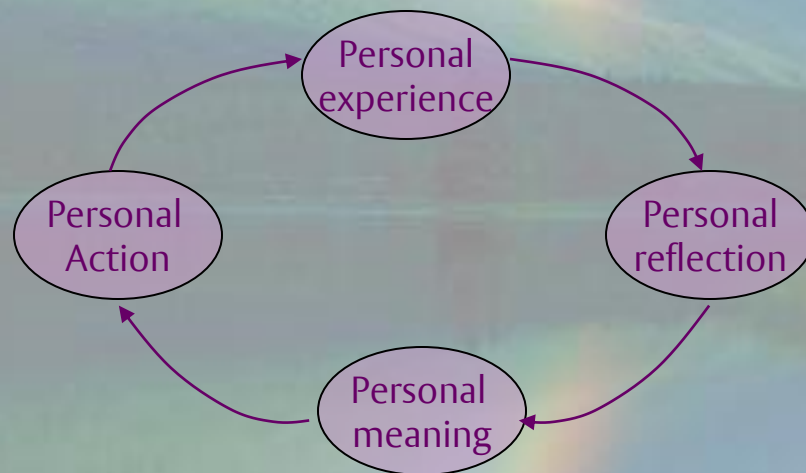


The Discipline of Reflection

‘Reflective approaches to management learning focus on the process of self discovery and questioning that leads managers to develop a comprehensive view of managerial practice’

Kayes 2002

What is Reflection ?



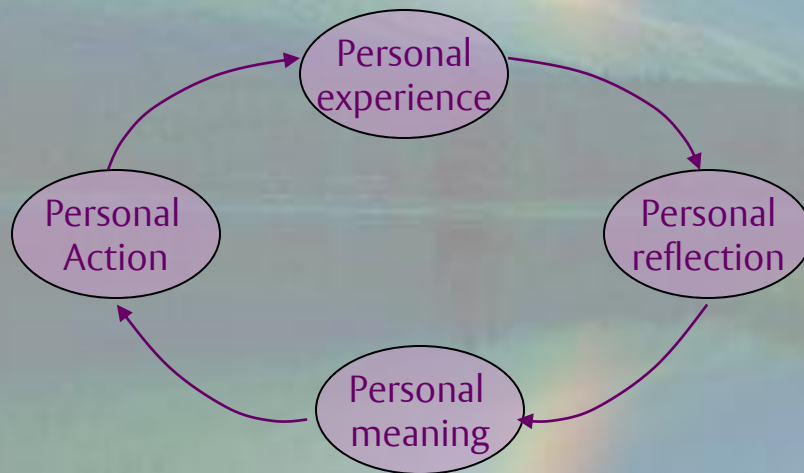
The complete learning cycle

Kolb and Fry 1975

• Reflection

- Is an indispensable part of every learning cycle.
- Matters even if you are only trying to grasp a topic by making mental connections information and experience
- Is crucial if you are working with the meaning of learning because you are trying to change behaviours and assumptions about how you tackle activities and problems
- Involves
 - Critical thinking about how goals, methods, knowledge and experience affect interpretation, meaning and outcomes.
 - Critical evaluation of the limits of concepts and knowledge when applied to *specific contexts*

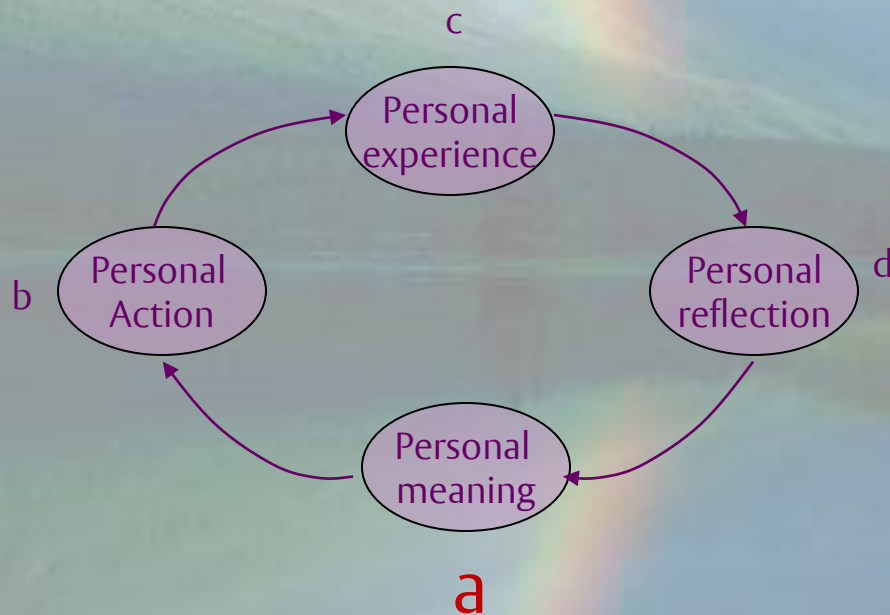
Where in the cycle do I start?



