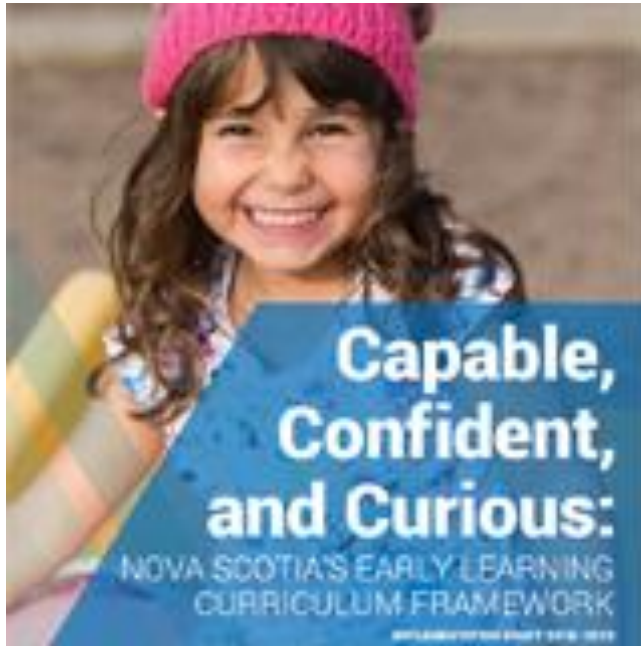




# REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: A CLOSER LOOK



# WHERE DOES REFLECTIVE PRACTICE FIT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK?



- Principles of Early Learning
  - Play-based learning
  - Relationships
  - Inclusion, diversity, and equity
  - Learning environments
  - Reflective Practice

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## AS WE BEGIN

What words, thoughts, sights, sounds do you think of when you think of reflective practice?

Why do you think it is important for ECEs to be reflective in their practice?



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## DEFINITIONS

Reflective practice is used in a variety of occupations (perhaps most occupations?)

Let's look at two 'academic' definitions of reflective practice to see if we can **see any commonalities between these two** and also if there are **commonalities with them and with the definitions that you've created.**

## REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IS...

- ... thoughtful consideration of a situation or event that has taken place with the intention of understanding and learning from it and changing or improving future actions. (Kapoor, 2014)
- ... not just a reflection, it involves the transformation of professional values and actions of the individual and those they interact with. (Ashcroft, 1992, as cited in DeVille, 2010)

