

# Praxis: “requiring students to be students of their own experiences”

## DEAL Model as an Approach to Critical Reflection

### Describe

Describe your experience in language that non-clinical readers could understand focusing on one or two key service activities that were significant or reflection worthy experiences. Think about where you were, who else was with you, when did the activity take place, what was your role, and why were you there.

### Examine

Examine and describe your experience from a *personal perspective* by reflecting on the impact the Service Learning activity had on you personally, how it might change your current perspective, or how it will impact your future medical practice.

Examine and describe your experience from an *academic perspective* by reflecting on the approaches taken during the activity and comparing them to academic elements of course materials related to this activity.

Examine and describe your experience from a *civic perspective* by reflecting on what you were trying to accomplish. Was the focus on symptoms or causes of the problem? Did you reinforce, engage or challenge the social structure by your actions?

### Articulate Learning

Express your learning experience through an articulated reflection using four frameworks:

- *I learned that ...*
- *I learned this when ...*
- *This learning matters because ...*
- *In light of this learning ...*

Through this examination process, you will confront and challenge your assumptions, beliefs, and thought patterns while connecting your activity to personal experiences, course materials, and future activities. This allows you to tie together your experience with articulation of learning.

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## What is praxis?

Basically, praxis means “learning” and effective learning follows a cycle. We start with our own theory of how change happens. Then we take action based on our theory. Then we take a step back and reflect on how the action went which re-shapes our theory.



## Praxis (Action/Reflection)

It is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. They must act together upon their environment in order critically to reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection.

Paulo Freire

## What is critical reflection?

Reflection is a form of learning that explicitly grows out of experience. It is a reasoning process that reflects on ideas, actions, and decisions in your clinical experiences.

**Critical reflection** adds four elements to “reconstruct or reorganize our experiences”:

- It requires one to elaborate or interrogate experiences
- It requires one to reflect with purpose and challenge emotional doubts based on experiences
- It requires one to move beyond explanation and into processing experiences on a deeper level
- It requires one to continually go over the process in order to do things differently the next time

Critical reflection is the process of looking back on what has been done and pondering on it and learning lessons from what did or did not work (Conway 1994).