It depends on what you are trying to achieve. *Kolb and Fry 1975*

- There are four places you can start. It depends whether you are trying to
 1. Become more self aware by imagining events to see possible new meanings
 2. Make sense of events and assess the suitability of actions in the current context
 3. Think back on events, review knowledge and experience to better understand their meaning for you,
 4. Stand outside the situation to work with the meaning of your personal practice and style with a view to transforming it in the future

What do you want to achieve?



-The *reflecting forward* phase

Kolb and Fry 1975

1. Become more self aware by

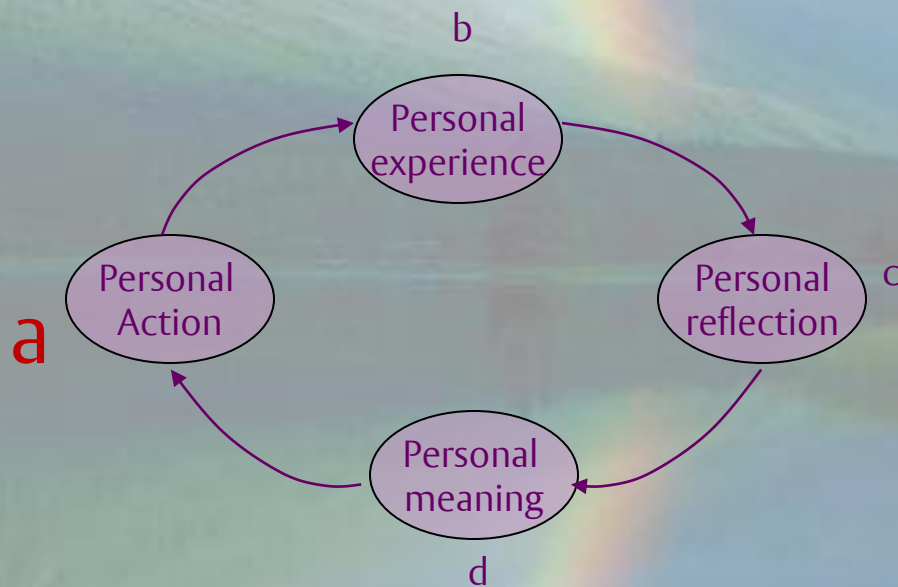
- Defining for yourself the outcomes you want to achieve given your specific context and needs
- Considering what you know already and how your current practice will fit with the demands of the situation

What do you want to achieve?

A process of becoming more self aware

2. Make sense of what is going on by

- Checking the relevance of your understanding to the current situation
- Questioning your own role and contribution
- Finding better ways to achieve your goal



The reflecting during phase

Kolb and Fry 1975

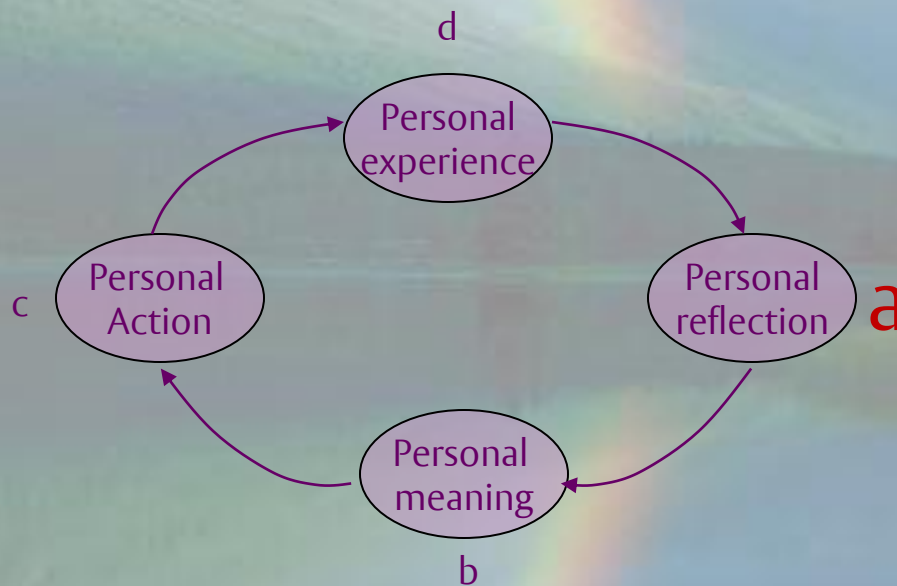
What do you want to achieve ?

