

Safer Decision Making: Implementing Reflective Practice

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**CPD Officers Network:
Building a Culture of
Reflection**

Introductions

- Basis of this workshop presentation was a project undertaken in my workplace from October 2015 - April 2016 seeking to implement reflective practice as an integral component of professional social work supervision (1) .
- Project was the subject of a MSc thesis – posters distributed
- While the project was carried out in a social work dept it has relevance for all health care professionals.

Recognition among HSCPs of Link between Reflective Practice, Professional Development & Improved Care

- *“The **value of reflective practice across HSCPs** was repeatedly acknowledged as was the need for further development of skills in this area. The benefits associated with the improvement of the **quality of care** and **continuing professional growth** were clear”*
- *“The themes supervision and **reflective practice** emerged strongly ... with HSCPs clearly focused on **professional and personal development** and ways to **improve patient safety, quality and standards**”.*

(HSCPs Education and Development Strategy 2016-2019, 2017: 13 &14)

Benefits of a Workshop Format

- A workshop is a forum to **interact** and **exchange information as peers**.
- All of us have knowledge and ideas on reflective practice and supervision.
- I hope today's workshop is an opportunity for sharing this knowledge and our ideas in order to learn together.
- Encourage respectful participation

Outline of Workshop

1. Background to the Project
2. Reflective Practice
3. Professional Supervision
4. Four Point Rationale for Implementing Reflective Practice as an Integral Component of Supervision
5. Project Implementation
 - A. Practical steps undertaken
 - B. Tools developed
 - C. Evaluation findings



1) Background to Project

Background to the Project

- Similar to other disciplines, social work is complex profession, operating in uncertain and unpredictable contexts, requiring **careful professional judgements** that can have profound impact on service-users.
- A number of high-profile inquiries have found **deficits** within the capacity of the social work profession to **critically analyse practice** and **manage complexity**.

Background to the Project

- These inquiry reports place **key emphasis on the need for reflective practice within supervision** as a critical means of providing safe, high quality services.
- However there is also evidence that social workers are **not getting the opportunity to reflect** on practice and that supervision has become overly **managerial and prescriptive**.

Background to the Project

- As a practicing social worker, I am aware of the complexity within which our professions operate and I wish to support and empower colleagues in complex professional decision-making to enhance safe, high quality services.
- I am also conscious of trends toward the predominance of managerialism within supervision and wish to rebalance the process to incorporate critical reflection as an integral component.

Background to the Project

- Furthermore, I am aware of the emphasis placed on reflective practice by CORU and wish to support and empower colleagues to meet regulatory requirements with competence and confidence.
- There was an identified desire for increased knowledge and learning on reflective practice within my workplace



2) Reflective Practice

Questions to Consider...

- Do you engage in reflective practice?
- If someone asked you to **explain** reflective practice what might you say?
- If asked to **describe how you engage** in it, would this be challenging or straight forward? What would you say?
- **Why** should health professionals engage in reflective practice?
- **How** can they engage?

Defining Reflective Practice

Reflective practice has been defined as the "**intellectual and affective** activities in which individuals **engage to explore their experiences** in order to lead to **new understanding** and appreciation" (Boud et al, 1985: 19).



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- "Reflective practice is the engagement of the practitioner in **analysis of experiences** leading to **new insights into him/herself** and/or his/her **practice**. It has been deemed **one of the defining characteristics of professional practice**" (Framework for Registration Boards CPD Standard and Requirements, 2013).
- The terms reflect, reflection and reflective practice are heavily referenced by CORU (**46 references**) within this framework.

What is reflective practice?



- Reflective practice is a process by which you: stop and think about your practice, consciously analyse your decision making and draw on theory and relate it to what you do in practice.
- Critical analysis and evaluation refocuses your thinking on your existing knowledge and helps generate new knowledge and ideas. As a result, you may modify your actions, behaviour, treatments and learning needs.

Donald A. Schon (1983)

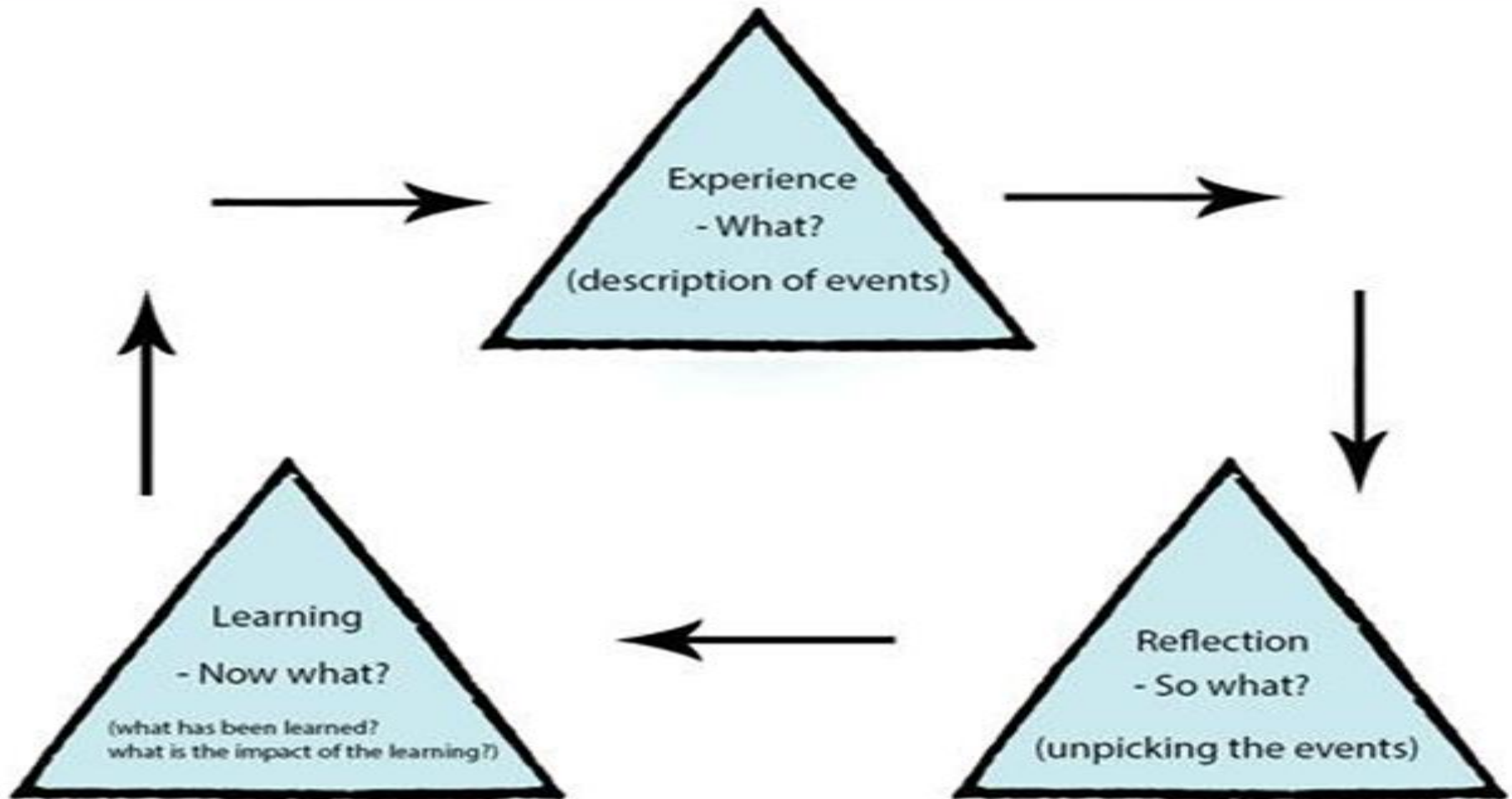
Schon believed that reflection takes two main forms:

