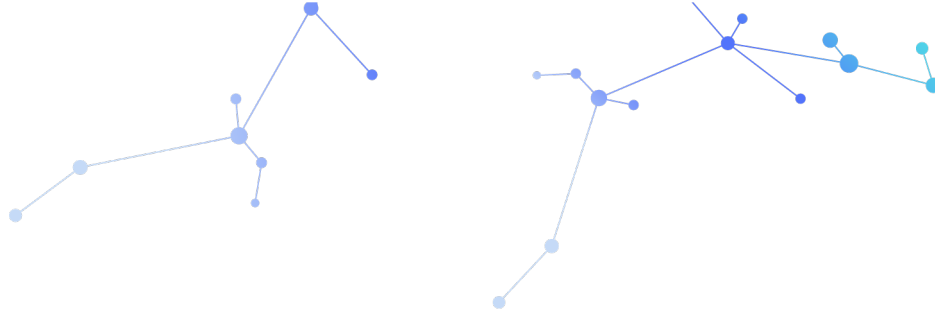




Inside out inclusion

How to make better decisions and create an amazing team culture by valuing and including different viewpoints, styles and people

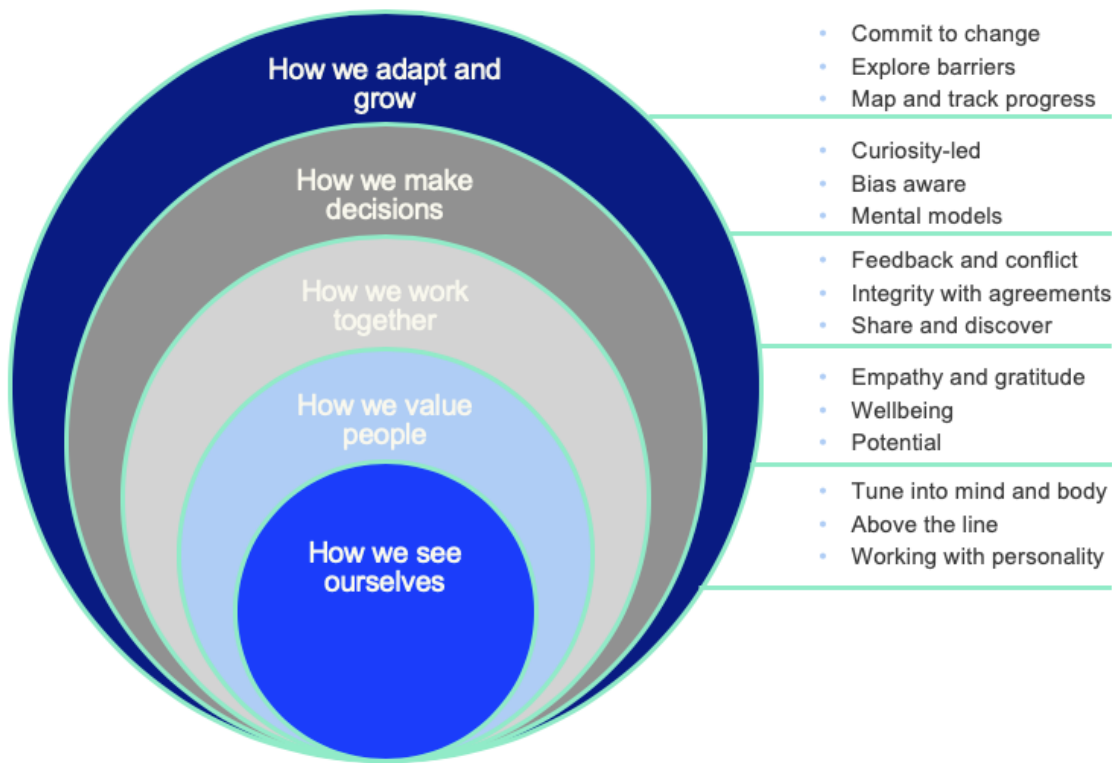
Yolanda Beattie
Director



Introduction

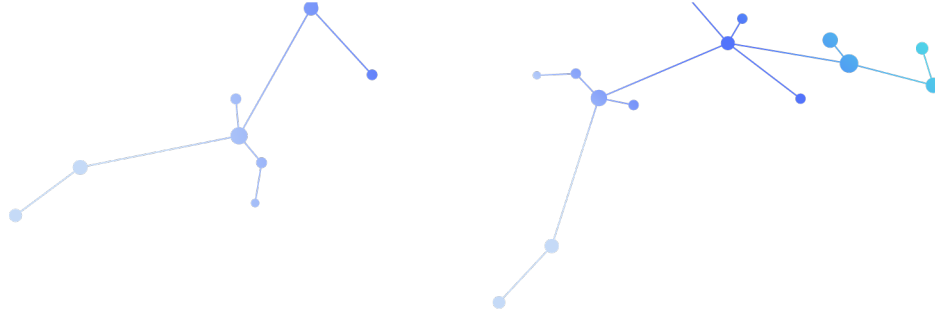
Teams matter more than ever. In a world where there's more to know about everything, bringing together different perspectives to solve complex problems and capture new opportunities is arguably the most important role of any leader in any organisation. Get that right and success is more likely to follow.

I reckon there are five things that matter most in pursuit of that endgame (see below). And if you intentionally cultivate and tend to them, good things happen.



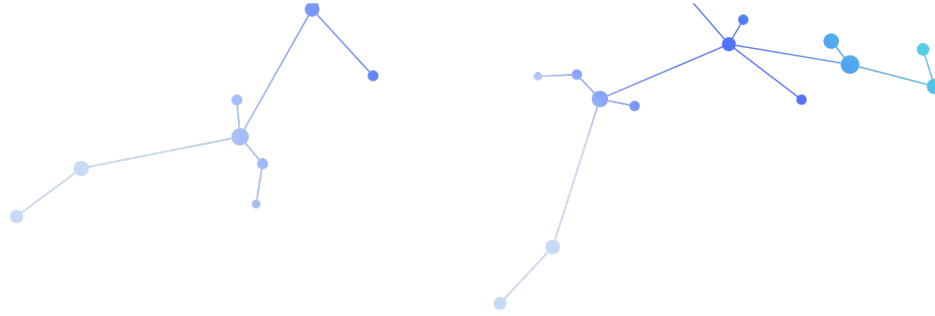
They are all inextricably linked. In other words, you can't make great decisions consistently without doing the three other elements well. And if you just focus on the first 3 and don't bring discipline, structure and energy to decision making, enabled by the ability to adapt to change, then you tend to waste the potential by failing to channel it.

In my programs I create the environment for teams to reflect on how they see themselves, value people, work together and make decisions. We work with current examples as case studies so clients can apply these principles to real situations. Behavioural change tools then help participants to map the change they need to make to shift what they say and do in pursuit of constant learning and growth.



Participants receive tailored pre-reading so they can start to marinade in the ideas before we meet. This pack is a taster of some of this content. I hope it makes for thought-provoking reading!