A process of becoming more self aware

A process of making sense of events and action

3. Thinking back on events and input and what they mean

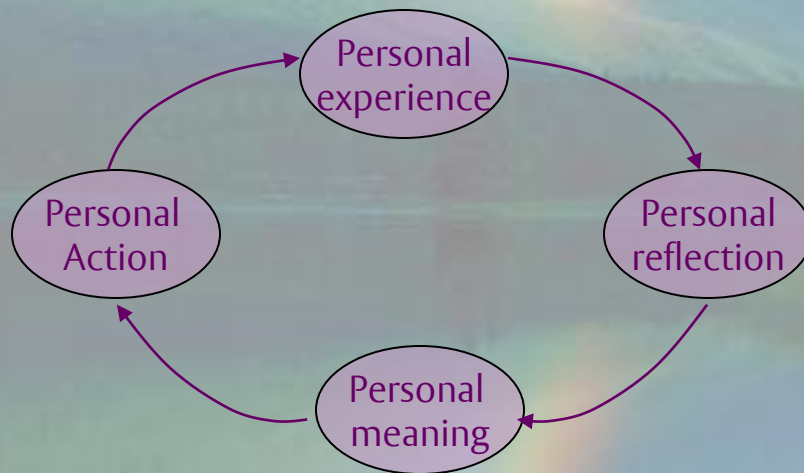
- How they fit with other knowledge
- Who the key stakeholders were
- Why did something happen as it did



The reflecting backwards phase

Kolb and Fry 1975

What do you want to achieve?



The Meta reflection phase

Kolb and Fry 1975

A process of becoming more self aware

A process of making sense of events and action

A process of thinking back on events and what they mean

4. Stand outside the situation to review your managerial practice and style with a view to changing it.

What are you reflecting on?



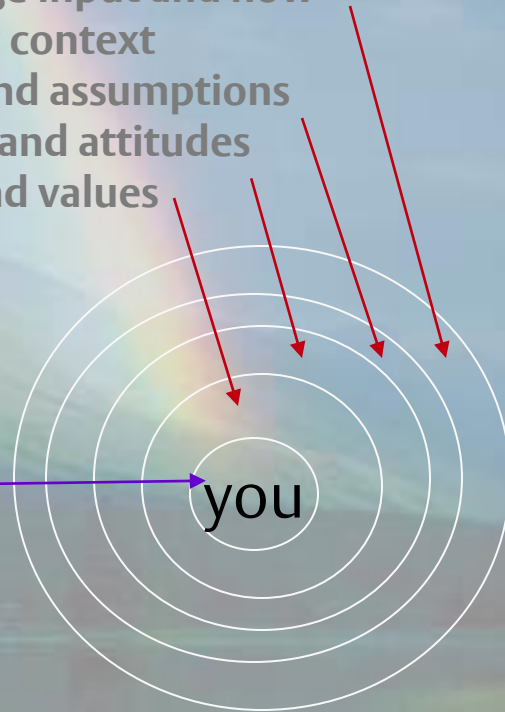
Your experience has layers like an onion



- External knowledge input and how it fits with your context
- Your own feelings and assumptions
- Your behaviours and attitudes
- Your beliefs and values

What are you reflecting on?

- External knowledge input and how it fits with your context
- Your own feelings and assumptions
- Your behaviours and attitudes
- Your beliefs and values



How do they shape your learning, before during and after an event?



Your experience has layers like an onion

Reflection is about analysing and questioning how each layer shapes the way you are and what you might become in the business context

What are you reflecting on?

External knowledge input and how it fits
with your context

Your own feelings and assumptions

Your behaviours and attitudes

Your beliefs and values

How do they
shape your
learning, before
during and after
an event?



