
Unleashing the Power of Us

Mind Grease The DNA of Reinventing Schools & Organizations

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- DNA contains genetic instructions for the development of function of a living organization

Learning Organization Definitions

Classic*

Places where:

- People are expanding their capacity to create the results they desire
- New thinking is nurtured
- Collective aspirations are set free
- People are learning how to learn

For Educators**

Places where:

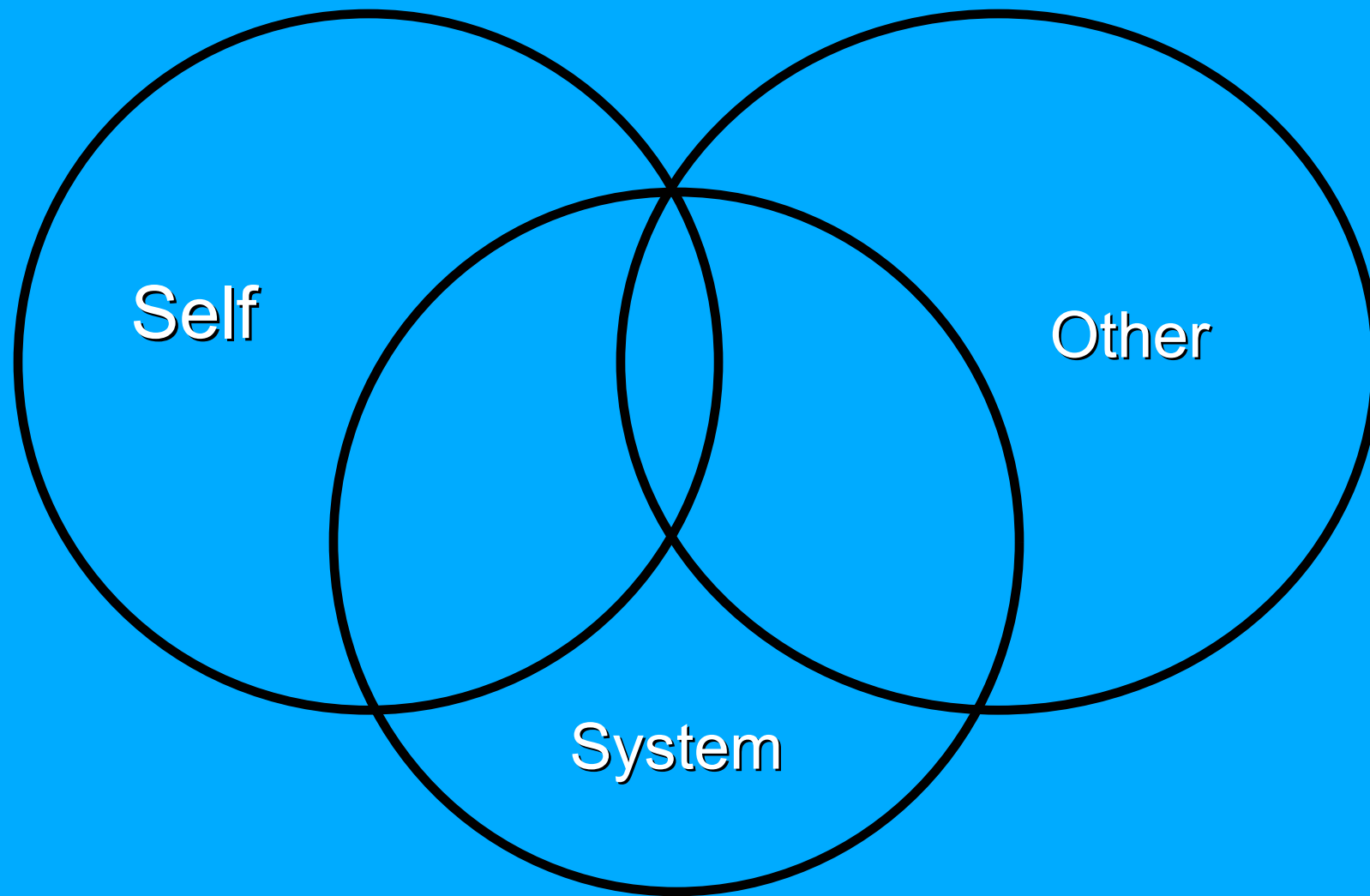
- Individuals are creating, acquiring and sharing knowledge about student learning or ways to support it
- And then change their behavior to reflect these new insights

* Source: The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization

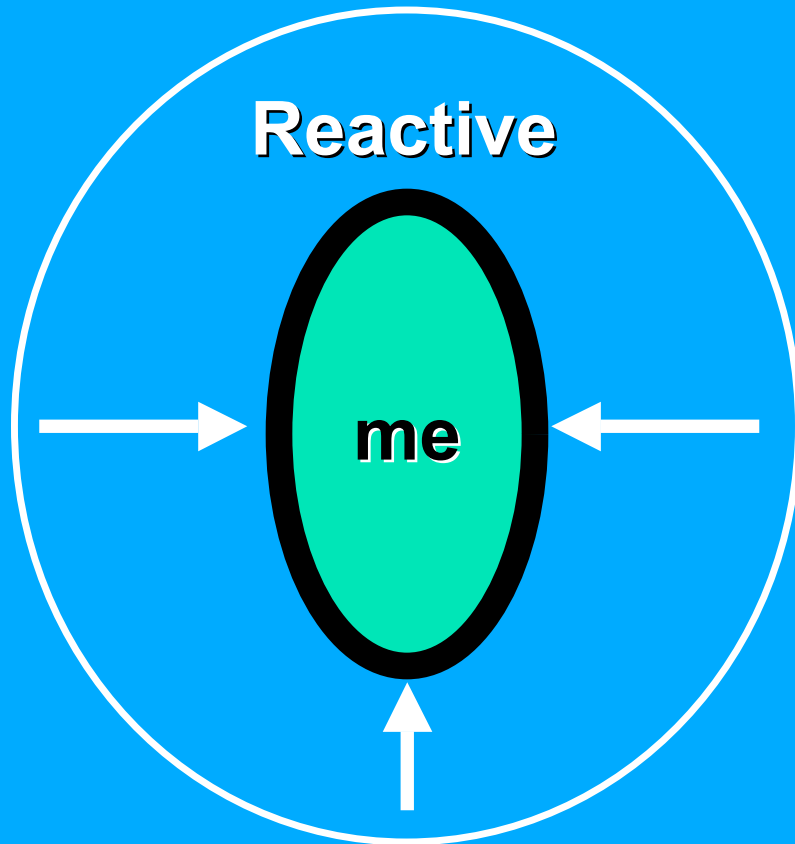
**The Change Institute and Beaufort County School District