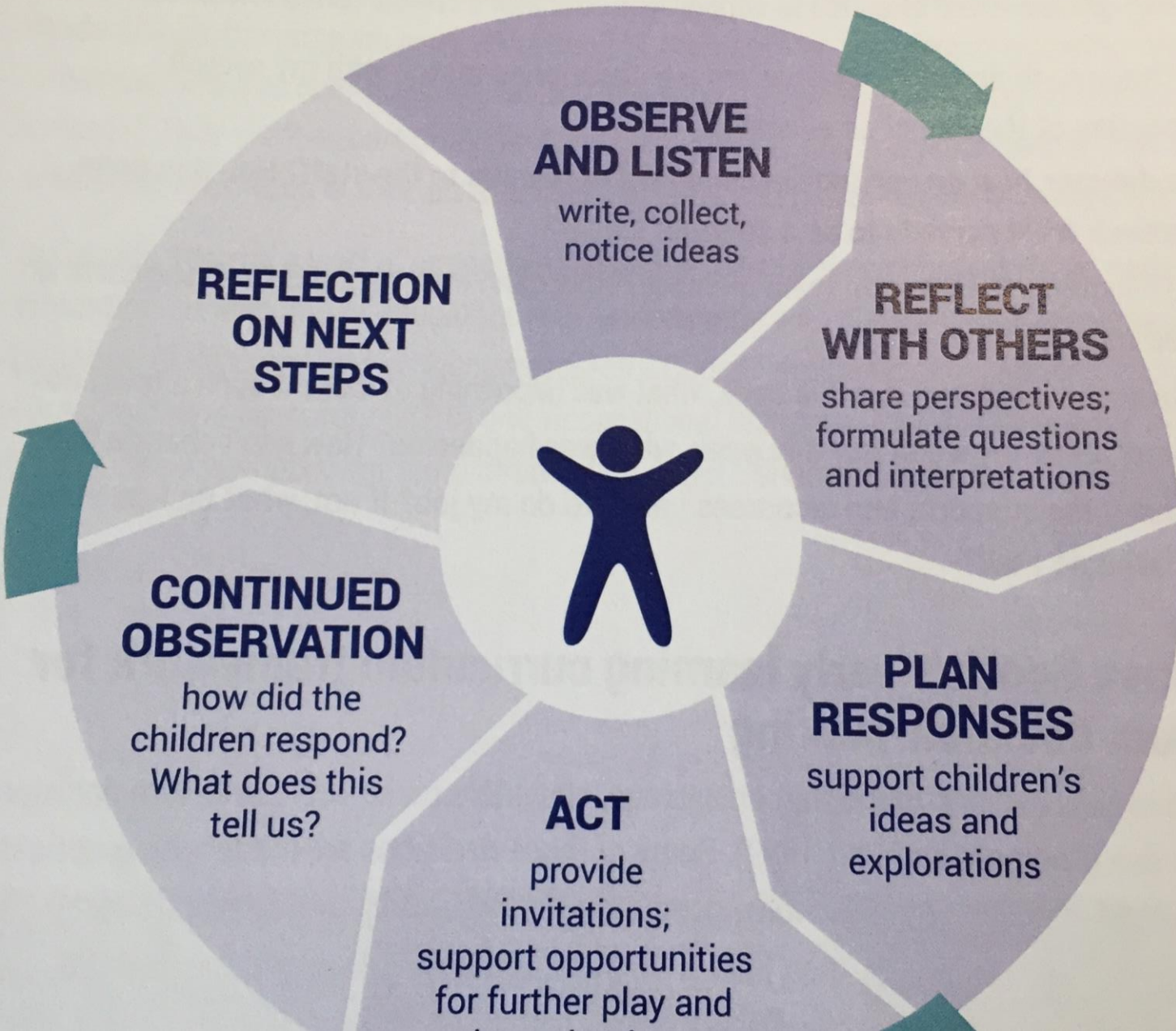
## AND HOW IS IT DEFINED IN THE FRAMEWORK?



- Reflective Practice is a form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics, and practice. Through their own reflective practice, educators **gather information** and **gain insights** that support, inform and enrich decision-making about children's learning. (p.33)



## Reflective Planning Cycle



## REFLECTIVE PLANNING CYCLE

When educators are aware of their own beliefs and knowledge, and how these affect practice, they can make intentional and wise choices when making decisions about how best to facilitate children's learning.

(Educators' Guide, p. 25-26)



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## ...SO WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BE REFLECTIVE?

We don't understand the fullness of everything, of anything. Things constantly change... To be able to adjust to these subtle differences means looking anew with what new materials we have gathered up inside ourselves....we need to be aware of what we don't know yet.

Corita Kent, as quoted in "Art of Awareness" (2013). Curtis & Carter, p.55



## ...AND BECAUSE...

‘...our (post-secondary) programs are **not long enough, or good enough**, to bring about the necessary conceptual changes, growth and attitudes necessary to be a successful educator in today’s early learning programs, or to bring about the necessary changes to improve what takes place in these settings.’

Paraphrasing Beattie, 1997





...AND BECAUSE...

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ECEs play a vital role in the development and support of young children and families....**what ECEs do is important!**

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ECEs need to constantly update professional skills. Reflective practice helps to **identify strengths and areas for future development.**

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ECEs need to support each other in professional growth. Being reflective together helps to create a **culture of mutual support.**

