

Promoting Core Reflection in Teacher Education

A two-day workshop with prof. dr. Fred Korthagen

"[Core Reflection] is about the opportunity to be who you really are or really want to be. Some people might call it self-actualization. Some people might call it authenticity, some might call it flow, but I'm not sure it's any of those things exactly. I think it's about being human, being very natural in responses, and being very present".

William Greene in Kim & Greene (2011)

Background and aim of the workshop

Based on the success of previous international workshops and the publication of two books on Core Reflection in English, we offer a two-day workshop on Core Reflection for teacher educators or teachers.

New developments in education require that we rethink how best to build linkages between theory and practice. In this context, reflection is a central concept. The Core Reflection approach has been developed by Fred Korthagen and his colleagues in the Netherlands and the US. Based on a holistic framework, the approach aims at promoting a deep and transformative kind of reflection in the coaching of students, teachers, or colleagues. This represents a shift from a focus on problems and deficiencies toward a focus on *strengths*.

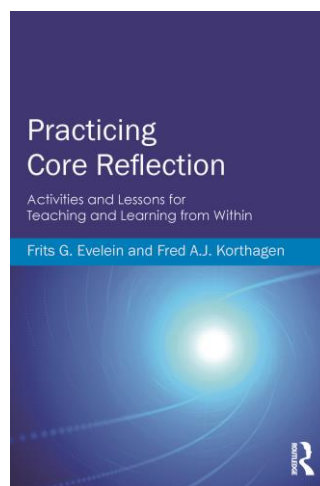
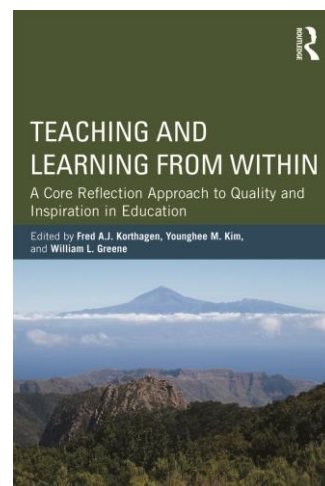
What are people's strengths? How can they be used optimally? How can you support people in overcoming obstacles, and help them act upon their strengths (their 'psychological capital')?

Core Reflection builds on people's *core qualities* and talents, and aims at dealing with internal and external obstacles to use one's best capacities in practice. In the Core Reflection approach, the cognitive, emotional, motivational, and behavioral aspects of learning are connected (thinking, feeling, wanting, and doing). It uses recent insights from positive psychology, and notions from Almaas's Diamond Approach, psychosynthesis, Gestalt therapy, NLP, Theory U, mindfulness, and the 'Courage to Teach' work of Parker Palmer.

Core Reflection has been successfully implemented in many schools and teacher education programmes. Research has shown its strong impact on the professional development of teacher educators, students, pupils, novice teachers, experienced teachers and school principals. Core Reflection appears to create flow, inspiration and high quality in work. Publications on Core Reflection have appeared in important academic journals in the field of teaching and teacher education (see the list of key publications below).

Aims

The workshop will provide a foundation for teacher educators to apply strength-based coaching based on Core Reflection. Participants will also learn how to use their own personal qualities more optimally and to recognize and overcome internal obstacles to bringing out the best in themselves.



Workshop structures

During this workshop, the presentation of theoretical issues will alternate with practical examples of coaching procedures. Interventions will be practiced through real coaching situations created during the workshop along with mini-exercises, each focused on developing specific skills.

The workshop facilitator



Prof. dr. Fred Korthagen will facilitate this two-day workshop. He is an emeritus professor of education of Utrecht University. He specializes in reflection and self-directed learning as key aspects of professional development and the integration of theory and practice. On these subjects, he has published extensively, for example the books *Linking practice and theory: The pedagogy of realistic teacher education* (2001) and *The power of reflection in teacher education and professional development* (2022).

Twice, in 2000 and in 2006, dr. Korthagen received the *Exemplary Research Award* from the Division *Teaching and Teacher Education* of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). In 2015, he received the honorary title of *Fellow of AERA*, as an acknowledgment for the quality of his research and its impact on practice. Fred Korthagen has been the head of two Dutch teacher education programmes. He is also an experienced Gestalt therapist and has a background in a variety of other therapeutic approaches. He has given workshops and professional courses in many European countries, as well as in the US, Canada, Japan, South-Korea, and Australia.

More information

For more information, see www.korthagen.nl/en.

Evaluations of former participants

- Personally, [I have gained] a set of skills I feel will be empowering, professionally a set of connections to people and ideals which I feel will deepen and lighten my experience of work.
- The biggest benefit for me has been learning new tools for refocusing problems and obstacles into strengths.
- A gained a sense of self-identity, freedom from limiting beliefs, empowerment to fulfil my life purpose.
- You would not know how much profound impact you've done to me personally and professionally. I feel so fortunate to be there at the first workshop you've given in America!
- To function from a place of strength, to affirm the qualities in self and other, and to have language that is approachable are all incredible valuable.
- Since returning, I have told colleagues and students that in my many years as an educator, I think this has been the most powerful and transformative experience I have ever had.
- I see this workshop as a tremendous gift.
- The techniques of core reflection are really limitless in their application.
- This has been the most profound, influential workshop I've ever had in my life. It presented me with, no, immersed me in an ideal vision for my work, my teaching and my way of being that.

Key publications

- Evelein, F. G. & Korthagen, F. A. J. (2015). *Practicing core reflection: Activities and lessons for teaching and learning from within*. New York/London: Routledge.
- Kim, Y. & Greene, W. (2011). Aligning professional and personal identities: Applying core reflection in teacher education practice. *Studying Teacher Education*, 7(2), 109-119.
- Korthagen, F.A.J. (2004). In search of the essence of a good teacher: Towards a more holistic approach in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20(1), 77-97.
- Korthagen, F. A. J. (2014). Promoting core reflection in teacher education: Deepening professional growth. In: L. Orland-Barak & C. J. Craig (Eds), *International Teacher Education: Promising pedagogies (Part A)*, (pp. 73-89). Bingley, UK: Emerald.
- Korthagen, F. A. J., Hoekstra, A. & Meijer, P. C. (2014). Promoting presence in professional practice: A core reflection approach for moving through the U. In O. Gunnlaugson, C. Baron & M. Cayer (Eds.), *Perspectives on theory U: Insights from the field* (pp. 77-96). Hershey, PA: Business Science.
- Korthagen, F. A. J., Kim, Y. M., & Greene, W. L. (Eds.) (2013). *Teaching and Learning from Within: A Core Reflection Approach to Quality and Inspiration in Education*. New York/London: Routledge.
- Korthagen, F. & Nuijten, E. (2022). *The power of reflection in teacher education and professional development: Strategies for in-depth teacher learning*. New York: Routledge.
- Korthagen, F. & Vasalos, A. (2005). Levels in reflection: Core reflection as a means to enhance professional development. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 11(1), 47-71.
- Korthagen, F. A. J. & Vasalos, A. (2010). Going to the core: Deepening reflection by connecting the person to the profession. In N. Lyons (Ed.), *Handbook of Reflection and Reflective Inquiry: Mapping a Way of Knowing for Professional Reflective Inquiry* (pp. 529-552). New York, etc.: Springer.
- Meijer, P.C., Korthagen, F.A.J. & Vasalos, A. (2009). Supporting presence in teacher education: The connection between the personal and professional aspects of teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(2), 297-308.