Can you think of a particular teaching practice that you have improved on?

- Think of a particular experience that may have contributed to improving this particular teaching practice?
- What processes were involved in this achieving this improvement?
Action Research:
My Own Journey of Discovery

Dr. Jose Roberto Guevara
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From biology research ... 

to social/educational research

(from Wadsworth, 1991)
Added a new instrument, in addition to the magnifying glass.

THE MIRROR!

action research
reflective practice

(from Wadsworth, 1991)
Action Research Spiral

1. **Issue or Problem**
2. **Observe**
3. **Plan**
4. **Act**
5. **Observe**
6. **Act**
7. **Observe**
8. **Plan**
9. **Act**
10. **Observe**
11. **Act**
12. **Observe**
13. **Plan**
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106. **Plan**
107. **Act**
108. **Observe**
109. **Plan**
110. **Act**

Steps:
- **Plan**: Design and implement strategies.
- **Act**: Execute and implement the strategies.
- **Observe**: Evaluate and assess the outcomes.
- **Reflect**: Analyze the results and make adjustments.

This cycle is repeated to continually improve and refine practices.
Researching Action, Action from Research

Critical reflection on action

Improved practice

New questions arise from the results of action

New knowledge emerges

Existing knowledge

Action

Research
Content (from scientific to interdisciplinary and holistic)

BSc Biology degree provided the foundations for work as a community environmental educator.

BSc Biology degree also gave me the blinkers, the narrow knowledge system that made me attempt to explain environmental problems through a scientific-technical lens.
Content
(from one true knowledge to ...)

- Now I emphasise to my students that they need to be aware that there are different knowledge systems and more importantly to be aware of how their own educational experiences have constructed the way they view the world.

- I begin by acknowledging that I do not have all the knowledge, and whatever knowledge I have to share is based on the context of my own life experiences.

... knowledge is not only diverse but contextual
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Why name reflection? Why not let it just happen?

For many practitioners, doing swallows up learning. Even staying aware of what we are doing does not itself create learning.

Learning is a purposeful activity, although not a complicated one.

Recognizing the necessary role of reflection in excavating learning from experience and becoming familiar with the basic elements of a reflective practice will allow practitioners to begin to act on the notion that knowledge is embedded in the experience of their work, and to realize the importance of this knowledge in furthering their practice.

Joy Amulya, Center for Reflective Community Practice, MIT

(http://web.mit.edu/crcp/vitaldiff1/Documents/what%20is%20reflective%20practice.pdf)
Principles and processes of action research

• As a process – it does involve steps of action, reflection, planning, action, reflection – in cycles/spirals
• It is driven – by a desire to understand practice or action in order to improve its ability to respond to a problem; hence it can be problem-based.
• It is guided by the commitment to involve the individuals and groups who “own” the problem and therefore wish to “own” the solution(s) – which others call an empowerment process.
• Recently it has also been used to build on the strengths of communities of practice (appreciative inquiry).
• It begins from the local – “from where people are” and builds on where they are
• In the process it generates local knowledge or often co-generates knowledge, when conducted together with outsiders
• Learning is inherent to the practice of action research.