Flow of Session A

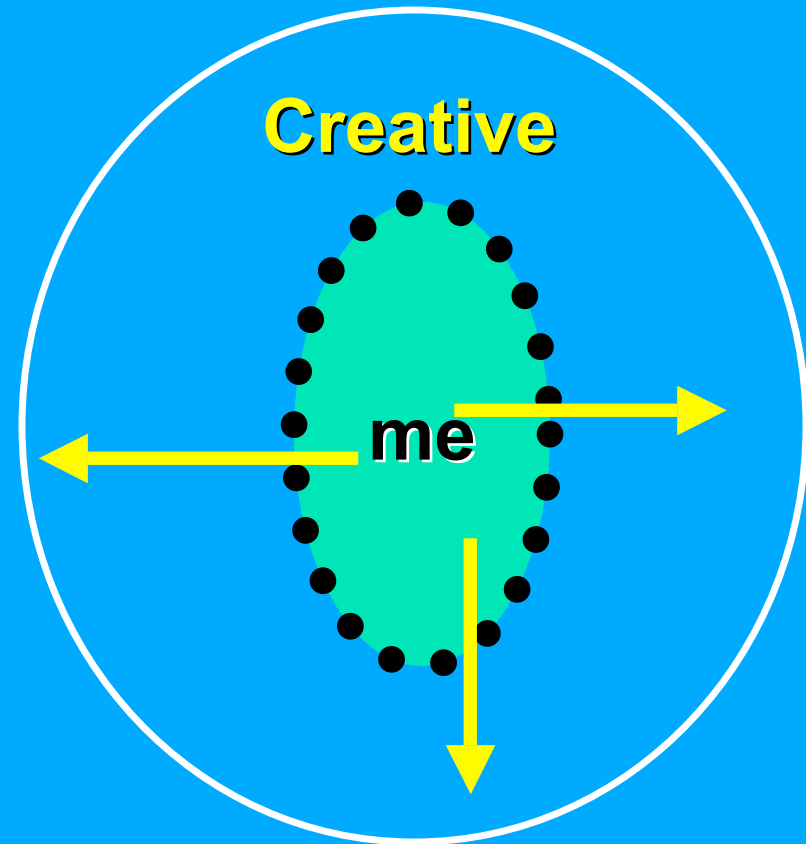
- Why reinvention?
- DNA – Self, Others, System
- RDA – Orientation, Creative Tension, Systems Iceberg
- Cognitive Tools – Living the DNA



Two Orientation

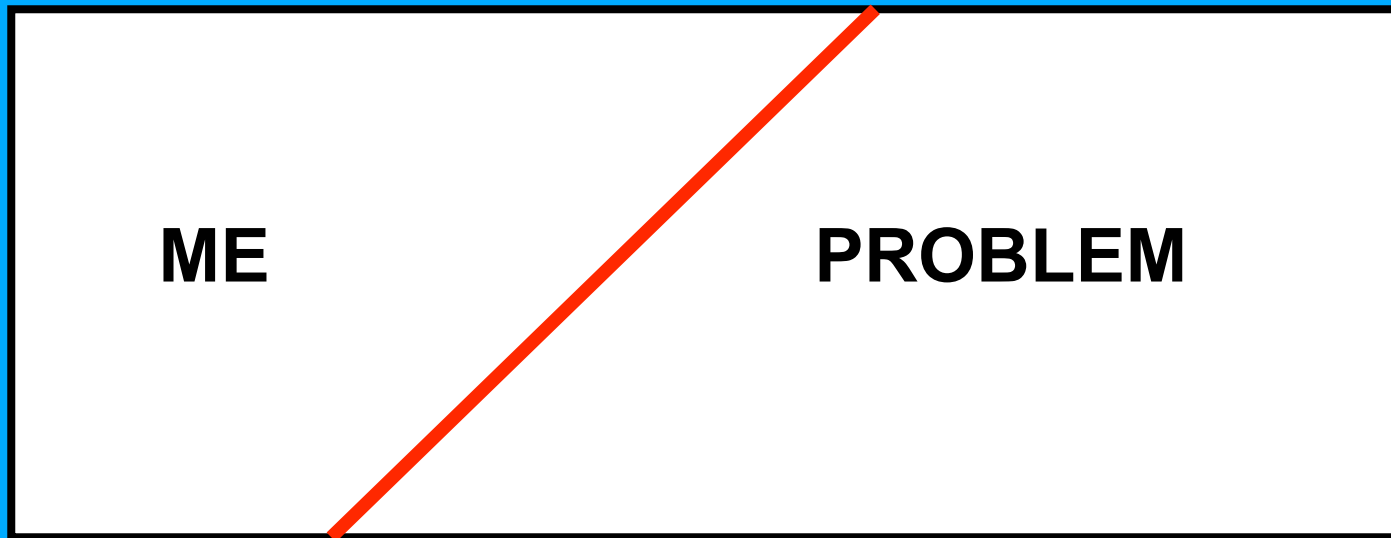


They did this to me.
What do they want?

