



LIONS PRESENTS

# Exercises for Reflective Thinking

Reflective thinking is the act of setting aside time to think about a recent endeavour – be it a project, a conversation or a piece of work.

It's a moment to consider what you did, what happened as a result, and to decide what you want to do differently next time.

“The greatest gift you can give anyone is your undivided attention.”

**Albert Einstein**  
Theoretical Physicist

# Exercise 1

## INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

Get into the habit of consciously reflecting more often. Step away from the computer. Put pen to paper, go for a walk, or sit down comfortably – however you like to pause. It only takes 2 minutes. Ask yourself:

- **At the start of the day:** How will I make this day count? What will make this day a good day?
- **At any time during the day:** What is the best use of my time right now?
- **At the end of the day:** What brought me joy today?

# Exercise 2

## GROUP REFLECTION

This can be done as a pair or as a small group to improve future projects. Decide on a topic you want to reflect on (e.g., 2020, a project). Decide who will speak first and who will listen and for how long. The listener(s) will act as timekeeper. You could start with 20 minutes or however long you've got. The listener then asks questions such as:

- What's your main learning? What surprised you? What did you find out about yourself?
- What changes have you noticed about how you relate to others?
- If it was a chance to learn something, what would it be?
- What new decisions can you make based on this?
- You could come away with something like this: "From now on, I'm going to ..." or "I noticed this helped so I will now ...".

# Exercise 3

## PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTANCING

This can be done individually, or you could also coach someone else through it. When we feel passionate about something, a project, idea, or a problem, our brains are overstimulated and it can be hard to see the full picture. Psychological distancing allows you to create distance or space to help you to reframe your thinking. Try the following techniques to help you see things in a new way.

1. Take a break. Physically step away. This immediately disrupts the situation and gives you time and space to gain perspective.
2. Think of yourself in the third person. If you were observing yourself in this situation what would you think of that version of you? What advice would you give to that version of you? This helps you to reconsider your behaviour.
3. Watch yourself from the future. Imagine your future self looking back at this situation. What would you future self think? Will your future self care about this situation in 3 months, 6 months, or 1 year from now?

Reflection helps us to be conscious of how we are living our lives, instead of blindly going through the motions; following old habits that no longer serve us, or passively allowing someone else to control how we spend our time.

## RESOURCES

- Visit [here](#) to learn more about psychological distancing.
- Harvard Business School
- [skillsyouneed.com](https://skillsyouneed.com)
- [trainingzone.co.uk](https://trainingzone.co.uk)
- <https://simpleandpractical.com/stages-change-poem/>