

# How to Practice Self-Reflection

- Identify some important questions. But don't answer them yet. Here are some possibilities:
  - What are you avoiding?
  - How are you helping your colleagues achieve their goals?
  - How are you not helping or even hindering their progress?
  - How might you be contributing to your least enjoyable relationship at work?
  - How could you have been more effective in a recent meeting?
- Select a reflection process that matches your preferences. Many people reflect through writing in a journal. If that sounds terrible but talking with a colleague sounds better, consider that. As long as you're reflecting and not just chatting about the latest sporting event or complaining about a colleague, your approach is up to you. You can sit, walk, bike, or stand, alone or with a partner, writing, talking, or thinking.
- Schedule time. Most leaders are driven by their calendars. So, schedule your reflection time and then commit to keep it. And if you find yourself trying to skip it or avoid it, reflect on that!
- Start small. If an hour of reflection seems like too much, try 10 minutes. Teresa Amabile and her colleagues found that the most significant driver of positive emotions and motivation at work was making progress on the tasks at hand. Set yourself up to make progress, even if it feels small.
- Do it. Go back to your list of questions and explore them. Be still. Think. Consider multiple perspectives. Look at the opposite of what you initially believe. Brainstorm. You don't have to like or agree with all of your thoughts — just think and to examine your thinking.
- Ask for help. For most leaders, a lack of desire, time, experience, or skill can get in the way of reflection. Consider working with a colleague, therapist, or coach to help you make the time, listen carefully, be a thought partner, and hold you accountable.