1. Reflection-in-action involves having the presence of mind to reflect on situations as they are happening so that one's positive influence and impact can be maximised. It entails the avoidance of slipping into unthinking routines and uncritical practice.
2. Reflection-on-action means reflection after the event, weighing up what happened so that plans can be developed and lessons can be learned.

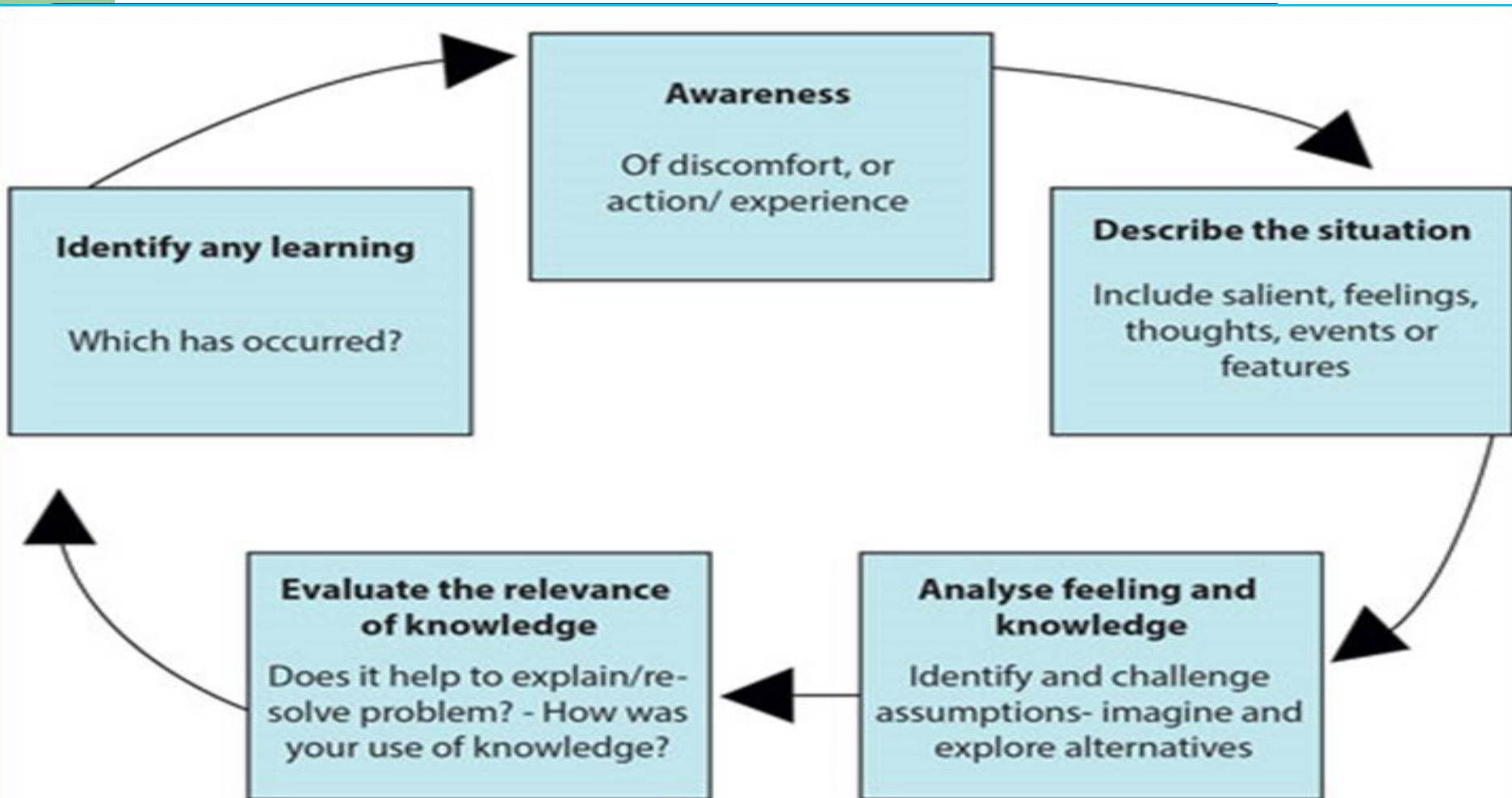
Reflective Practice Models

1. Rolfe et al (2001) - What, So What, What Now
2. Atkins & Murphy's Model
3. Gibb's Gibb's Reflective Cycle (1988)
4. Johns' Model for Structured Reflection (2000)
5. Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (1984)

