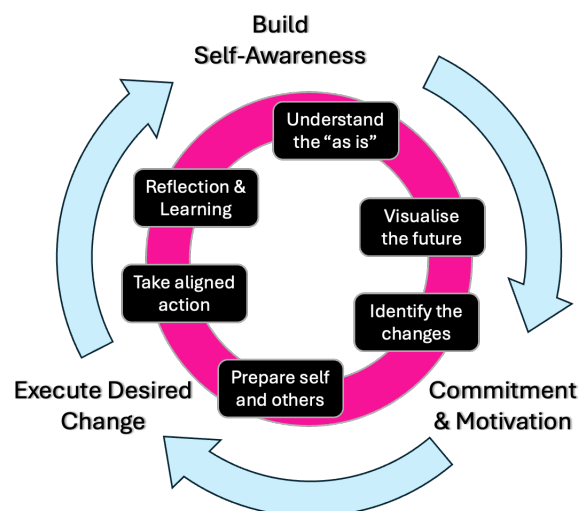


*Hello!* Welcome to your introduction to self-reflection!

If you've downloaded this workbook, it's because you are ready and excited to do self-reflection into your inner world. Most of us are called to do self-reflection work because we feel the need to make changes in one or more area of our lives. Self-reflection is a key tool for our development. Through reflection, we learn to explore deeper into ourselves and build our self-concept: our identities, beliefs, values, thoughts and behaviours that make up who we are. With this self-awareness, we are better equipped to recognise patterns in ourselves, identify growth areas, align with our core values and overall, make the changes we desire to build a life of authenticity and purpose.

*"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom." - Aristotle*

The below change model, based loosely on Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984), is the framework of how I support clients in change. Building self-awareness is the entry point to the cycle in order to achieve sustainable change, and reflection is the foundation of this process. It is a skill and mindset that can be developed over time.



The below exercise is one of the tools I use in the "Build Self Awareness" stage of the change model described above. Working with exercises such as this help us fully understand and commit to the changes we want to achieve. This exercise can be repeated on different scenarios as a way to explore patterns or habits that come up for you.

## Exercise One

### Reflective Learning: Develop the thought process

This exercise helps to build your reflexive muscle by learning to ask questions about yourself through journaling, or if you choose, discussion with someone else. For the first time, I suggest writing the answers to the questions. The purpose is to build your confidence and comfort in exploring your own inner world, so that you can learn from it and apply it to the external world.

**You need:** pen and paper, a timer/stopwatch, quiet space without interruptions for at least half an hour.

Allocate at least half an hour to do this exercise. The time beside each question is the minimum time that you should spend answering it. Even if you feel like you have written everything, do not to move on until the time has finished. Instead, keep thinking about the question and write down anything more that comes up. The aim is not to do this as quickly as possible, but to answer the question as deeply as possible.

1. Think of an event in the last 2 weeks that gave you a strong emotional response, either positive or negative. Describe the situation of what happened in as much detail as possible. Focus on the facts and not your interpretation of the fact. Use the below questions for prompts, but do not limit yourself to them. (8 minutes)
  - ◇ Where were you? What were you doing?
  - ◇ Who else was there? How many people?
  - ◇ What was the conversation or interaction with these other people?
  - ◇ What did you do afterwards?
  - ◇ What else do you remember? What else?
2. Re-read your answer to Question One. Now imagine the same situation as if you were watching it back on a video, and you had not lived through it. Cross out anything that is not an absolute fact describing what happened. For example, if you already wrote about how you felt, or you've written an opinion about the other person or the outcome (if it was good or bad), you can cross it out. Reread it again. This should now be an unbiased account of the event. (4 minutes)
3. Now, explore how you felt. Write down everything you remember feeling in the moment about the event, the people, the outcome or anything else. What emotions came up? How did your body feel? Did you have any visible reaction? (4 minutes).

4. Next, write down how you feel about the event now. How do you feel about the resolution of the event? What has shifted between the event and now? (4 minutes)
5. Re-read your answer to Q2 again. Underline anything that are your own behaviours or actions, that you had control over. Write out these behaviours and actions as bullet points. Next to each point, answer these questions (6 minutes):
  - ◇ What feeling or thought prompted this behaviour? What was your motivation for doing it? What drove you?
  - ◇ Was that feeling or thought based on a fact, or was it based on an assumption you made about the situation or the other person?
6. Now consider the links between your actions, your thoughts or assumptions, and how you felt after the event and now. How much did your thoughts or assumptions influence your feeling or the outcome? (4 minutes)
7. Are there any parts of the event that you would like to get more clarity on?
8. What have you learned about the way your thoughts and assumptions can influence an event?

Well done for completing this exercise! As you look back over your own actions, thoughts and emotions, it can be easy to wish we'd done something different, or to judge how we responded. Rather than letting any inner critic voices come up, try to see this as a learning opportunity, and keep in mind that everyone is doing the best they can at each moment in time.

When we reflect back on a situation, we can often want to take action to change the outcome. The invitation here is not to relive the moment to change it, but to learn more about ourselves from it. Practice this exercise on different scenarios. Where else might this be a useful tool for you?

*"Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life  
is the foundation for all abundance." — Eckhart Tolle*

Well done on completing this exercise! A huge part of our learning journey is celebrating our success. Well done for taking the time to focus on you, your development and your growth. What are you going to do now to celebrate what you've done?

This exercise is the first of six exercises that explore the change model described above. The full six-part workbook can be purchased from me directly. For an even deeper exploration into your self-reflective practice, schedule a free 30-minute discovery call with me, to see how 1on1 coaching might benefit you. I am so excited to see how I can support you on your journey!

If you have any questions on any of the above, or want to discuss anything that came up for you during the exercises, I would love to hear from you! Get in touch with me on LinkedIn or email me at [hilary@hedcoaching.com](mailto:hilary@hedcoaching.com) with the subject "Introduction to self-reflection".

*I can't wait to hear from you!*

*Hilary*

## About Me....

I am a social psychologist who has found my purpose in supporting people to develop self-awareness, in order to support their development. I do this for two reasons: firstly, to support women in their career and personal development, to become their most authentic and fulfilled selves in the workplace; secondly, working



with leaders to develop their awareness of their role in creating diverse and inclusive organisational cultures. Through these two channels, I hope to contribute to more equitable work environments for women, with a stronger sense of belonging and value for all.

Social Psychology explores the way that we, as individuals, are influenced by people and society around us, and how that in turn shapes our thoughts, behaviours and emotions. Building on my own previous experience in both engineering and corporate environments, I now focus my energy in create awareness in organisations around the social challenges that are limiting inclusion and equality in the workplace.

My main work focusses on women's development coaching and DEIB coaching for leaders. In addition, I offer DEIB consultancy work in culture assessments, qualitative research and analysis, workshop facilitation and training, report writing, and strategy design and interventions.

I am also passionate about storytelling for connection and shared learning, and am pleased to offer public speaking and writing on a range of topics. Please contact me to discuss how I can support you and your organisation in any of these areas.