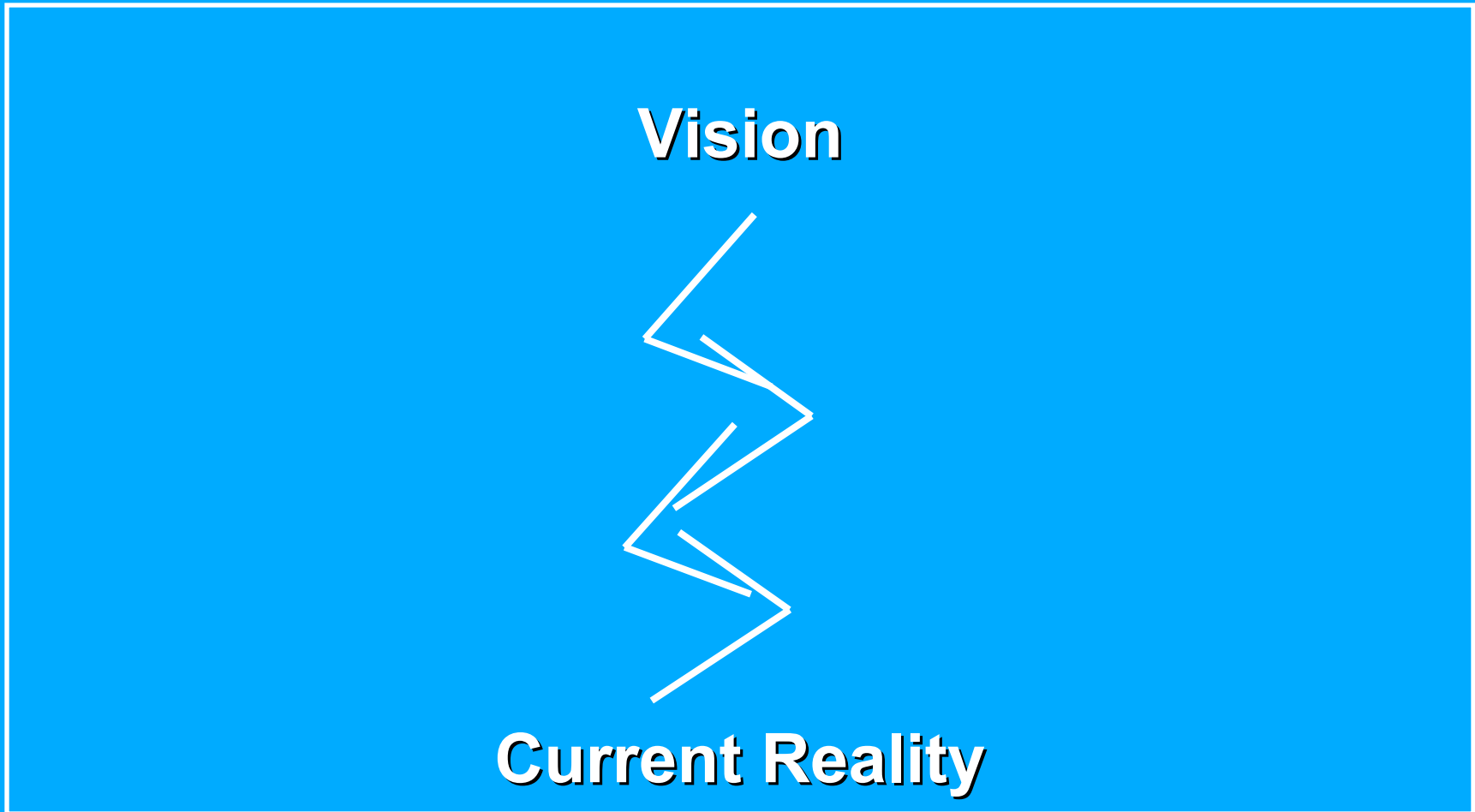


What do I want to create?
How did I contribute to
what we have now?

HAIPOP: How am I part of the problem?