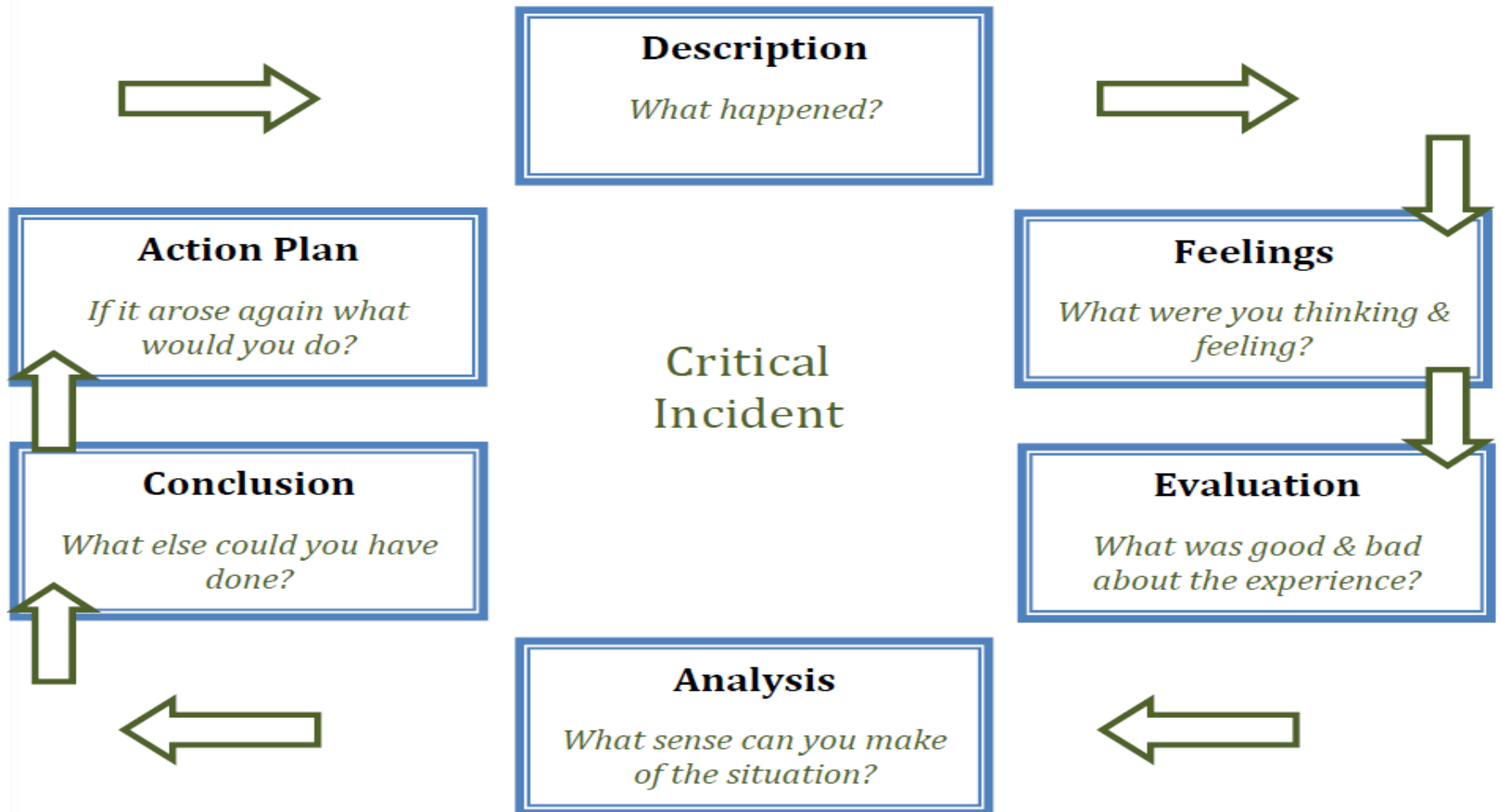
Rolfe et al, 2001: What, So What, What Now



Atkins & Murphy



Gibb's Reflective Cycle (1988)



Johns' Model for Structured Reflection (2000)

Look In

*Find a space to focus on self
Pay attention to your thoughts and emotions
Write down thoughts & emotions that significant in realising desirable work*

Look Out

*Write a description of the situation surrounding your thoughts and feelings.
What issues seem significant?*

Aesthetics

*What was I trying to achieve?

Why did I respond as I did?*

Personal

Why did I feel the way I did within this situation?

Ethics

*Did I act for the best?

