

**Student Development Administration  
Internship Support**

**Reflective Journal Writing**

Definition:

A tool for connecting thought, feeling, and action- a synthesizing tool that works from the inside out and outside in. The act of writing in and of itself leads to a level of understanding that would often not otherwise occur, that is the writing itself is generative, something happens while you are writing. The journal is therefore not a recording of what *has happened*, it is an exploration of what happened, the journal *is happening* as it is being written. (Source: Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood, Jack Mezirow and Associates, 1990).

Suggestions to move into reflection:

1. As you jot notes on the events of the internship, ask yourself questions about their meaning, and *write those thoughts on the page*. Don't just write, "hmm, I wonder what this might mean." Actually spend time in the act of writing and exploring what you are wondering.
2. Look for significant "learning's" and express those. At the end of the day's entry, reflect on what you learned that day, and for example, what that means in terms of student development roles and challenges; what it means in respect to your ideas about how work ought to be accomplished and managed in the workplace; what you would do if you were in charge to make things better, different, etc.
3. Think about connections, patterns, themes, that arise through the internship experience. You may realize for example, a particular pattern of organizational management, something that lives below the surface perhaps. What about connections to basic principles you have learned in classes.

Rewards that go with reflection:

These insights are what make a journal interesting to write, and interesting to read. They also offer many more opportunities for meaningful conversation with your supervisor and the colleagues you meet on the your job. Meaningful conversation builds relationships, and relationships open doors for great jobs. But as important, you learn more about yourself, what you think, how you think and organize, and what you value.

Contributed by Mike Naylor 3/31/00