

SEL MONTHLY™ COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

*SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)
& TAKING TIME TO REFLECT*



THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-REFLECTION

by Brian Schank, Senior SEL Program Specialist

The definition of self-reflection is the ability to witness and evaluate our own cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes. In psychology self-reflection is referred to in terms of “reflective awareness” and “reflective consciousness,” which has become somewhat of a lost art. However, self-reflection is critically important for all of us, and getting back to a place of more examination should be a priority for everyone. When speaking in terms of SEL, we can start to practice self-reflection by thinking, meditating, and evaluating our behaviors, thoughts, attitudes, motivations, and desires. The first spoke of the SEL competencies wheel is self-awareness, which definitely requires us to put some time in reflecting to understand who we are, and how are emotions impact our lives, as well as what our strengths and areas for improvement are with our emotional health and our own emotional intelligence or (EQ). In this issue we will explore the different ways we can use self-reflection with intentionality to reflect on specific areas of our lives, our work, relationships, and more.

EARLY LEARNING

The act of self-reflection can be nurtured in children while they are young. We can do this by being intentional with developing our little one’s confidence to ask questions, think about how they feel, and by bringing awareness to how their behaviors affect others. Another way is by inviting their voices, ideas, and unique perspectives, rather than just relying on our reflections to inform our planning. It is all about planting the seeds of reflection and it is never too early to start.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Most elementary-aged children can identify and articulate their goals through structured reflection. Building on the strategies shared for early learners, you can begin to support your school-aged child with intentional opportunities to reflect. They can capture these thoughts on paper using a journal, or you can get creative with scrapbooking photos of special experiences or even have them draw and share out. Taking time to reflect means slowing down enough to stop, enjoy the adventure and figure out what is important to you as an individual. There are so many fun ways you can do this with elementary-aged children.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle schoolers can benefit from self-reflection, especially with all the changes they are acclimating to during these eventful years. Reflection allows the brain to pause amidst the chaos, untangle and sort through observations and experiences, as well as consider multiple possible interpretations, and create meaning. Students will gain a greater sense of self-awareness through reflection, and this is critical at this age. Taking time to reflect will allow middle schoolers to separate their perception from a situation as an objective observer. Self-reflection becomes learning, which can then inform future mindsets and actions.

HIGH SCHOOL

Self-reflection will support high schoolers by shifting their mindset, increasing positivity in their life, and discovering a greater connection to themselves. During this age, life can feel overbearing. High schoolers have an increased set of responsibilities and are at a stage where they make big decisions that impact their lives. This age group can benefit from spending time understanding more about the way they respond to situations. Instead of being oblivious to areas they can improve, self-reflection gives them the space to deal with life events positively and productively instead of allowing moments to consume their mindset and keep them stagnant. Self-reflecting is critical for achieving all the goals they aspire.

COPING SKILLS & ACTIVITIES



SELF-REFLECTION SKILLS

by Carolyn Tompkins
SEL Programs Specialist

Taking the time to be intentional and reflect upon specific areas of our lives is a great place to start. Let's take a look at how we can reflect upon our work. Some great questions to ask yourself regarding your work are:

- What is your greatest strength in your workplace?
- How are you helping your colleagues achieve their goals?
- Is there anything you are avoiding at work? If yes, why so?
- How might you be contributing to your least enjoyable relationship at work?
- What was your most recent successful work outcome? What did you do to facilitate that?

When first beginning the reflection process, it is important to identify a method that you connect with. For some this may include journaling, while for others this may be best achieved by having a specific colleague at work who you talk with regularly. Setting a recurring calendar date/time for this and starting with a small window of time is a great place to start. Taking the time for reflection in all aspects of life is essential and you are deserving of this time just for you!

Resources for this topic were found on the Harvard Business Review website. For more information on this topic, [click here](#).