What factors were influencing me?*

Empirics

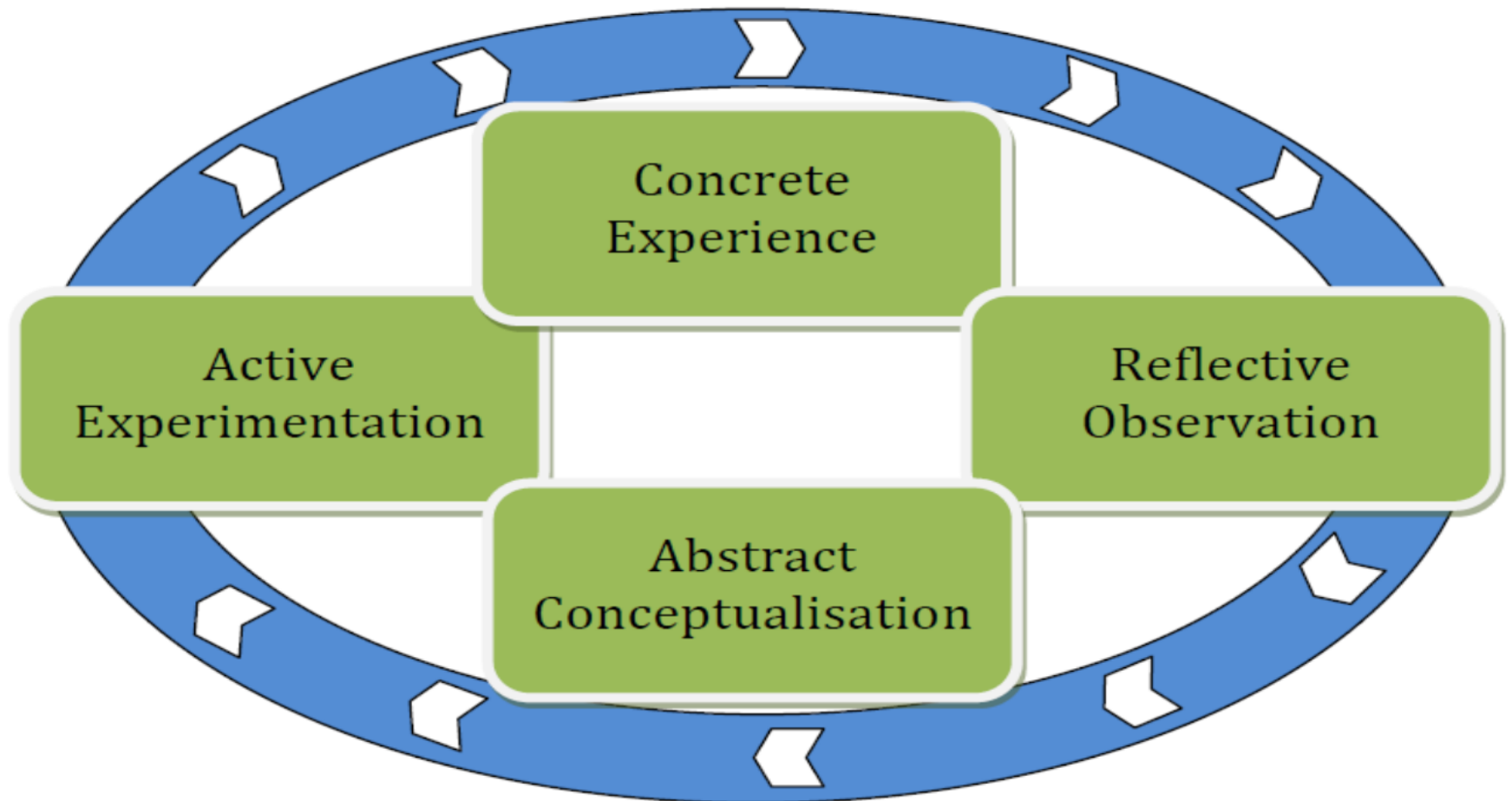
What knowledge did or could have informed me?

Reflexivity

*Does it connect with past experiences?

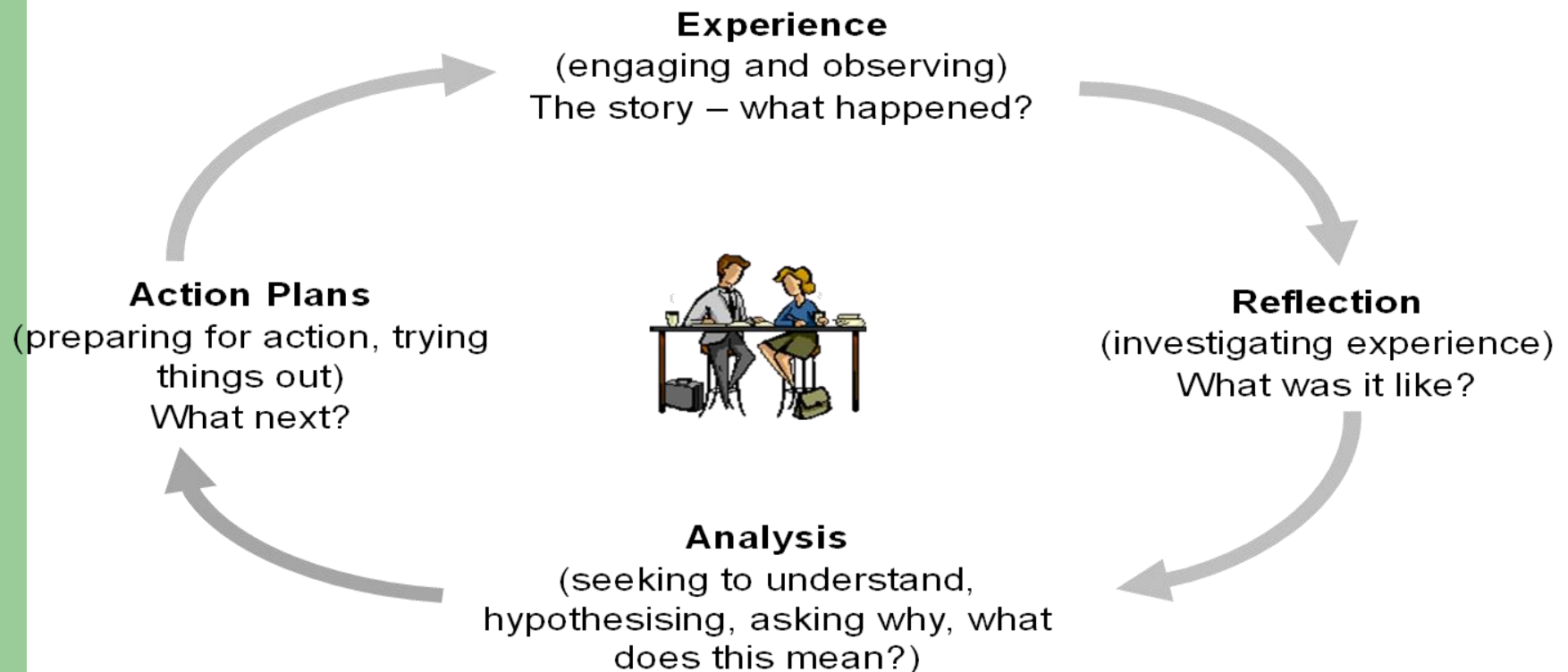
How could I handle this situation better?*

Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (1984)



Morrison's (2005) Adaptation of Kolb

THE SUPERVISION CYCLE



Questions to Consider...