Creative Tension



Key Points

Vision



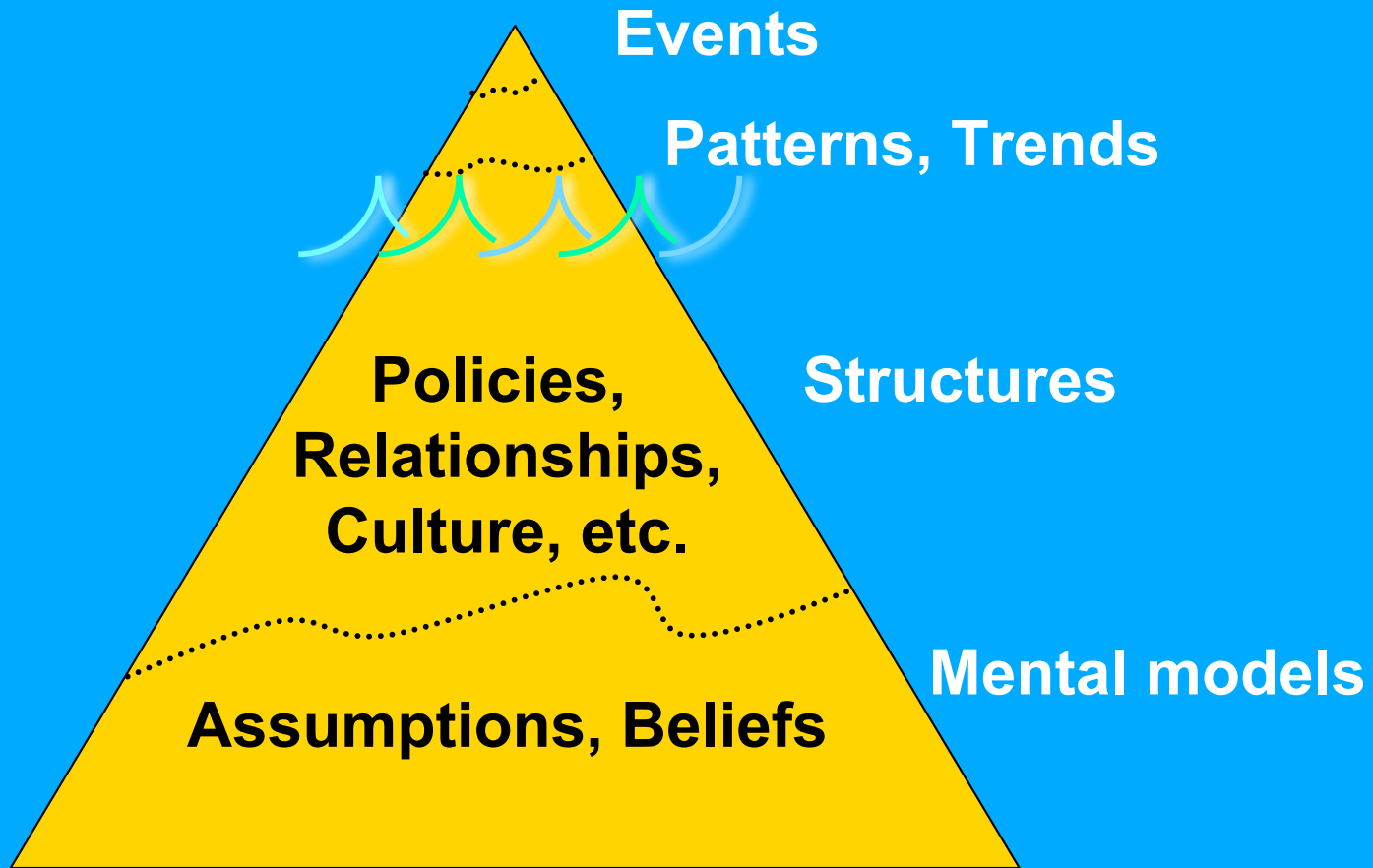
**Current
Reality**

- **Collapsing creative tension reduces learning.**
- **Being clear and clean about current reality is not always easy.**
- **If creative tension is held, there is a natural creative force that can be harvested, pulling current reality toward one's vision.**

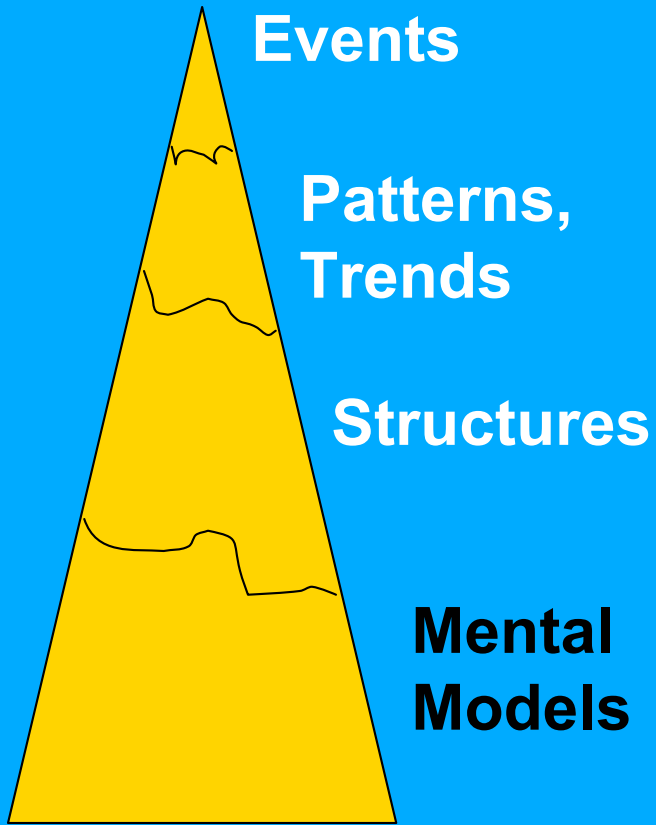
Personal Mastery is ...

- **Having the courage to create a vision.**
- **Describing current reality in a clear and honest manner.**
- **Learning to hold creative tension with a learning posture.**
- **Developing new skills and deepening old ones that move current reality toward your vision.**

Systems Iceberg



Mental Models



How birds see the world

Mental Models

*** Definition -**

**** The beliefs and assumptions we hold about the world.**

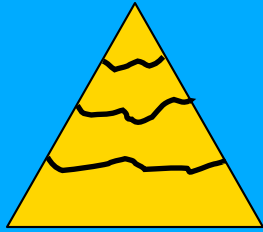
Question -

How do my beliefs and assumptions shape my view of the world and create habits that influence my decisions, actions and behavior?

