

# Self-Reflection & Journaling

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## WHAT IS SELF-REFLECTION?



Self-Reflection is our mind's equivalent to looking in the mirror. When we look at ourselves in a mirror, we are pointing our eyes toward ourselves so that we can see how we look. Similarly, self-reflection points our awareness toward our thoughts and feelings to get a better look at how we operate. We have a mirror to visually see ourselves and a journal to introspectively understand ourselves.

## WHY LEADERS NEED TO SELF-REFLECT



- Leaders lacking awareness overestimate their intelligence and ability, reducing their adaptability and relatability.<sup>1</sup>
- Leaders aware of their cognitive processing make better decisions.<sup>2</sup>
- Leaders with high self-awareness have more satisfied employees.<sup>3</sup>
- Leaders with awareness have more empathy, esteem and confidence, demonstrate better self-control, and are more accomplished creatively.<sup>4</sup>
- Leaders with self-awareness achieve higher strategic and financial performance.<sup>5</sup>

## HOW TO CREATE A SELF-REFLECTION PRACTICE



**Expressive Writing:** One of the most well studied ways to self-reflect is to “let it all out” in writing. For 20 straight minutes, each day, write your deepest thoughts and feelings, especially about things that challenge you. Be candid, let go, and express yourself without judgment.

**Gratitude:** Our hurried, transactional lives put us out of touch with what is actually going well, while we busily try to solve every problem. Another evidence based practice that improves our self-understanding is writing down our gratitude. At the end of every day, make an exhaustive list of what you are grateful for. Be as specific and contextual as possible.

**Reframing:** We are often unaware of our judging, negative assumptions and false interpretations in our mind. Try to “catch” your negative thoughts midstream, write them down, and also write an alternative possibility that is more thoughtful, inclusive, open-minded, compassionate, or has more reasoned rationale.

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<sup>1</sup> IAAP <sup>2</sup> The Journal of Experimental Education <sup>3</sup> Academy of Management <sup>4</sup> Journal of Social & Clinical Psychology <sup>5</sup> Green Peak Partners