Based on the information given today on a selection of models for reflection:

- 1) Have you noted any similarities
- 2) Have you a preference for a particular model and why?

Similarities Among the Models

- Similarities among the models in terms of describing an event (critical incident or a case), analysing it and effecting change in practice (what will I do now / differently in the future)

Benefits of Reflective Practice

- Supports deeper learning
- Assists the professional to analyse complex situations
- Challenges existing assumptions, the way one makes decisions and encourages objective assessment
- Promotes an inquiring attitude encompassing differing viewpoints or theories
- Improves problem solving skills
- Improves quality of practice

Barriers to Reflective Practice

- Holding on to old ways of learning
- Choosing only one alternative
- Resistance to change
- Conformity
- Stereo-typing
- Reluctance to engaging in self evaluation
- **TIME**
- **Trust**

What are the Consequences of not Engaging in Reflective Practice?

- Poor practice and service delivery
- Procedural, bureaucratic, automated responses to practice
- A narrowing of thinking
- Loss of opportunities for learning
- Loss of confidence, competence and morale
- Reduction in self-awareness and empathy
- De-motivation as the development for the worker lies in reflection and analysis.



3) Professional Supervision

Questions to Consider...

- If someone asked you to explain professional supervision what would you say?
- How have CORU defined professional supervision for HSCPs?
- Is there a place for reflective practice within supervision? If so, how or where?

Tony Morrison's Definition of Supervision (2005)

“Supervision is a process by which one worker is given responsibility by the organisation to work with another worker(s) in order to meet certain organizational, professional and personal objectives which together **promote the best outcomes for service users**” (Harries 1987 in Morrison, 2005: 32)

Tony Morrison's Four Functions of Supervision

These objectives / functions are:

1. Competent, accountable performance (managerial function)
2. Continuing professional development (developmental / formative function)
3. Personal support (supportive/restorative function)
4. Engaging the individual with the organisation (mediation function).



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

“HSE / Public Health Sector Guidance Document on Supervision for Health and Social Care Professionals; Improving Performance and Supporting Employees”

“the aim of supervision is to ensure the **provision of safe, quality services** delivered by employees who are supported, engaged and participate in continuous professional development” (HSE, 2015: 6)



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In relation to supervision the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for SW, OT and SLT states:

*"You should **seek and engage in supervision** in professional practice on an **on-going and regular** basis."*



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- The same requirement is not specified for the other professions with a Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics to date
- Professional supervision is referenced as a potential structured learning activity in the published Continuing Professional Development Standard and Requirements for other professionals



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CORU **define** professional supervision as:

*"an interactive process between two or more practitioners within a safe/supportive environment, designed **to enable a continuum of reflective critical analysis of care**, to ensure quality health and social care services"*

- Placing key emphasis on the reflective component within supervision.

Trends in Supervision

There is evidence that social workers are not getting the opportunity to reflect on their practice and that supervision can be **overly managerial and prescriptive**, driven by **statutory requirements** and **risk management** (Adamson, 2012, Peach & Horner, 2007; Taylor, 2014; Morrison & Wonnacott, 2010; Noble & Irwin, 2009).

Trends in Supervision

- Sellars (2001) found that, despite physiotherapists valuing time out to reflect on their practice, heavy workloads, busy schedules and staff shortages often meant that they were unable to take that time. Staff appeared to attend to patients' needs ahead of their own when time was short

Lord Laming's Views

*"there is real concern that deliberate, reflective social work practice is being put in danger because of an **overemphasis on process and targets**, resulting in a **loss of confidence** amongst social workers. It is vitally important that social work is carried out in a **supportive learning environment** that actively encourages **the continuous development of professional judgement and skills**. Regular, high-quality, organised supervision is critical". (Laming, 2009: 32)*

Trends in Supervision

In 2013 our colleagues in the UK were surveyed by Community Care publication (2013) which found:

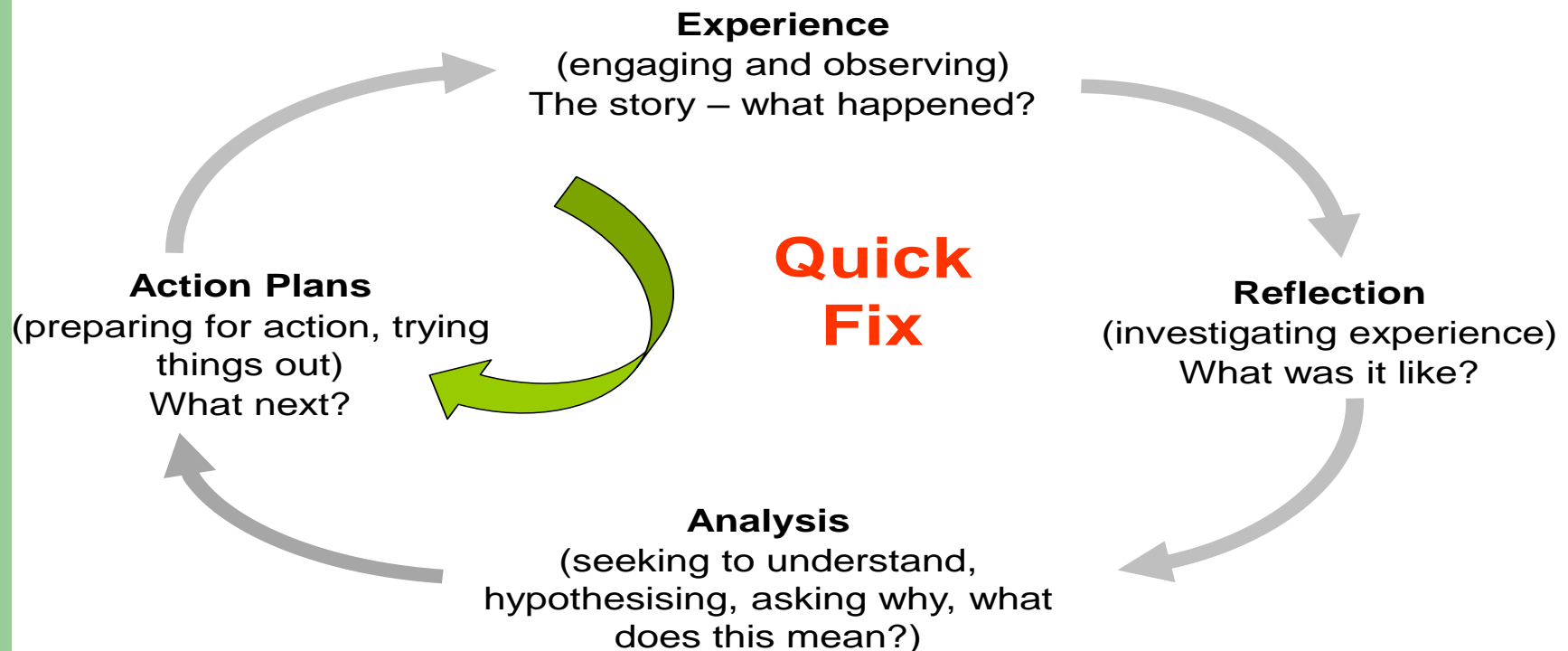
- 37.5% of respondents said they did not receive supervision because “it is not prioritised in my organisation”
- 54% of respondents said none of their supervision was reflective – while 28% said the reflective elements made up roughly half
- 73% of respondents said supervision was about **monitoring targets and timescales**