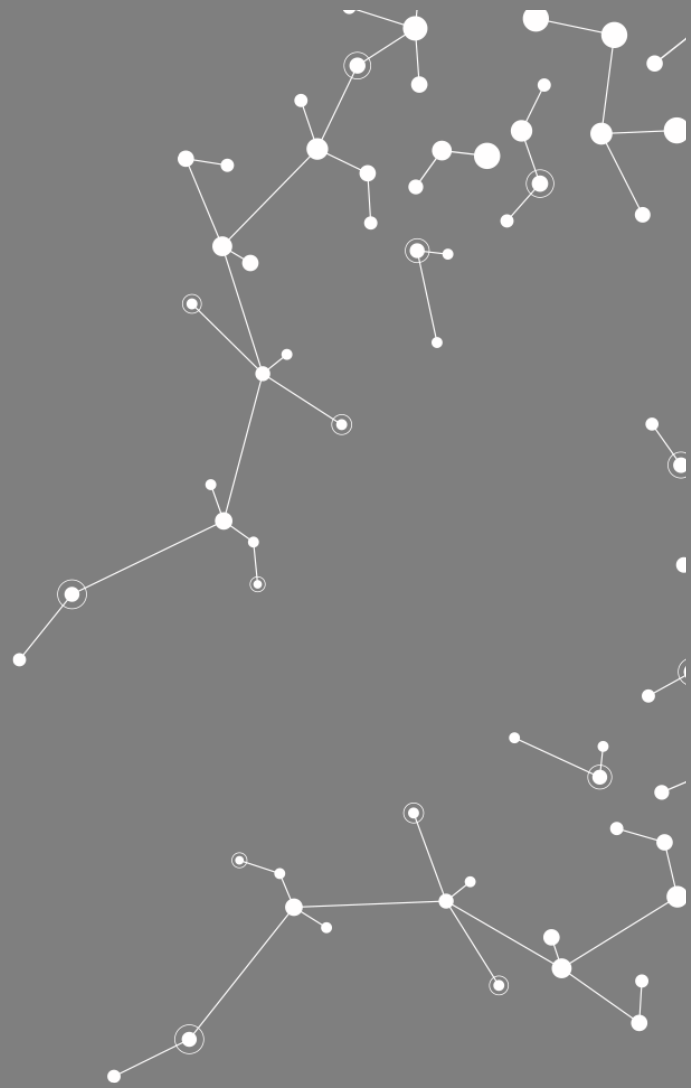
Yolanda Beattie
Director



How to read this paper

This paper is split into five sections for each of the elements of my *inside out inclusion* model. As you read this paper, I invite you to think of yourself like a research project. I'm providing lots of frameworks and reflection questions for you to gather data that allows you to assess how you're currently showing up in life and at work, and what you might do differently to shift your experience and effectiveness in both areas.

It's important you bring a kind curiosity to this endeavour. Your critical brain will trigger defensiveness and will distort the data you collect and how you interpret it. By being kindly curious, you will be better able to see things as they are.



Section 1

How you see yourself

Your physiology

Tune into your mind and body for essential, real-time performance data

Self-awareness starts with understanding what's happening to you physiologically when you're at your best and your worst. Understanding the neuroscience behind your thoughts, emotions and behaviours, and routinely observing your mind and body sensations allows you to hack your brain for good.

How we think - fast and slow

What we say and do is a function of our brain's decision making and three emotional regulation systems.

Decades of research by Nobel Prize Laureate Daniel Kahneman and his research partner Amos Tversky concluded we have two decision making systems – our fast, automatic system 1 and our slow, more deliberative system 2. System 1 is our source of snap judgements that allow us to navigate the world without the cognitive load of tapping into consciousness for every decision we make. It's why we judge on first impressions and are so susceptible to stereotype threats and other cognitive biases.

Two system brain

System 1: Sub-cortex (reactive)

- Monkey (or child) brain; threat system
- Formed by emotions and feelings at the time
- Source of bias
- Automatic sorting tendency

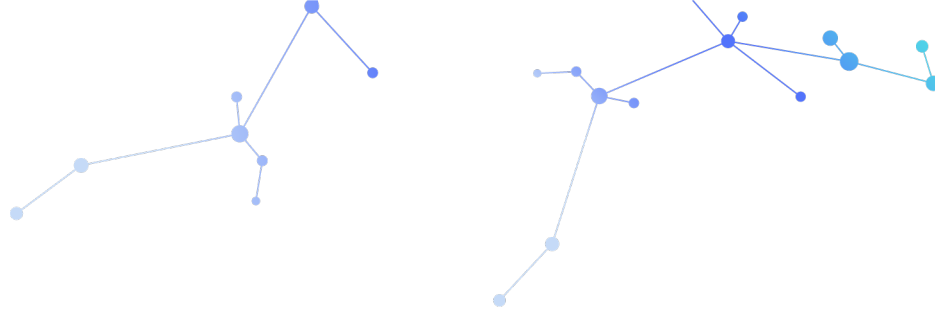


System 2: Cortex (responsive)

- CEO of the brain
- Empathy and emotional balance
- Response flexibility
- Fear modulation
- Insight and perspectives
- Moral awareness

Source: Kahneman, D (2012), Thinking fast, and slow

The comfort we gain from working with and being around people who think and act like us also originates from this slow system. Known as affinity bias, it explains our desire to recruit clones and is the driver of groupthink.



It also explains how we survive danger through surges of adrenalin and cortisol activated by our amygdala – a set of neurons found in system 1. While this attribute was essential for our past ancestors' survival, these days most of our threats are perceptions – indeed illusions – making them a source of inner and outer conflict, and cognitive impairment. When we're feeling threatened, we're more likely to make mistakes and overlook important information while coming up with creative, novel ideas is almost impossible. That's because our brain has drained resources from our deliberative system 2 to charge up our system 1.

Kahneman will tell you there's no escaping this automatic tendency and all of the ways it distorts our decision making. But we can reduce our reactivity and the degree to which we're hijacked by this system, and in doing so strengthen the pathways to our system 2, found in our pre-frontal cortex.

