

A photograph of a single tree with bright yellow autumn leaves growing from a small, mossy island in the middle of a calm, blue-green lake. The tree's reflection is clearly visible in the still water below. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with more trees and a clear sky.

Group Reflective Practice Planning Tool

Created by No One Left Out
for North Somerset Council

Content

Group reflective practice is a great way to start your trauma informed journey, providing staff 'time out' to process and consider the emotional impact of their work and identify new approaches to complex situations

The aim of this planning tool is to help facilitate an exploration of the role and value of reflective practice and steps to implementation.

Activities

- 1. Share your experience of reflective practice and create a definition*
- 2. Identify benefits for you, your team and the people you support*
- 3. Tips on overcoming hurdles to implementation*
- 4. Action planning, agree next steps*





Defining reflective practice

Activity 1.

In small groups, spend 10 minutes discussing your understanding and experience of reflective practice and create a definition.

Feedback to wider group





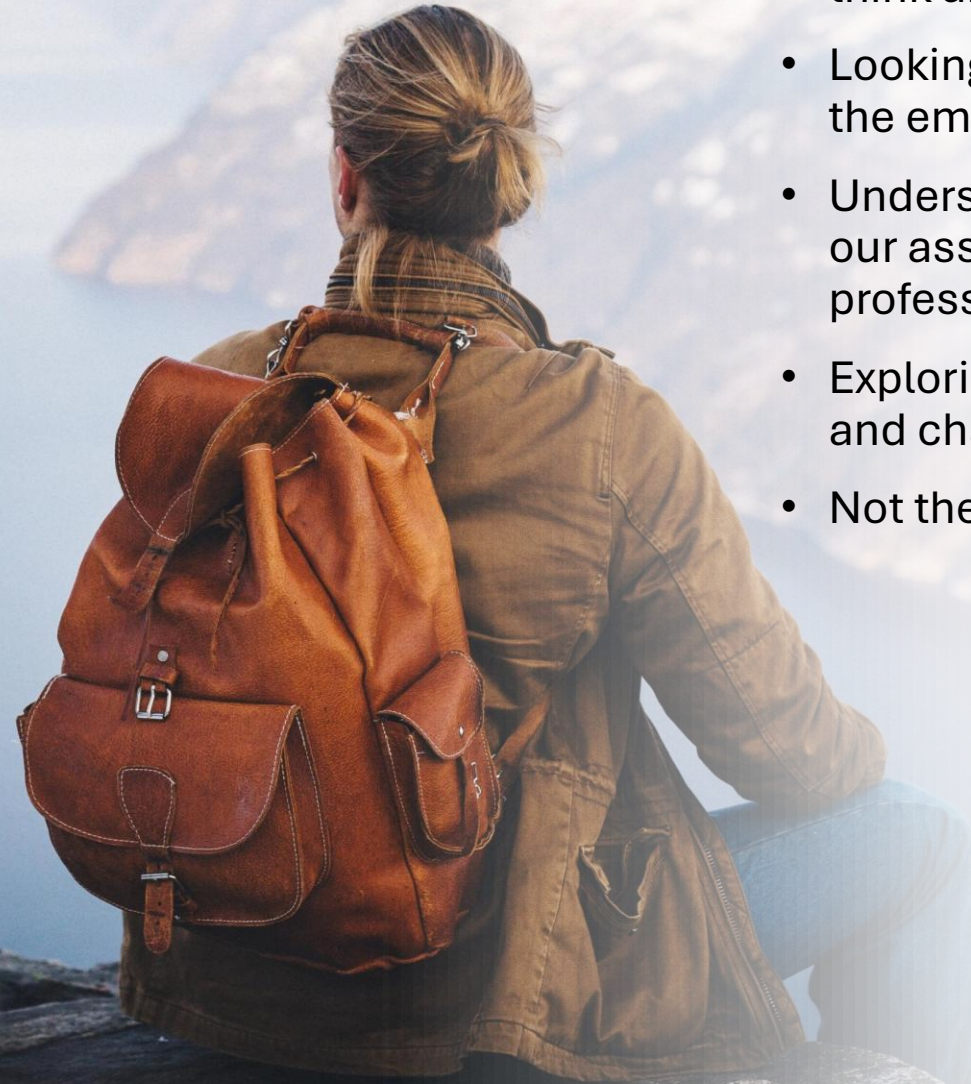
“Reflective practice describes an individual or team taking time to think about their role, including what is going well, what is difficult, how they are feeling, and how they make others feel.” Homeless Link 2019