Question to Consider...

- Have you noted a trends towards a reduction in supervision or a predominant focus on managerial and performance agendas at the expense of reflective practice?
- Has anyone heard of Morrison's term, "the quick fix"?

The Quick Fix with Long-term Costs

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Quick Fix – “Tell me what to do”

- Morrison cautions that a common issue that can arise when staff are under pressure is that the supervisor gets half a story and moves to action without engaging in reflection and analysis.
- Overtime this is de-motivating as the development for the worker lies in reflection and analysis.
- This response leads to procedural , bureaucratic responses, a reduction in awareness and empathy, and a narrowing of thinking
- I wonder about the agreed action plan and how informed that is

Questions to Consider...

- Can you identify with seeking the quick fix from a supervisor?
- There is also a danger that we will mirror this approach with our clients (being prescriptive) depleting their ability to reflect on their experiences, draw on their strengths and develop new skills or learn new ways of problem solving. Where is the empowerment in that?
- Have you mirrored this in client intervention?



4) Four Point Rationale for Implementing Reflective Practice as an Integral Component of Supervision

Rationale for the Project

1. Reflective Practice as Integral to High Quality Service Delivery
2. Statutory Registration and its Implications for Supervision and Reflective Practice
3. Re-establishing the Key Role of Reflective Practice within Professional Supervision
4. Identification of a Learning Need and a Desire for Change

Reflective Practice as Integral to High Quality Service Delivery

- As a practicing HSCP, we are aware of the **complexity within which our professions operate.**
- Reflective practice is of **fundamental importance** to ensuring that HSCPs have the **skills to understand complex situations, engage in critical thinking and provide effective intervention**
- **CORU** have similarly **articulated the connection between reflective critical analysis and ensuring quality health and social care services**
- Engaging in reflective practice **supports HSCPs in complex decision-making** with view to enhancing **consistent, safe, high quality practice.**

Statutory Registration and its Implications for Supervision & Reflective Practice

- The recent **regulation** of HSCPs means a number of us are **obliged to seek and engage in supervision** and the **regulator has placed key emphasis on the reflective component** within supervision.
- For those professions that do not have the same obligations in relation to supervision, CORU place heavy emphasis on the role of reflective practice in practitioner learning and development.
- Engaging in reflective practice **empowers all HSCPs** to meet **regulatory requirements** with **confidence and competence**

Re-establishing the Key Role of Reflective Practice within Professional Supervision

- National and international standards and policy documents view **supervision as a key mechanism** through which social workers develop the **skills and capacity for reflective practice**
- Yet despite the acknowledged importance and centrality of reflective practice, there is evidence that social workers are **not getting the opportunity to reflect** on their practice and that supervision can be **overly managerial and prescriptive**, driven by **statutory requirements and risk management**
- This project sought to re-establish the key role of reflective practice in social work supervision by very deliberately making it an integral component of the process.

Identification of a Learning Need and a Desire for Change

- The Social workers within the department identified the desire for increased knowledge and learning on reflective practice, acknowledging that despite the importance of reflection, opportunities within professional supervision and elsewhere to engage, were not being utilised to best effect.
- This project sought to address this learning need and desire for change by contributing to the enhancement of the team's knowledge and learning on reflective practice.