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Mental Models: Individual Stories

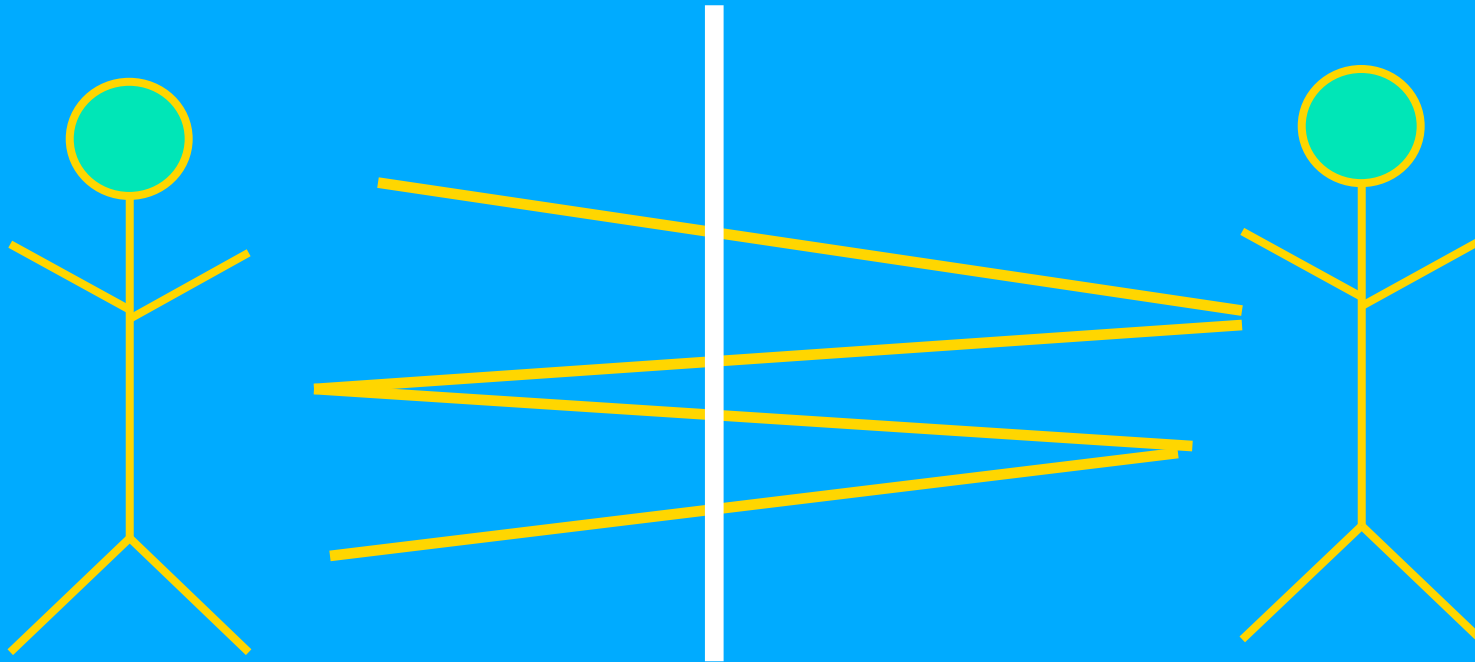


Events:
Pattern:
Structures:
Mental Models:

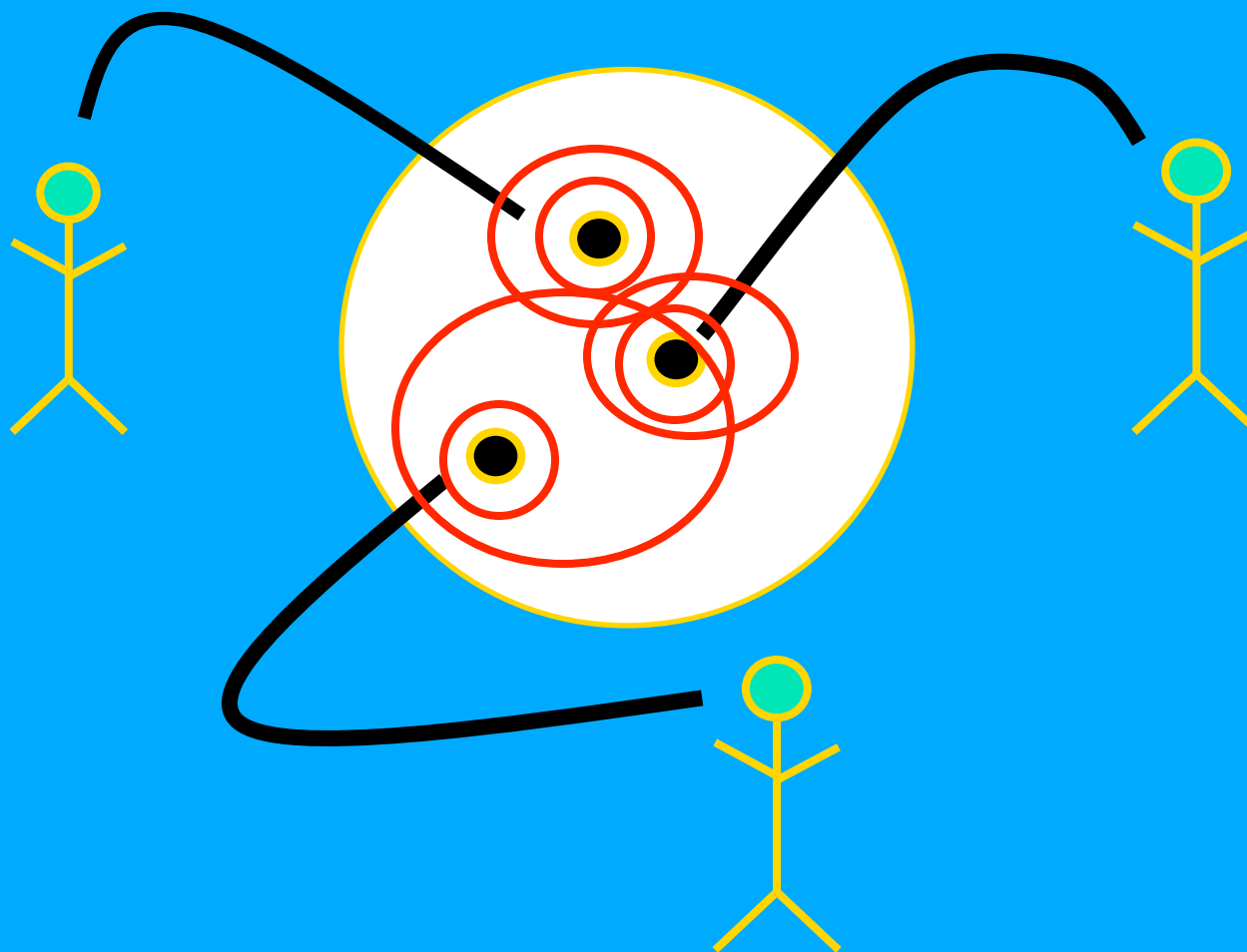
Find an iceberg that is floating in your professional life.