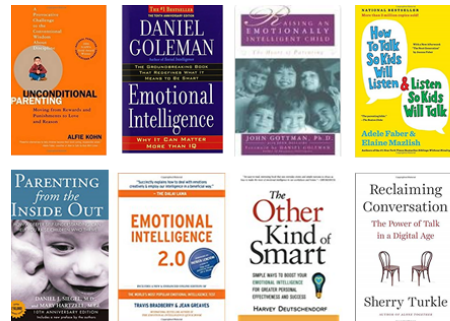
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SELF-REFLECTION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

by Jordan Sims
Community Programs Specialist

Self-reflection helps us in many areas of our lives, but children are not born knowing how to do this on their own. They need adults to teach them how to take time to reflect and continue practicing self-reflection with them. Here are some fun ways you can practice self-reflection with your kids and even get the whole family involved!

1. "All About Me" Scavenger Hunt – Create a scavenger hunt list focused on different aspects of your child's life such as something that is their favorite color, something that makes them feel calm, or something that frustrates them. Once they have found all the items on the list, ask them open-ended questions to encourage them to reflect on why they selected each item.
2. Creative Expression - Get creative with your child's self-reflection by providing them with a reflection prompt and encourage them to give their answer by doing an activity they enjoy. This could be singing, drawing, or any other creative method. The prompts can be sentence stems like "Something that brings me happiness is..." or "When was something hard for you but you kept practicing?"
3. Conversation Cards – Conversation Cards are a great self-reflection tool developed by Frameworks and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Each card has two sides; one side has an emoji and the other side has a question and discussion prompt related to one of the five SEL core competencies. These cards are a fun and easy way to model and practice self-reflection for adults and kids and are available for purchase on the Frameworks website: www.myframeworks.org.
4. Mindfulness Moments - Taking time to reflect sometimes means we need to slow down our minds, and mindfulness activities are perfect for this. Mindfulness can be practiced in many ways, such as sitting quietly and mentally reflecting, taking stock of our emotions throughout the day, or practicing a specific strategy like the 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique.
5. Play 'Rose-Bud-Thorn' - For this activity, children are encouraged to share the best part of their day (a rose), the least favorite part of their day (a thorn), and something they are looking forward to tomorrow (a bud). The great thing about this activity is that it can easily be incorporated into conversations during your typical routines like driving home from school, eating dinner, or getting ready for bed!



RESOURCES AND READINGS

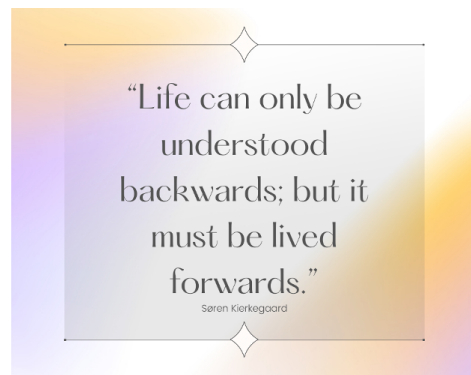
by Mabel Filpo
SEL Programs Specialist-Early Childhood

Self-reflection is an essential component for self-awareness, self-care, and growth. It allows us to go back to moments of our life, identify different qualities, and explore through our emotions. It is like seeing ourselves in the mirror and highlighting things we love about us or things we want to improve. It is also an opportunity to close the gap between self-perception and becoming more objective about our presence (Gordon and Barlow, 2008). Here are three resources that explore reflection practice ideas and benefits.

"15 Essential Ways to Practice Self-Reflection" (Minimalism Made Simple)

"The Power of Reflection: Tune In and Tune Up Your Focus" (Resilient Educator)

"The Reflection In Me" (Fable Vision)



To access free resources or purchase resources for home, classroom, or office use visit www.myframeworks.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

Tampa Oyster Fest 2021

[CLICK HERE](http://www.tampaoysterfest.com)
www.tampaoysterfest.com

for Tickets and Information



November 2021

SAVE THE DATE
Frameworks
2022 Head & Heart Luncheon
FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER
ARTHUR BROOKS
ARMATURE WORKS | APRIL 21, 2022

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