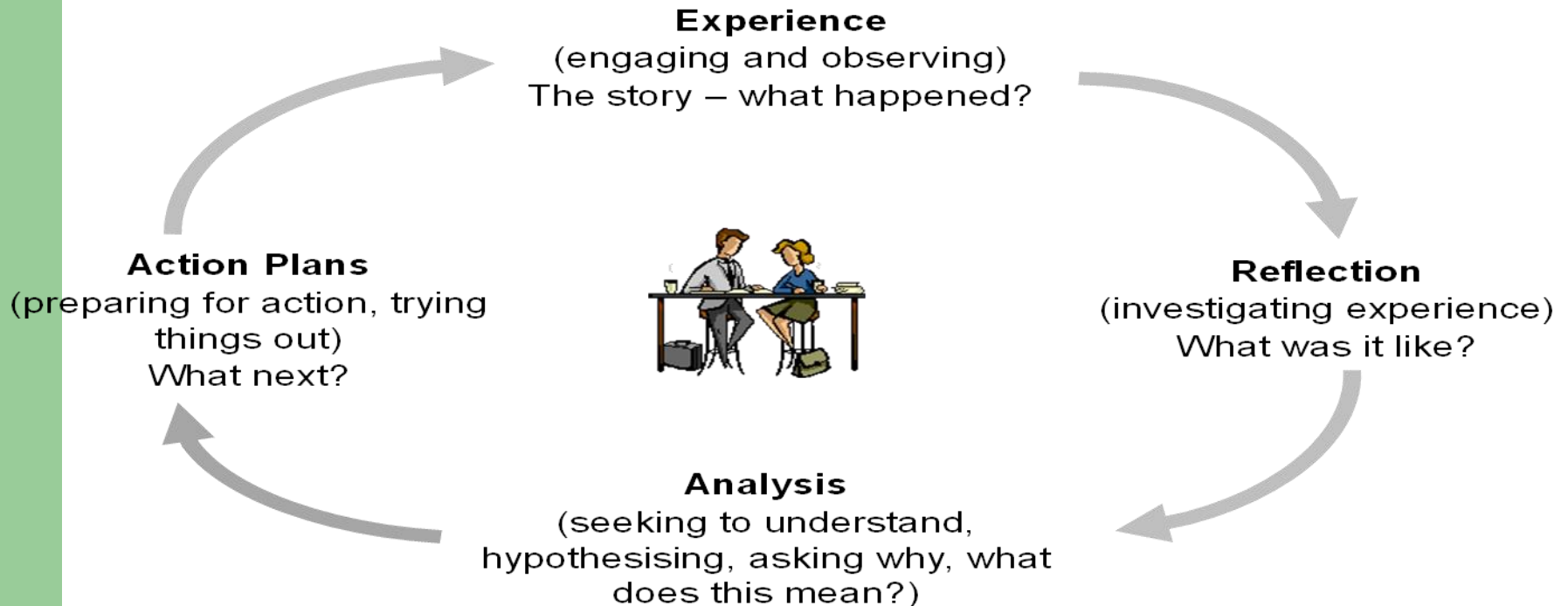
5) Project Implementation and Evaluation

Implementing Reflective Practice as an Integral Component of SW Supervision

- 1) Workshop on CORU CPD Framework & Requirements
- 2) Workshop on reflective practice
- 3) Decided to commence by engaging and recording one reflective practice discussion on a case, issue or incident on a monthly basis in supervision
- 4) Decided to use a model of reflective practice –Tony Morrison's adaptation of David Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (1984)
- 5) Developed a tool (with prompts) to support reflective practice initially until we build our confidence and competence.

Kolb's Model Adapted by Morrison

THE SUPERVISION CYCLE





Féidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Social Work Department

Reflective Practice Discussion Recording Tool

Client Discussion / Critical Incident / Other Issue that the Supervisee wishes to Reflect on:

Date:

Experience	Reflection	Analysis	Action Plan
<p>These questions facilitate an accurate and detailed recall of events. A partial description of the situation can undermine the cycle. Prompting questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was your aim? What planning did you do? What was your role? • What did you expect to happen? What happened? • What did you say and do? What did the client say, do or show? • What were the key moments and what stuck out? • What words, non-verbal signals, interactions, sounds, images or smell struck you? • What or who was hard to observe and what observations or concerns do other agencies have? • What went according to plan and what didn't happen? 	<p>These questions elicit feelings to bring out further information and to assist the worker in articulating their underlying attitudes. This will also point to personal factors that may be complicating the social workers responses. Prompting questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you feel at the start of the visit/interview? • Describe the range of feelings you had during the session and what did these remind you of? • What patterns did you see in the visit? Are these familiar and have you encountered similar processes? • Who/what does this client remind you of? • What do you think the client was feeling? Based on what? • Where and when did you feel most or least comfortable? • What thoughts/ideas went through your mind during the session? • What are the similarities/differences between this contact and your previous contact? • What was left unfinished? 	<p>These questions facilitate an analysis by probing the meanings given to situations by the supervisee. They may help you identify what is not known or understood and lead to areas for further assessment. Prompting questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List three assumptions you, the co-worker or the client brought to the session. • How do you define your role in this situation and how does your employer define it? • What aims/outcomes for this session were or were not achieved? • What went well, or not well and why? What other, possibly unexpected outcomes, did the session produce? • How far did the session confirm or challenge your previous understanding or hypothesis about this situation? • What new information emerged? What is not known? • What theory, training, research, policy or values might help you make sense of what was happening in this session? • What areas of further assessment are required and what conclusion are you drawing from this work so far? 	<p>These questions help translate the analysis into planning, preparation and action by identifying outcomes and success criteria as well as considering potential complications and contingency plans. Prompting questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In light of the reflection and analysis what is your overall summary of the needs, strengths and risks for the client in this situation? • What are you responsible for in managing this situation and what needs obtaining before proceeding? • What is urgent and essential? What would be desirable? • What would be a successful outcome of the next session from your perspective and the client's perspective? • What are the best or worst responses from the client? • What contingency plans are needed? • Who needs to be involved (co-worker, supervisor, agency)? What would you like from them? • Any safety issues for you or others? What can be done to minimise the dangers?
<p align="center">Record Key Words Used in the Reflective Discussion</p>			

Supporting, Monitoring and Reviewing

1. Placed reflective practice on the agenda of the monthly departmental staff meetings in order to provide a continuous feedback mechanism on its implementation in supervision as well as celebrating gains in implementation and addressing any barriers to full implementation as soon as possible.
2. Agreed to review the process within six months to capture team member's perceptions of the impact of reflective practice on both their social work practice and self development, as well as their views on changes to the implementation process.

Team Meetings Feedback

- Engagement in reflective discussions has facilitated team members to **broaden their focus** on a matter beyond their own initial lens.
- Team members report enhanced **clarity of thinking and casenote recording** following a reflective discussion.
- Team members feel **confident** that they are meeting **regulatory requirements** and can **articulate clearly** how they are doing so.
- Supervision has become a place to **discuss complexity** & has enhanced the workers **capacity to critically analyse** their work
- The use of the tool has provided a **scaffold / structure** to enable both supervisor and supervisee to **engage in reflective practice** and is **valued** for its **clarity of focus** in terms of facilitating the process

Formal Evaluation Feedback (1)

Intended Impact: To develop the team's capacity to engage in reflective practice in order to **support complex decision-making** with view to enhancing safe, high quality practice.