- **What are the events (crisis)?**
- **What are the patterns or trends?**
- **What are the structures?**
- **What are the mental models?**

Discussion

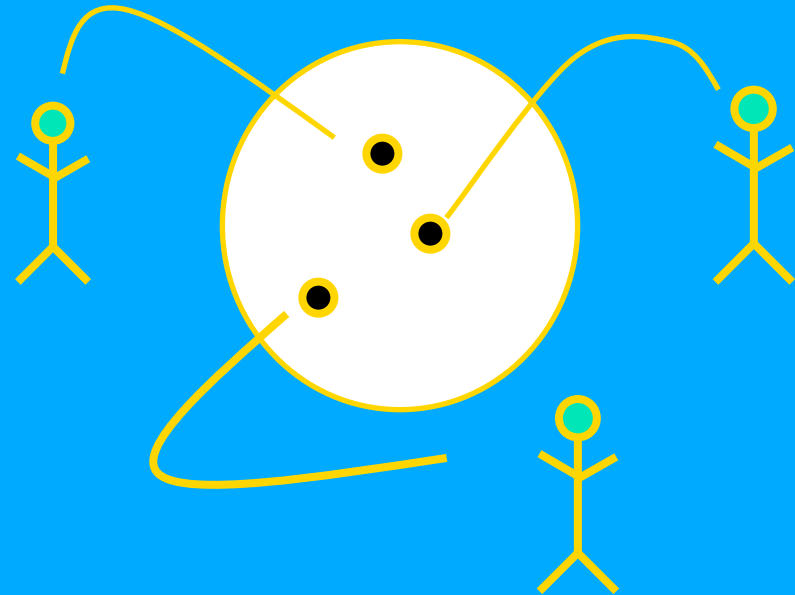
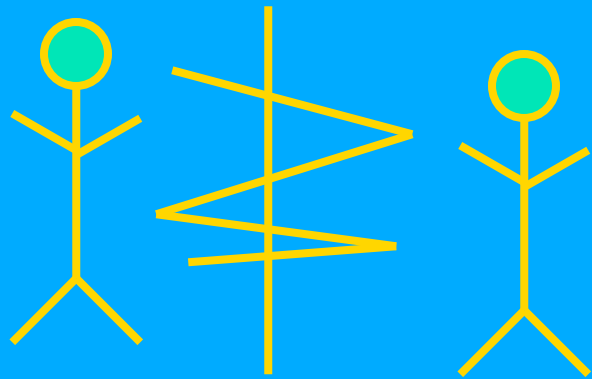


Dialogue



Discussion

Dialogue



Knowledge



Insight

Knowing



Wonder

Memorex



Live

Decision



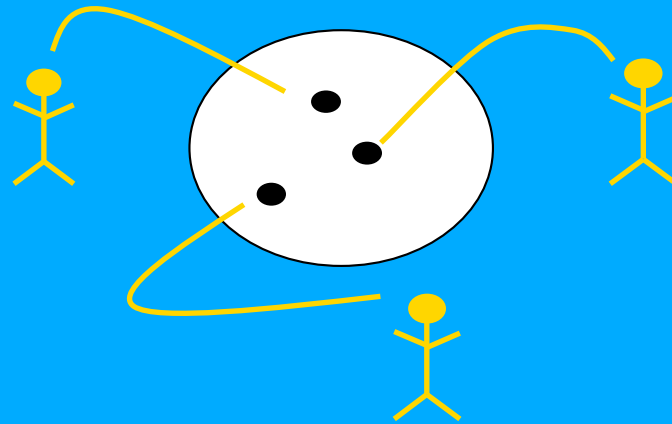
Choice

Fragmentation



Wholeness

Ways to Enter Into Dialogue



- **Listening in silence.**
- **Not voting in your mind.**
- **Suspending assumptions.**
- **Listening with a beginner's mind.**

Key Points

- **The internal chatter in our minds often keeps one from truly listening.**
- **Discussion often fall into ping pong behavior where each party is seeking to convince the other person they are “right.”**
- **Dialogue is looking for the flow of meaning. It requires openness, deep curiosity and the suspension of noble certainties.**

Ladder of Inference

Inference ↑

I take **Action** on my conclusions

I make **Assumptions & Conclusions**

I add **Meaning** (cultural & personal)