A definition

“Questioning your approach, engaging with your feelings, questioning your assumptions and gaining greater self awareness.” B Bassot 2016

“In its simplest form, (its) thinking about what you do.” Skills you need

Purpose of reflective practice



- Making sense of what we do: taking time to think and engage in meaningful discussions
- Looking after ourselves, allows us to process the emotional impact of our work
- Understanding ourselves better, challenging our assumptions and bias contributing to both professional and personal development
- Exploring new ways of responding to complex and challenging situations
- Not therapy or performance management



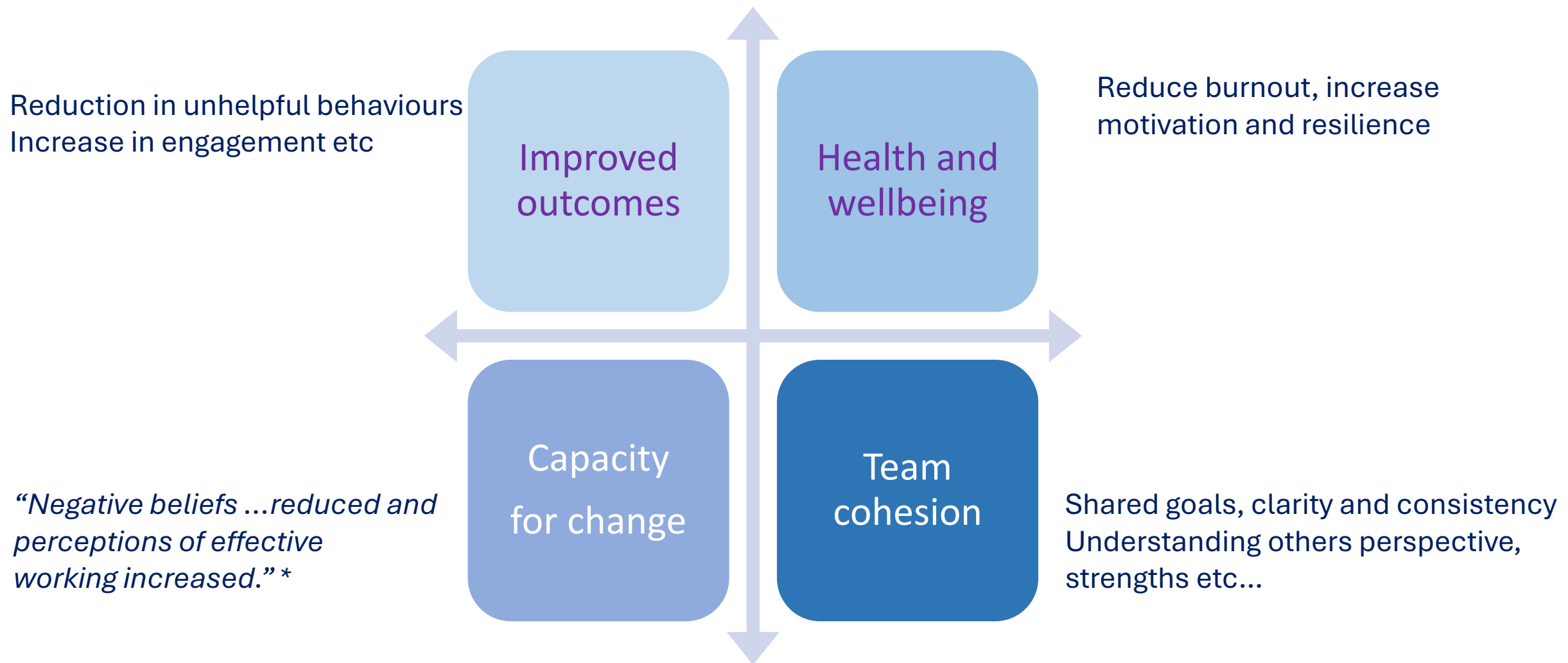
Benefits

Activity 2.

In small groups, take 7 mins to list the benefits of groups reflective practice for staff, clients and the organisation.