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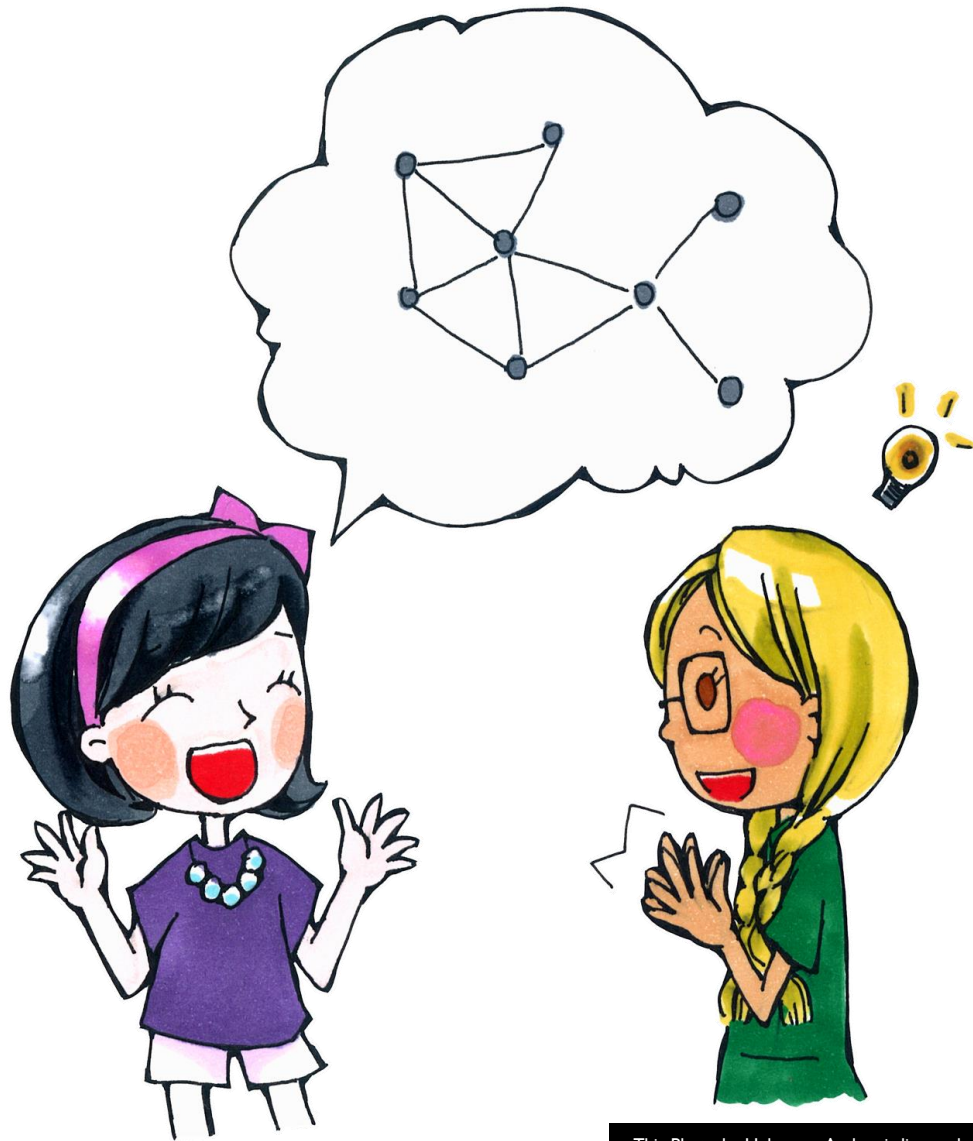
Somerville & Keeling, 2004



## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION



- Think about the changes that have happened in the field since you first became an early childhood educator – list as many as you can. How have your conversations changed? What words do you use now that you would not have been using ten years ago?
- Take a look at the list and discuss what types of professional growth needed to happen in order for these changes to take place, e.g. specific changes in attitude, changes in ideas, etc.
- What role does reflective practice play in this professional growth?



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DISCUSSION:

HAS THE IMAGE OF  
THE EARLY  
CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATOR CHANGED  
OVER THE PAST  
DECADE?

HOW?



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## THREE IMAGES OF ECES

- ECE as ‘substitute parent’
- ECE as ‘technician’
- ECE as ‘researcher’

Moss, 2006





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## LET'S DISCUSS

What are some examples of behaviours/actions that would fall under each of Peter Moss's categories?



IF I'M NOT A  
REFLECTIVE  
PRACTITIONER,  
WHAT AM I?



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## THE 'OPPOSITE' OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IS....

- According to John Dewey (1933), the opposite of reflective practice is
- **“Routine Action”** - behaviour that is guided by impulse, tradition and authority.





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## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

What are some examples of routine action that you've seen? Think about the reasons behind these routine actions....do they happen because of tradition? Impulse? Authority?



WHAT IMAGE DO YOU WANT  
TO HOLD OF YOURSELF AS  
AN ECE PROFESSIONAL?

- Will you be a substitute parent? A technician? A researcher?
- Will your image include reflective practice?




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## ECES AS RESEARCHERS

- Investigating
- Exploring
- Inquiring
- Examining





“It seems a little incongruous to suggest that teachers who have not experienced inquiry in their own lives will be able to create settings which encourage children to question, to pose problems, and to be self-directed learners.”