And how does your
experience intersect with the
beliefs and values of others
the behaviour and attitudes of others
the feelings and assumptions of others
the way others receive knowledge

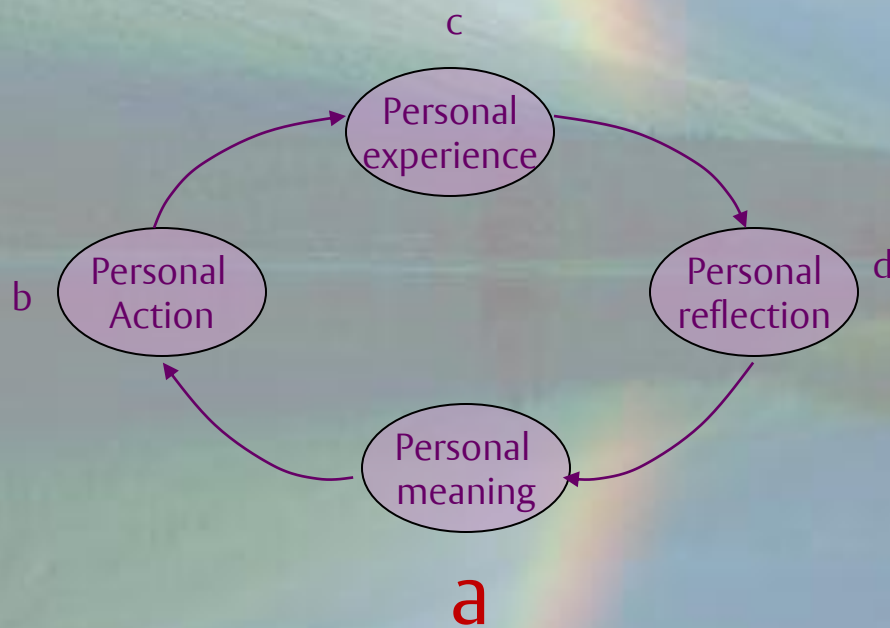


Your experience has layers like an onion

Reflection is about analysing and questioning how each layer shapes the way you are and what you might become in the business context

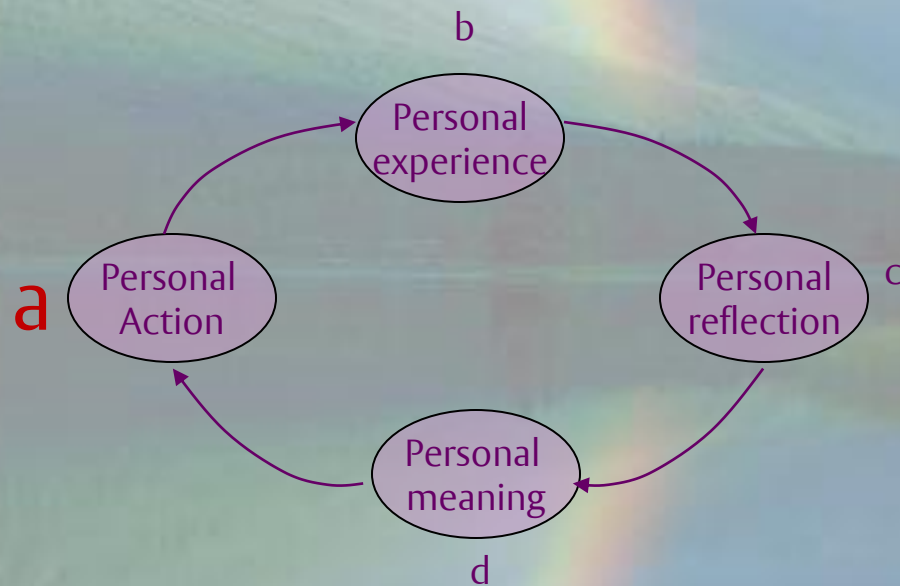
Reflection is also about considering how the way *your* meaning making creates ripples that intersect with the meaning that others make to affect the collective outcome.

Reflecting forward ?