Feedback to wider group





Better outcomes for customers | Helps us process the emotional impact of our work| Develops self-awareness, emotional intelligence and resilience | Avoid cognitive bias| Understand our personal values and beliefs | Appreciate how our behaviour impacts on others| Fosters psychological safety and team cohesion
Useful in our personal and professional lives| Apply trauma thinking to our work| Maximises performance |Challenges assumptions | Reframes problems| Supports creative and lateral thinking | An opportunity to celebrate success, strengths and achievements|

STAFF BENEFITS

"I don't have time for this"

"My time is better spent working directly with clients"

Before

"I know this stuff already
I am good at my job"

St Basils Staff comments

"...it provides the space I need to remove myself from the situation and think"

"It's a valuable way to offload when your feeling stuck and helps reach a mutual understanding and way forward."

After

95% reported reflective practice enabled them to work flexibly and creatively with individuals who present risk behaviours

Feedback from Bristol City Council Commissioning Team 2025

'I have found the sessions really helpful in thinking in different ways about my work and the kinds of problems that it involves and have learnt more than I expected about different aspects of our work.'

'The sessions have really helped me feel a sense of belonging and support that have supported me through difficult (personal) times. They have helped me feel able to work at my best and increased my resilience.'

'Now that we have had a few sessions and have experienced how others are totally engaging in this experience has completely reduced any feelings of anxiety or concern around how I might respond and enabled me to feel completely comfortable to take part (or not!) depending on how I feel without any judgement.'

'I feel that the sessions have a great mix of personal and team reflection but also work based solutions. This helps to feel part of the session even though you might not be the focus in the individual session. I think the fact that most people try and attend each time is really important and helps to deepen the connections that we have and sense of being in this together.'

Better outcomes for clients

- Reflective, rather than reactive response
- Better relationships
- Improved outcomes as we share ideas and feel safe taking positive risk
- Helps us to tolerate uncertainty
- New ways of considering and approaching complex behaviours
- Challenges are reframed as learning opportunities



Stronger teams, better outcomes

“There is a robust evidence base demonstrating that teams who regularly meet to reflect on their practice are more effective than those who do not. Furthermore, literature indicates that effective teams achieve better outcomes for their client group.” West & Markiewicz, 2004





Hurdles

Activity 3.

In small groups take 10 mins to discuss hurdles to implementing group reflective practice and how might we overcome these

Feedback to wider group





Hurdles

1. Time, resources, logistics
2. Organisational buy-in and commitment
3. Service culture of blame/mistrust/lack of transparency
4. Fear, anxiety and reluctance from staff

Potential obstacle

Possible solution

**Time and resources.
Logistics of getting the
whole team together**

- Belief in and commitment to the benefits of Group Reflective Practice (GRP) Prioritise. Explore and identify internal resources available e.g., staff from different projects covering for each other. Share facilities. Can a team meeting be replaced with GRP once a month/bi-monthly? How have other services managed it? Plan sessions in advance and protect time allocated.

**Organisational buy-in and
commitment**

- Promote benefits. Report the experience of services which have implemented GRP less evictions/warning etc... happy, healthy staff etc...

**Stuck in “old” service
culture and behaviours**

- An external facilitator could help address this. If that’s not possible it will be important to support internal facilitators to understand and feel confident in their role

**A reluctance to reflect in a
group setting, avoidance**

- Staff may be anxious or unsure about the process. Be ready, willing, and able to respond to this by promoting the benefits and explore their fears. Ask those who have experienced it to talk to the team. Practice reflection in different settings: 1:1, team meetings. Demystify the process. Offer a briefing/workshop to staff. Promote the process as one of inclusion, supporting and encouraging all participants to have a voice.

A conceptual illustration featuring a glowing lightbulb as the central element, representing an idea or insight. The lightbulb is encased within a large, hand-drawn thought bubble. Below this main bubble are three smaller, similarly drawn circles, suggesting a flow of thought or a hierarchy of ideas. The entire graphic is rendered in white chalk-like lines on a solid black background.

Activity 4.

Action planning: What next?

Who is going to do what, by when
to get group reflective practice
up and running?

Consider the questions on the
following slide in a large group

Next steps

When?

Where?

Frequency?

Whose job is it to organise and co-ordinate?

Group composition?

External facilitator?

Is attendance “voluntary” or “strongly encouraged”



References and acknowledgements

www.nooneleftout.co.uk
claire@nooneleftout.co.uk

www.homelesslink.org.uk

The Reflective Practice Guide Barbara Bassot 2016

www.skillsyouneed.com

www.stbasils.org.uk

Bristol City Council Commissioning Team and Trauma
informed Bristol

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/40500274_Building_Team-Based_Working_A_Practical_Guide_to_Organizational_Transformation
West and Markiewicz 2004

Psychologically Informed services for homeless
people Good Practice guide 2012 Keats et al