Beattie, 1997

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# WHAT DO YOU DO WHILE THE CHILDREN PLAY?





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SO...HOW CAN  
WE START?  
**WHAT** SHOULD  
WE RESEARCH?

## WHAT CAN ECEs RESEARCH?

Learning about the NS Early Learning Curriculum Framework is an example of 'research'.





# WHAT CAN ECEs RESEARCH?

- Innovative Practices
- Current Trends
- What's happening in other jurisdictions?
- What's happening in other programs/centres?





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## ECEs CAN RESEARCH...

- Their beliefs about....
  - Children and their rights
  - Families and their rights
  - Their values
  - The role of the ECE in the lives of children

## Reflective Planning Cycle



# HOW DO OUR BELIEFS AND VALUES IMPACT OUR PRACTICE?

WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?  
LET'S DISCUSS...



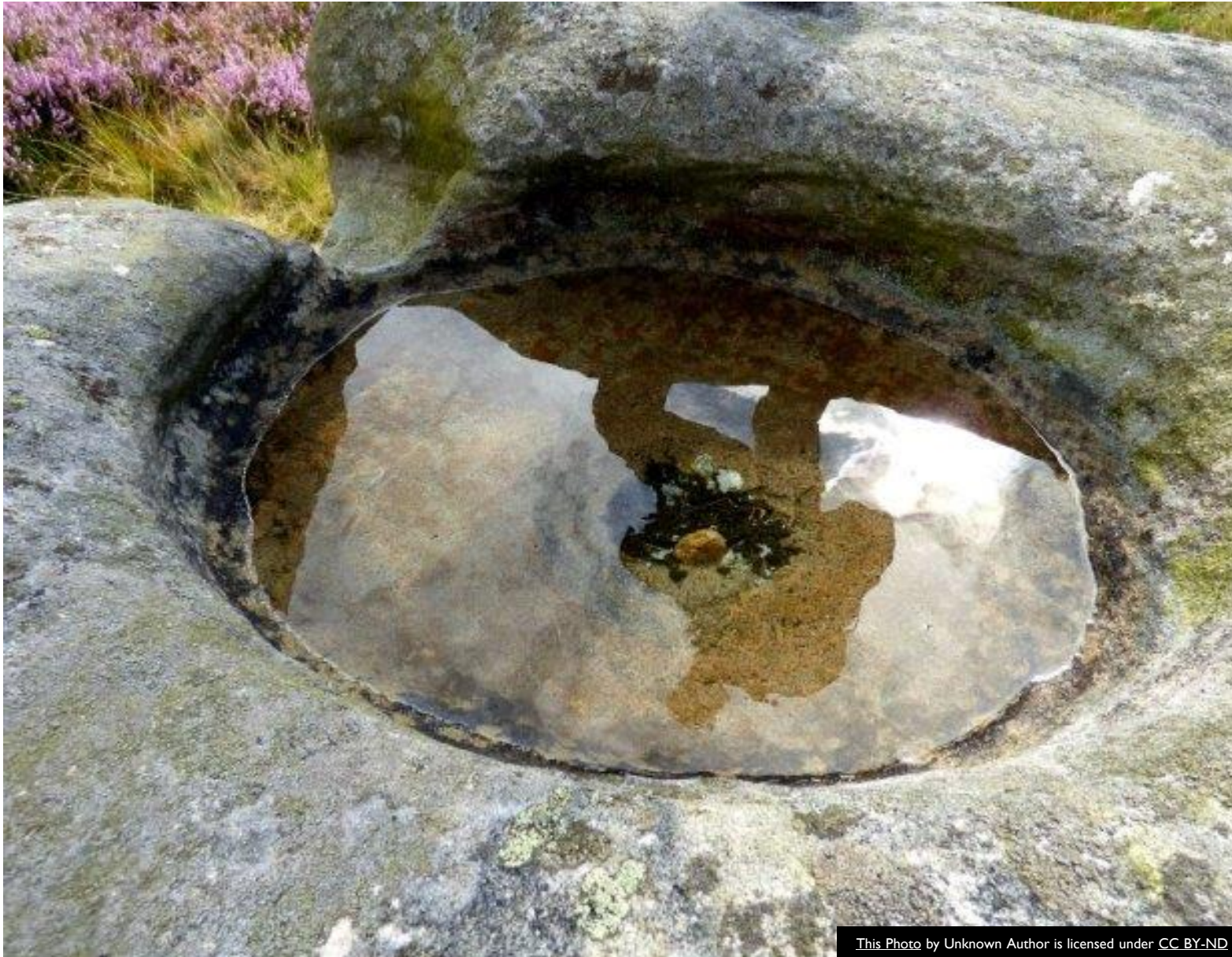


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## WHAT ELSE CAN EDUCATORS RESEARCH?

