



July 20-24, 2026 in Providence, Rhode Island

The Reflective Practitioner: Coaching Mindset for the Disability Resource Professional

Christina Fabrey, MEd, PCC, BCC
Virginia Tech

Tiffany Halsell, PhD, PCC
The Ohio State University



July 20-24, 2026 in Providence, Rhode Island

We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects...

**Access and Inclusion
and
Civility and Respect**

...this week and in all aspects of our organization.

Learning Objectives:

- Differentiate between a traditional supervision and a coaching mindset to support equitable and student-centered disability services.
- Identify barriers to reflective coaching and develop practical strategies to address them.
- Apply reflective tools to strengthen professional practice.

'Before' Centering Activity

What is a coaching mindset?

A coaching mindset is the ability to:

- Be **open, curious, flexible, and [student]-centered**
- Engage in **ongoing learning and self-reflection**
- Be aware of your own **assumptions, biases, and impact**
- Maintain a focus on the **[student]'s agenda, growth, and autonomy**



Traditional Supervisory Models versus a Coaching Mindset

Traditional Supervisory Model	Coaching Mindset
Hierarchical, authority-driven	Collaborative, partnership-oriented
Supervisor as expert / problem-solver	Supervisor as facilitator of learning
Focus on compliance, policies, and outcomes	Uses inquiry and active listening
Feedback is directive (“Do this”)	Feedback is reflective (“What do you notice?”)
Emphasis on efficiency and risk management	Focus on growth, development, and capacity-building

**What comes to mind when you think of
reflective practice?**

Reflective practice is....

a proven learning and development approach that involves consciously and deliberately thinking about experiences to develop insights and apply these within [coaching] practice.

McCormick, 2023



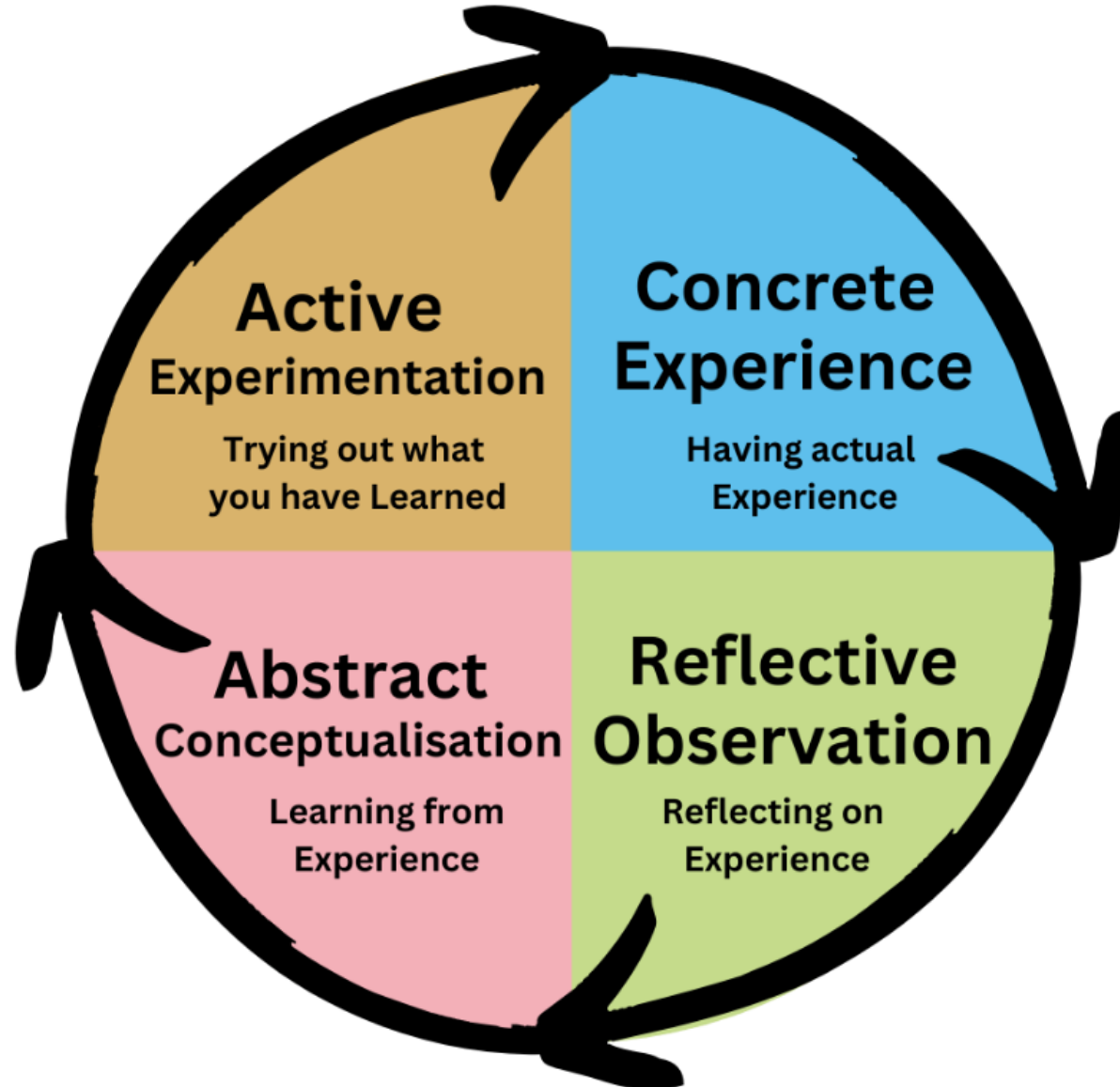
Core Elements of Reflective Practice

- Self-awareness
- Critical questioning
- Continuous learning
- Openness to discomfort