Evaluation Findings: The project has enhanced the team's professional decision-making capacity with evaluation feedback including "it has encouraged me to **evaluate my practice** and become more **critical and creative** in finding solutions to dilemmas, thereby improving interactions with patients and their families".

Formal Evaluation Feedback (1)

- "It has encouraged me to draw on **numerous sources of knowledge** in providing a more comprehensive and professional service".
- "I am **clearer** in my decision-making practices".
- One team member described a "**shift emotionally**" from "an **auto-pilot** or routinised response" to a more considered or "**thought-out response**" to practice matters.
- One team member reported **enhanced confidence in articulating decision-making** to colleagues following a reflective practice discussion in supervision.

Evaluation Feedback (2)

Intended Impact: To empower the team to **meet regulatory requirements** around reflective practice and supervision with **confidence and competence**, as well as being able to **clearly articulate** how they are meeting these requirements.

Evaluation Findings: The project has supported the team to meet regulatory requirements around reflective practice and supervision with evaluation feedback including "The project meets with the requirements of CORU and I am **confident of my ability** to engage in the process and effectively meet these requirements". In terms of being able to clearly articulate engagement, evaluation feedback included "I can talk about reflective practice in a **concrete way**".

Evaluation Feedback (3)

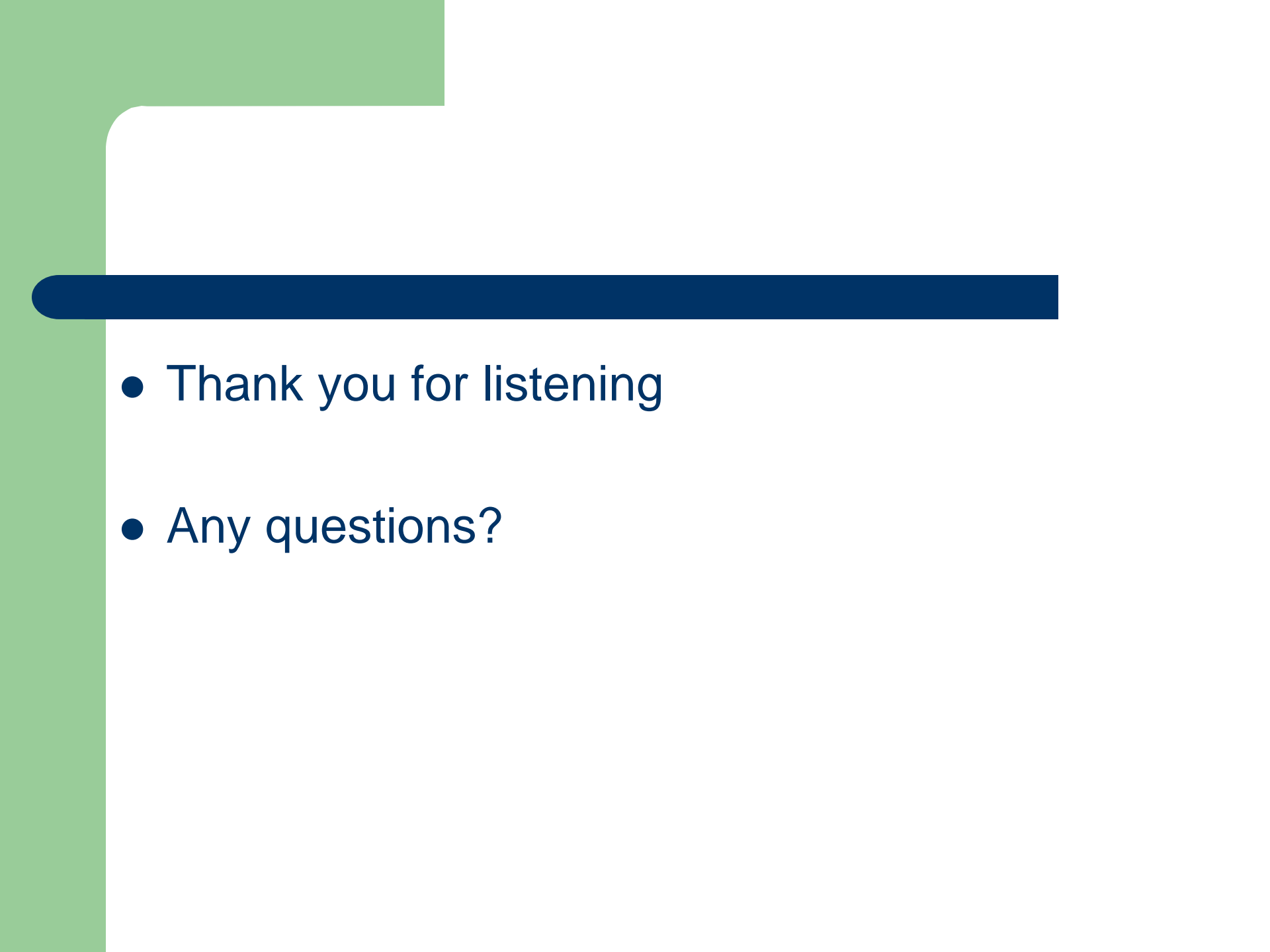
Intended Impact: To re-establish the **key role of reflective practice within supervision** on the team by very deliberately making it an integral component of the supervision process.

Evaluation Findings: The project has re-established the key role of reflective practice within supervision, with evaluation feedback finding that supervision has become "a **forum to bring issues of concern or complexity for discussion, analysis and reflection**" and supervision is now "a more focused, client-centred tool".

Evaluation Feedback (4)

Intended Impact: To address an identified learning need & desire for change by contributing to the **enhancement of the team's knowledge and learning on reflective practice.**

Evaluation Findings: The project has enhanced team member knowledge of reflective practice, with evaluation feedback finding that "having so much exposure to the theory and practical application, **reflective practice is becoming a normal part of my day-to-day operations**" and the prompting and recording tool has served as a **scaffold / structure** to enable both supervisor and supervisee to engage in and facilitate the process.

- 
- Thank you for listening
 - Any questions?