I select **Data** from what I observe

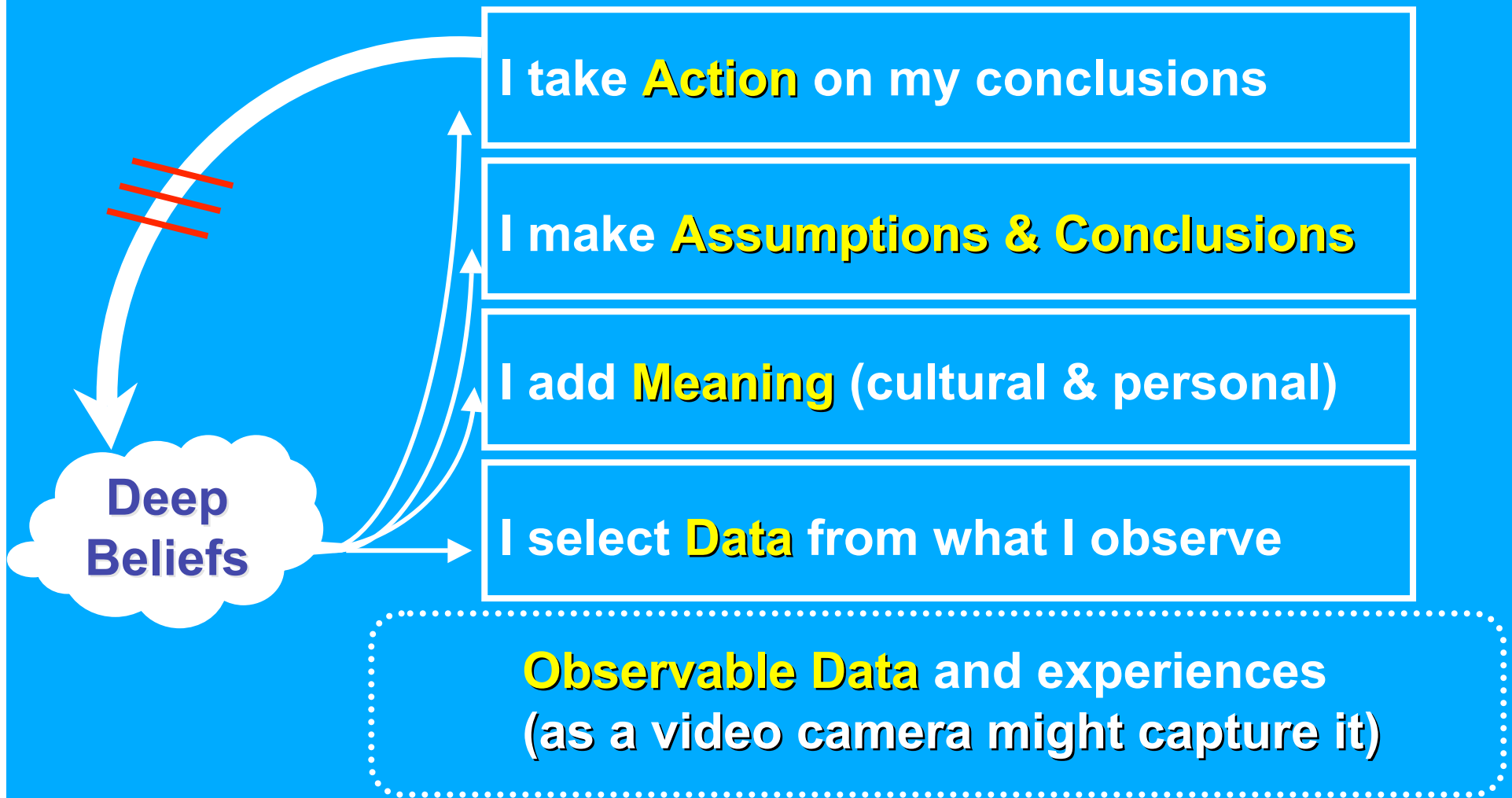
Observable Data and experiences
(as a video camera might capture it)

Key Points

- We process information rapidly and our evaluation is based on a fraction of the available data.
- Behind my actions are assumptions, conclusions and beliefs.
- The Ladder of Inference is a natural process. Brain research confirms we are wired for rapid evaluation of information.

Ladder of Inference:

Influenced by, and Slowly Over Time, Influences our Deep Beliefs



Key Learning's

- Because ladder jumping is so rapid ...
 - I may not be aware of the data behind my decisions and actions. I also may not be aware of my assumptions and beliefs.
 - I may not see the link between the data I am selecting and how it is driving my assumptions / conclusions, beliefs to arrive at an action .
 - I may not see how my assumptions, conclusions, beliefs are shaping my actions.

Key Learning's (continued)

- Therefore many of my actions may be based on untested inferences, but which feel like facts.
- Preview...my actions often create conditions which yield data to confirm my assumptions; so I'm even less likely to see the need to test my thinking!

“A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices.”

William James

(Inquiry) Ladder of Inference

I take **Action** on my conclusions

I make **Assumptions & Conclusions**

I add **Meaning** (cultural & personal)

I select **Data** from what I observe

Observable Data and experiences
(as a video camera might capture it)

Inquiry: Exercise Instructions

- Find a partner who you have not worked with before.
- Partner A – shares a belief they hold about education. (no details)
- Partner B – listens deeply and ask three inquiries to unpack their partner’s belief.
- Switch Roles
- Reminders
 - Listen deeply. Suspend assumptions; listen with a beginner’s mind.
 - Be curious: Look for something that I want to know more about.
 - Inquire: Ask questions based on curiosity.

