

The Reflection Tree

Enclosed is a graphical template for structuring the “problem” of your inquiry. It is based on Suzanne Bailey’s work on designing and leading whole system change through the use of living system metaphors. Reflect on the questions and then record your answers on the template provided.

1. **The Problem of Your Inquiry**—State the unresolved issue, challenge, opportunity, or performance gap that is at the center of your inquiry.
2. **Energy**—What motivates you to resolve the issue? What gives you stamina and keeps you focused on wanting to solve the problem? List your responses under the sun.
3. **Beliefs and Values**—Why is the problem important to you? How are your beliefs and values on effective teaching and learning related to the problem? Write three or four beliefs that support your efforts to resolve the problem beside the trunk of the tree.
4. **Fruit**—What are the benefits of solving the problem? State what you think is the potential end result of your inquiry.
5. **Pests**—What’s getting in the way of solving the problem? What are the obstacles and challenges that need to be overcome for the inquiry to be a success? Write this information under the rabbit.
6. **Roots**—Reflect on the “roots” of your current perspective regarding the problem. What has influenced your view of effective teaching and learning that makes this issue a significant problem to solve? List the people, previous experiences, and literature that has influenced you under the roots of the tree.
7. **Other Trees**—What other colleagues, friends, and mentors share your views of the problem? List these supporters under the “Other Trees”.
8. **Cactus**—Who has different or conflicting views on the problem than you? What are their views on the issue? Write this information next to the cactus.
9. **Storms**—What would happen if the problem is not resolved? Write down your worst fears by the storm clouds.

Review the reflections you have just listed on your template. What patterns are evident? What were the most difficult parts of the template to complete? The easiest? What are the implications of your entries for the next steps of your inquiry?