Example prompts to consider in student meetings:

- What assumptions did I bring into this interaction?
- Whose perspective is missing?
- How did power dynamics show up?

Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning



What makes reflection hard in your role?

A few facts about reflection...

- Anyone can do it!
- It doesn't have to be a special thing added to what you do.
- It can be a way of working.
- It is evidence based.
- It has the potential to be transformative.

Reflective practice

- Has been shown to improve diagnostic reasoning and clinical problem solving, especially in complex cases (Mamade & Schmidt, 2023)
- Has been shown to reduce cognitive bias, improve practitioner awareness, and support better patient care in the health field (McIntyre, Lathlean ,& Esteves, 2019)
- Has been shown to improve metacognition and self-regulated learning in education and nursing research (Kuiper & Pesut, 2004)

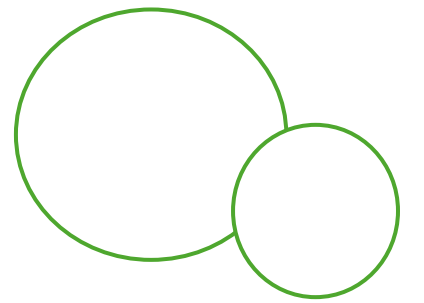
Why does it matter in disability services?

- Develops student-centered practice
- Promotes culturally responsive decision-making
- Builds professional growth and confidence
- Prevents burnout and reactivity
- Challenges implicit bias and deficit-based thinking
- Recognizes systemic barriers vs. personal or student “shortcomings”

The coaching mindset is reflective practice.

BEFORE	Planning and Centering
DURING	Active Awareness and Real Time Adjustment
AFTER	Evaluation and Learning

'Before' practices to consider

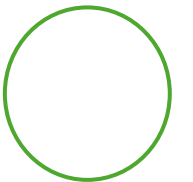


Scheduled pauses: Ask: "What is this moment asking of me?"

Time for thought or time in nature: Sit quietly in your office space. Or go for a walk or find a place in nature that offers grounding and perspective.

Breathing: Consider simple breathing exercises or even blowing bubbles!

Preview: Preview your notes on your next student. What are their strengths? What do you appreciate about them?



‘During’ practices to consider

Set one intention: “I want to stay curious.” or “I will ask, not tell.”

Mindful communication: Bring awareness to the balance of speaking and listening

Reduce distractions: Turn phones off, close unrelated tabs, etc.

Listen for understanding, not to reply. And reflect back key points. “It sounds like...” or “If I am hearing you correctly, you are saying...”

Allow pause for thoughtfulness

'After' practices to consider

- Structured reflection:
 - What happened?
 - What was I thinking or feeling?
 - What went well or poorly?
 - What did I learn?
 - What will I try differently next time?
- Behavioral adjustments:
 - What should I repeat next time?
 - What small change will I experiment with?
- Metacognitive reflection:
 - Where did my attention drift?
 - How will I monitor or redirect myself?
 - What thinking patterns helped or hurt me?



Make it sticky

- Start small
- Create environmental cues
 - Sticky note
 - Reflection template open
 - Notebook on the keyboard
 - Calendar reminders
- Practice transition rituals
 - One breathe before
 - One intention during
 - One takeaway
- Create a visual template



'After' Practice Activity

One small step: What would you like to consider in creating a more reflective practice?

Questions?

References

McCormick, Iain. *Reflective Practice for Coaches: A Guidebook for Advanced Professional Development*. Routledge, 2023.

Lucas, Michele. *Creating Reflective Habit: A Practical Guide for Coaches, Mentors, and Leaders*. Routledge, 2023.

Hay, Julie. *Reflective Practice and Supervision for Coaches*. Open University Press, 2007.

Love, D., and Nieuwerburgh, C. *Effective Reflective Practice: Improving Practice Through Self-Reflection and Writing*. Sage, 2025.

Beckett-McInroy, C., and Ali Baba, S. *Creative Reflective Practice: Global Perspectives for Critical Reflection on Professional Experiences*. Beckett McInroy Publishing, 2015.

Microsoft. Research Proves Your Brain Needs Breaks. Microsoft WorkLab, April 20, 2021. <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/worklab/work-trend-index/brain-research>

Session Evaluation

tiny.cc/8zu1101

Thank you for attending!

Your feedback helps shape future programming.