Ways to use **INQUIRY**

I take **Action** on my conclusions

I make **Assumptions & Conclusions**

I add **Meaning**
(cultural & personal)

I select **Data** from what I observe

Observable Data
and experiences

Gently walk others down the ladder

- *What leads you to conclude that?*
- *Can you help me understand your thinking?*

Draw out reasoning

- *What is the significance of that?*
- *How does that relate to your other concerns?*
- *Where does your reasoning go next?*

Explain your reasoning

- *I'm asking you about your assumptions because...*

Key Ideas: Inquiry

- **Inquiry is the process of unpacking the thinking of others with questions, when they take actions or make statements we don't fully understand.**
- **Inquiry acknowledges that people are busy and issues are complicated. It requires a stance of curiosity.**
- **It provides you with a clear understanding of current reality.**

(Advocacy) Ladder of Inference



I take **Action** on my conclusions

I make **Assumptions & Conclusions**

I add **Meaning** (cultural & personal)

I select **Data** from what I observe

Observable Data and experiences
(as a video camera might capture it)

Instruction for Advocacy Exercise

- 1. Identify a conversation that you desire to have with another individual at work.**
- 2. The purpose of the conversation is to share and explore an idea, action or belief that will contribute in a small way to the vision of the district.**
- 3. 3. Fill in the steps of the ladder of inference**

Instructions for Advocacy Conversation

- 1. Find a partner**
- 2. Tell your partner their role.**
- 3. Read your advocacy script (start at bottom).**
- 4. Respond to 3-4 questions from your partner.**
To signal a time out put your hands up in a T.
- 5. After 3-4 rounds of questions, end the conversation. Share any observations that would strengthen the success of the participants' upcoming conversation.**
- 6. Switch roles**

Ways to use **ADVOCACY**

I take **Action** on my conclusions

I make **Assumptions & Conclusions**

I add **Meaning**
(cultural & personal)

I select **Data** from what I observe

Observable Data
and experiences

STATE YOUR ACTIONS

- *Here's what I 'm doing*

EXPLAIN YOUR ASSUMPTIONS/ CONCLUSIONS

- *From that I assumed/concluded...*

EXPLAIN YOUR MEANING

- *I interpreted those to mean....*

DESCRIBE YOUR DATA

- *I focused on these items....*

Key Points: Advocacy

- **How helpful it is to understand the map of somebody's thinking.**
- **Advocacy takes the conversation to the learning level not a guessing level.**
- **It is not always apparent to us what is under our ladder of inference.**
- **Using advocacy can be discovery process. It invites us to think about data, meaning, assumptions / conclusions.**

Key Points: Advocacy (continued)

- **Advocacy coupled with the question “What do you think.” moves one into the living system paradigm because you are exposing thinking and inviting feedback.**
- **Advocacy is not to be evaluated on the result it achieves.**
- **Advocacy is making your thinking clear and visible to others and engaging in a dialogue about it. The ultimate goal is collective intelligence & collaboration.**

Left-Hand Column (example)

Unspoken Thoughts & Feelings

What Was Actually Said

| | |
|---|--|
| | Principal: I would like you to come down to my office. |
| <i>What does he want? What 's wrong now?</i> | Teacher (Me): Is there a problem? |
| | Principal: We'll find out when you get here. When can you come? |
| <i>Great! I don't have time right now. I have to prepare for my class.</i> | Me: I'll be there as soon as I can... |
| | Principal: I got a call from Mrs. Jones about Jeff. |
| <i>It has to be math - this new curriculum is so hard to teach. Half the class failed the test.</i> | Me: Jeff is a hard worker but Mom doesn't understand that math is his weakest subject. |

Left-hand Column: Debrief Questions

- **What were you hoping to achieve?**
- **What results did you actually get?**
- **Why didn't you say what you were thinking? What did you think might happen if you said that?**
- **How did your unsaid thinking and feeling affect your actions in the conversation?**
- **How might this have affected the other person?**
- **Are there other conversations like this that you tend to have?**

Instructions for Left-hand Column Exercise

- Find a partner (one you have not worked with before).
- Partner A - reads left-hand column case
- Partner B - asks “6 questions - verbatim” and listens deeply. (No follow up inquires)
- Switch Roles Immediately (no dialogue at this time).
- Once you have both shared, open it for a dialogue and revisit the cases.
- If you were unable to answer questions 4 & 5 your partner might have some suggestions here, but refrain from any judgmental statements.

Difficult and Complex Issues

- **Paradoxes**
 - **If I don't say anything, the issue doesn't get resolved. If I do raise the issue, it may make things worse.**
 - **If I bring up conflict, it may destroy the relationship. If I'm not honest, the relationship will eventually die.**
 - **If I don't ask questions, I don't learn. If I do ask questions, I may look stupid.**

Difficult and Complex Issues

- **Common Characteristics about difficult or complex issues:**
 - **Much of what people think or feel most strongly about does not get spoken.**
 - **Each assumes they are acting rationally while others are not.**
 - **Each person creates their own private explanations of the situation, none of which is discussed.**

Difficult and Complex Issues

- **Unintended consequences of not engaging in difficult conversations:**
 - **Opportunities for personal and team learning are reduced dramatically.**
 - **Issues remain unresolved.**
 - **Our beliefs and assumptions become institutionalized.**
 - **A culture of non-learning is created.**

Key Ideas: Left Hand Column

- **The left hand column is our unspoken thoughts and feelings in a conversation.**
- **These unspoken thoughts and feelings often are not examined or shared.**
- **Our inability to examine or test the assumptions in the left hand column limits learning and creates paradoxes.**

Contact Information

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