- The current program:
  - What are we doing?
  - Why are we doing it?
  - What is working well?
  - What isn't working?
  - What is the child experiencing?  
Is it useful?





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**HOW IS  
REFLECTIVE  
PRACTICE  
DONE?**

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## THREE KINDS OF REFLECTION

Reflection-in-action

Reflection-on-action

Reflection-for-action

## MOVING FROM 'TECHNICIAN' TO 'RESEARCHER'



What did I do today? (make a list)



How did I do these things? (provide more detail for each item)



Why did I do them? (choose two or three items from list)



Could/should these routines/activities be done differently? How? Why? Why not?

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# WHEN IS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE DONE?





# OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION-IN- ACTION

- Often done many times during the day (reflection-in-action) when educators ask themselves questions like:
  - “Why did I just do that/say that?”
  - “This is going well....how can I keep it going?”
  - “I’m not sure what to do right now.”
  - “How can I make this situation better?”

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION- ON-ACTION

- Done at the end of the day either alone (on the drive home or as the last clean-up of the day is happening) or with a friend/colleague. Topics or questions might include:
  - What insights did I gain from the children today?
  - What insights did I gain from families today?
  - What insights did I gain from colleagues today?
  - How will these insights affect my practice tomorrow and in the future?

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION- FOR-ACTION

- Sometimes done formally as part of a self-review or self-assessment.
- Can be done as part of a focused staff meeting
- Professional Learning Communities
  - Within a centre or group of centres
  - Within a community
  - Sponsored by an organization
  - Online Virtual Community

## QUESTIONS THAT SUPPORT REFLECTION-FOR-ACTION

What personal and professional values influence my image of the child?

What theories, philosophies, and understandings shape and assist my work?

Who is advantaged when I work in this way? Who is disadvantaged?

What am I curious about? What am I confronted or challenged by?

What can I do as an educator to expand this child's experience and development?





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LET'S DISCUSS...

**WHEN DO ECES  
HAVE TIME AND  
OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR REFLECTIVE  
PRACTICE?**

# WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN AT YOUR 'MOST REFLECTIVE?'

- Was it when you were a practicum student?
- Was it when you supervised a practicum student?
- What was it about practicum placements that supported reflection?
- How can this experience be replicated in your own workplace?



## REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IS BEST DONE WITH OTHERS

- “Social reflection generates change in the perspective meaning of each participant. Participants can share experiences, establish interpretations and question different options. In this way, they use the perspectives and experiences of others.” (Ojala & Venninen, 2011, p. 337).





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## CRITICAL FRIENDS

- The term 'critical friends' was introduced by Stenhouse (1975) as a method to support action research.
- Research indicates that whilst having a critical friend is useful, acting as one is even more helpful to professional development. (Dahlgren et al. 2006).





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AND SO....

- How will you grow as a reflective practitioner?
- How will you support reflective practice?
- Why is this important?



# LEADERS' INFORMATION FOR REFLECTIVE PRACTICE MODULE



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# HOW IS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE NURTURED IN AN EARLY LEARNING SETTING?

IT STARTS AT THE TOP

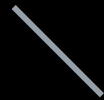
THE LEADER  
CREATES AN  
ATMOSPHERE  
WHERE...



Collaboration replaces competition



Understanding replaces judgement



Connectedness replaces separation



Reflective practice is valued, practiced, encouraged,  
and supported at all levels of the organization



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LET'S LOOK  
AGAIN AT  
THE  
THREE KINDS  
OF  
REFLECTION

Reflection-in-action

Reflection-on-action

Reflection-for-action



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## THINK ABOUT YOUR PROGRAMS

- Are there opportunities/support to get involved in all three kinds of reflection?
- How can your program structure time and opportunity for 'reflection-for-action'.

I have been impressed with the urgency of doing.  
Knowing is not enough; we must apply.  
Being willing is not enough; we must do.

*Leonardo da Vinci*

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## QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS





