

Questions to explore the Kolb Cycle - adapted with permission from Staff Supervision in Social Care, Tony Morrison, Pavilion (2005)

1. Focusing on Experience

Here, the emphasis is on facilitating an accurate and detailed recall of events. A partial description of the situation will undermine the rest of the cycle. Workers can be assisted to recall more than they think they can recall if the right questions are asked. In these lists 'you' is the supervisee.

- How are you today – what's your day been like so far?
- What happened before the interview?
- What was your role?
- What was your aim? What planning did you do?
- What did you expect to happen?
- What happened? Identify different perceptions of co-workers.
- What did you say and do? What methods or interventions did you try?
- What did the user say, do or show?
- What reactions did you notice to what you said/did?
- What surprised or puzzled you? Who behaved differently?
- What stuck out for you? What were the key moments?
- What words, non-verbals, smells, sounds, images struck you?
- What did you notice about yourself, the user, your co-worker?
- What do you think others would have noticed about you?
- What didn't you notice? What or who was hard to observe?
- What observations or concerns do other agencies have?
- What went according to plan? What didn't happen?
- What changes or choices did you make?
- What did you say, notice or do immediately after the session?

2. Focusing on Reflection

Here the emphasis is on eliciting feelings, partly because they may bring out further information, or may reveal the worker's underlying attitudes. They may also give clues to other personal factors complicating the worker's experience. Reflection helps the worker make links between the current situation and his/her prior experiences, skills or knowledge.

- What did you feel at the start of the session? What feelings did you bring into the session?
- Describe the range of feelings you had during the session.
- What did the session/your feelings remind you of?
- What previous work, processes, skills, knowledge are relevant?
- What patterns did you see in the session? Are these familiar?
- Where have you encountered similar processes?
- Describe a time when you last experienced that – what happened?
- Who/what does this user remind you of?
- What did you think the user was feeling – based on what?
- What feelings might you or your co-worker be carrying on behalf of the user/victim/other workers – e.g. what transference or projection might be occurring?
- What other factors might influence how you, the user, co-worker felt or reacted e.g. gender, race?
- Where and when did you feel most or least comfortable?
- Who seemed least or most comfortable – at what points?
- What thoughts went through your mind during the session?
- What ideas came to you during the session?
- In what way have your feelings about this case changed over time?
- What did you tell yourself about what was happening, or about your feelings?
- What feelings were you left with? Does this always happen after seeing these kind of cases?
- What metaphor or analogy would describe your experience of working with this situation?
- What was left unfinished?

3. Focusing on Analysis

Here the emphasis is on analysis, probing the meanings that the supervisee and the user attributes to the situation, consideration of other explanations, the *identification* of what is not known or understood, and areas for further assessment.

- List three assumptions each that you, co-worker or user brought with you into the session.
- How would you explain or understand what happened in that session? **Note:** it is important to identify and probe different perceptions
- How would the session have been seen differently if: the user had been black; you had been a male or female worker, you had been working with another member of the family or the victim?
- How did this session fit or not fit into the overall aims of the work or programme? **Note:** this relates to issues of programme and treatment integrity
- What aims/outcomes for this session were or were not achieved?
- What went well, or not well and why?
- What other, possibly unexpected outcomes, did the session produce?
- How else could you explain what happened?
- How would the user explain what was happening in that session?
- What was the nature of the power relations during this session?
- Did power relations shift during the session – if so why? What might this tell you about assumptions about gender, race, sexuality etc.?
- How far did this session confirm or challenge your previous understanding or hypothesis?
- What new information emerged? What was the critical moment?
- What bits of theory, training, research, policy, values might help you make sense of what was happening in this session?
- What are the current strengths, needs, risks for the different users?
- What is not known?
- How do you define your role in this situation?
- How do the user and their family define your role?
- What expectations does this agency have of your role?

4. Focusing on action plans

The focus here is on translating the analysis into planning, preparation and action. This includes identification of outcomes and success criteria as well as consideration of potential complications and contingency plans.

- In the light of the reflection and analysis we've done, what's your overall summary of where things are at, and what needs to be done next?
- Can you identify what you are and are not responsible for in managing this situation?
- What training, supervisory, co-work and support needs have been raised for you?
- What information needs to be obtained before proceeding?
- What are your aims on this next phase of work?
- What is urgent and essential?
- What would be desirable?
- What is negotiable and what is non-negotiable in this situation?
- What would be a successful outcome to the next session from your perspective?
- What are the different ways in which you could approach this?
- What might your strategy be for the next session?
- What are the possible best or worst responses from the user?
- How can the user be engaged – what does s/he need from you? • What contingency plans do you need – what is the bottom line?
- Who else needs to be involved (co-worker, supervisor, other agency)?
- What would you like from them?
- How well equipped do you feel to undertake this?
- Where do you feel more or less confident?
- How can you prepare for this – mental rehearsal, flipchart map, reading, and co-worker?
- What can I do as supervisor that would be helpful at this stage?
- What similar tasks have you done?
- What and when does feedback and debriefing need to take place?
- Are there any safety issues for you or others?

• What behaviours or norms are acceptable to the family or community

• What can be done to minimise any dangers?