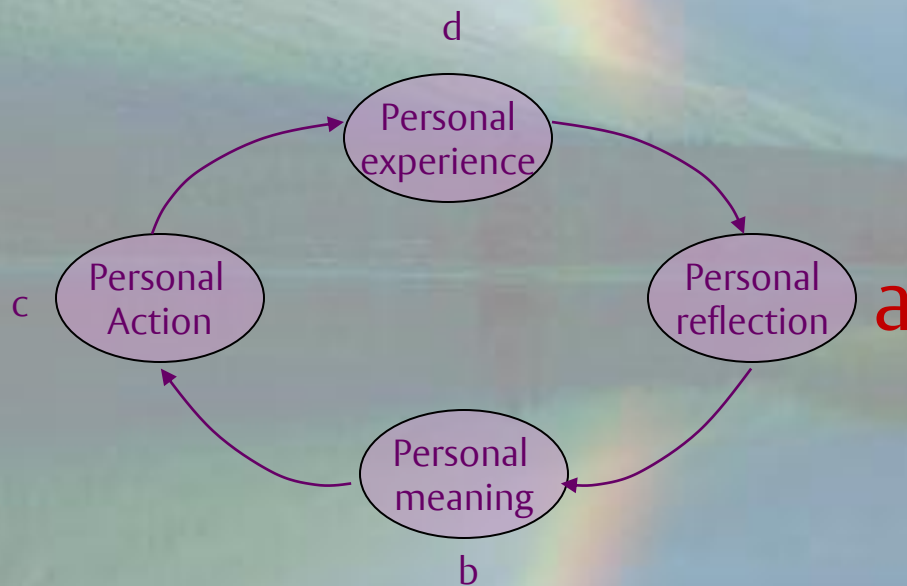
- Do a mental audit of what you already know about a situation, and who is involved – *we often know more than we realise*
- Ask yourself
 - What does the situation mean for me
 - How are your emotions (e.g. fear, excitement, boredom, etc.) likely to affect what you notice?
 - How will all these things affect how I make sense of the situation ?
- Skim any materials you have and create a mind map of the major concepts
- Consider who in the group you may learn from, and how you might react to their style
- Identify what you want to focus on, where you have knowledge gaps and what elements may be difficult for you to get to grips with
- Plan a strategy for learning

Reflecting during learning?



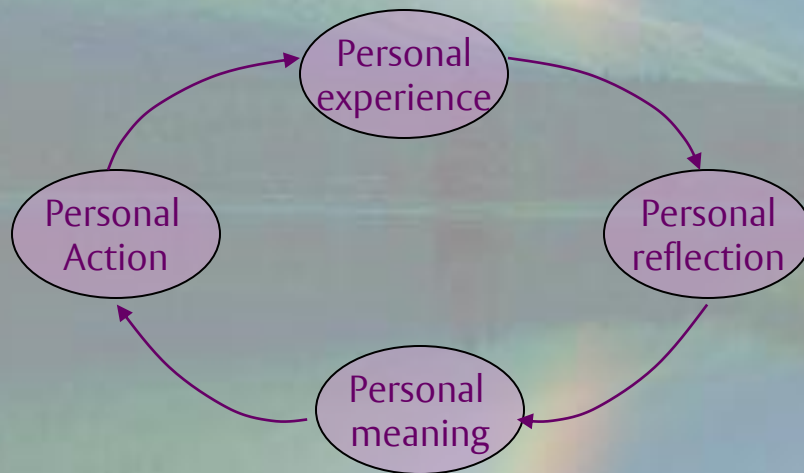
- Watch your thoughts and actions, listen to your own conversations, and notice what you are feeling.
- Evaluate these sensory inputs as you are experiencing them
- Think critically about how they are affecting your learning plan
- Ask yourself
 - What are the connections between events, experiences and what you know
 - What are the risks of actions and what can be done about them
- Adapt your approach to make sense of the changing needs of the situation, by using alternative strategies either from your knowledge base, past experience or by negotiating new understanding in dialogue with others

Reflecting after learning ?



- Ask yourself
 - How does what you have learned relate to what you knew before?
 - How does it change how you interpret things?
 - Does it feel emotionally right?
 - How can you integrate these new ideas into your reasoning for the future?
 - What difference will that make?

'Meta' Reflecting ?



- Stand back from the whole experience and ask yourself
 - Where was experience similar to my original plan; where was it different?
 - What did I find easiest to learn and why?
 - What did I find most difficult to learn and why?
 - What does this tell me about my approach to learning?
 - What must I change to improve for the future ?
 - How can you change your biases ?
 - What will I do differently?

What is the value of reflection?

- It increases what you notice
- It helps you make better sense of information and events
- It makes material more meaningful
- It builds real expertise
- It can change your view of the world
 - Moon 2010

Reflection is the means through which people develop relationships between what they know and value and the learning in which they currently engage

Thorpe 2000

Reflection should enable learners to express doubt, uncertainty and awareness of contradictions

Boud and Walker 1985

Reflection is a means of monitoring our own learning, both what we know, how we know it, and the process through which we learn

Thorpe 2000

Now is a good time to start practising



- What are the three most important things that struck you during this session?
- Relating them to your business context, how might you make best use of them in changing the way you approach decisions ?