

# Reflective Practice Quick Guide



## Curious Questioning

**Definition:** The work that we do can, and will, evoke feelings. We can ask curious questions that focus on the positive and negative emotions of the work.

**Purpose:** Curious questioning helps us seek understanding of others and replaces defensiveness and assumptions with openness.



"What was that like for you?"

"What feelings did that bring up for you?"

"I'm wondering, what is something that brings you joy in your work?"

"I'm curious, what is one thing you think went right with that case/situation?"

"What did you feel was successful about today/this month?"

**Avoid:** Asking if you don't have the time, energy, or bandwidth.



## Active Listening

**Definition:** Listening to hear and understand.

**Purpose:** Active listening allows others to feel understood on a deeper level. It can also clarify aspects of the work and increase effective communication to improve the quality of work. Slowing down and mindfully listening, before jumping in with your response, can elicit more information from others.



Tips:

Remove distractions

Ensure capacity to fully listen

Show engaged body language and non-verbal cues

**Avoid:** Problem solving, fixing or being too distracted



## Reflection

**Definition:** *Inward* Reflection is looking internally to understand our emotions and feelings.  
*Outward* Reflection is conveying the essence of what you heard to the other person.

**Purpose:** Reflection can help us to better understand ourselves and our reactions as well as help others feel heard and seen.



"What I heard you say is \_\_\_\_\_. Is that correct?"  
 "It sounds like \_\_\_\_\_. Is that about right?"  
 "Can you help me understand? On one hand \_\_\_\_\_ and on the other \_\_\_\_\_."  
 "How am I feeling today?"

**Avoid:** Problem solving, parroting, jumping to conclusions



## Modeling

**Definition:** Demonstrating the emotional impact of the work by sharing your own thoughts and feelings.

**Purpose:** Sharing your personal experience with the work can provide others a safe space to feel understood and validated.



"When I was going into a similar case, I felt nervous for those home visits. I'm wondering if that is similar or different to what you were feeling?"  
 "When I have those types of situations, I know I feel really frustrated. I'm curious to hear how you are feeling about that?"

**Avoid:** Sharing too much about your own experience or shifting the spotlight to yourself. Avoid "one-upping with war stories."



## Boundaries

**Definition:** Boundaries are the guidelines we set for ourselves to ensure clarity, safety, and respect in our relationships.

**Purpose:** Boundaries allow us to provide effective support within the scope of our roles and serves as protection from secondary trauma.



"It sounds like there's a lot going on today, both at work and outside of work. I am happy to support you in areas that overlap with your work, but let's think about other resources that can support you outside of work."  
 "Is now an ok time to tell you about a difficult case I just experienced?"

**Avoid:** Being the therapist. Determine what is relevant to the nature of the work vs. what is outside your scope and role.