The source of wisdom, insight and human connection

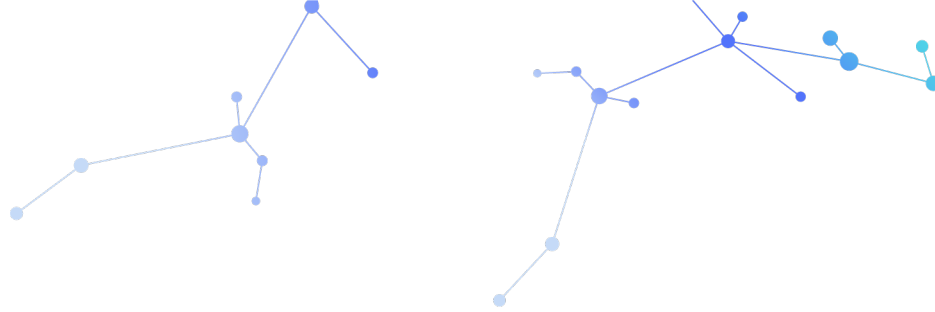
Our pre-frontal cortex (PFC) is our source of wisdom, insight and moral awareness. Our best, most creative thinking originates from this zone. Humility, conviction and ethical decision making also need the PFC to be switched on. When it is, we are more able to observe how our automatic threat system is distorting our judgement and behaviours, and then choose a different path.

When we're connecting with colleagues, friends or family, our pre-frontal cortex is running the show. These positive human connections send the love hormone oxytocin coursing through our system, which soothes our threat responses and makes way for the PFC to do what it does best.

Setting goals, removing obstacles to success (ie threats) and working towards the achievement of goals, triggers dopamine production and puts us in drive mode. Human (or animal) connection also triggers dopamine production.

We need dopamine to turn on the circuits in our PFC that adjust our behaviour in line with our goals. In other words, dopamine is the get stuff done neurotransmitter and oxytocin helps us get stuff done without making others mad or sad.

The interaction of our decision-making systems and emotions is captured in the work of Dr Paul Gilbert, which I've adapted a wee bit below over the page.



	Threat	Drive	Connected
Doing	Picking fights or avoiding danger	Moving towards resources and rewards	Seeking perspective and shared understanding
Driver	Survival; attention hijacking / tunnel vision	Pressure to act, achieve, problem solve	Creation collaboration
Feeling	Anxiety, anger, disgust	Excited	Joy, trusting
Body chemical response	Adrenalin and cortisol	Dopamine	Oxytocin
Focus	Self	Self and task	Self, task and other
Underlying motivations	Fear and shame	Money and status Purpose	Love Play

We can change the brain by observing the mind

We can also strengthen our access to our PFC by observing it. This is the art and science of mindfulness.

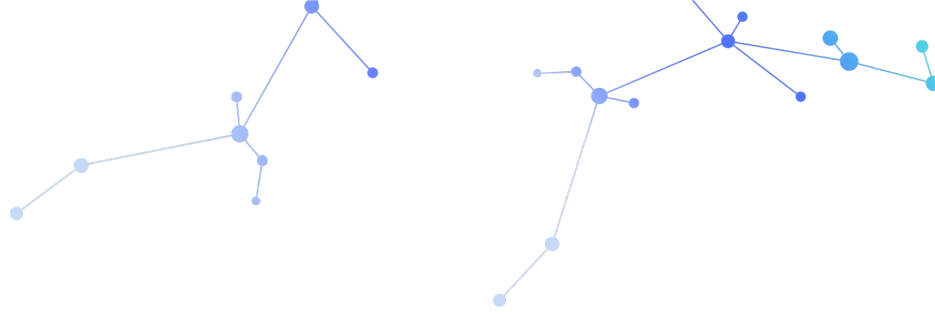
Neuroplasticity means our brains respond to what we pay attention to. Mindfulness is a practice of paying attention to consciousness; meaning thoughts, feelings, emotions and bodily sensations. By simply paying attention, we train the PFC and soothe the amygdalae while also gaining a deeper understanding of where our thoughts and feelings come from, and how they impact what we say and do.

This is a big part of self-awareness. You can only fully appreciate your impact on others if you understand the thoughts and feelings that drive your behaviour in the first place.

Our body is the first responder

To quote my mindfulness teacher, Charlotte Thaarup, “the body never lies”. It’s our warning signal alerting us to danger, fear, stress, love and any other emotion you feel. Our body can respond with a gentle message, like a restriction in our chest, that things aren’t all well in the mind. Or it can send a much more brutal message like hair loss, heart attack or irritable bowel syndrome.

Whatever message you’re getting, the important thing is to listen to it.

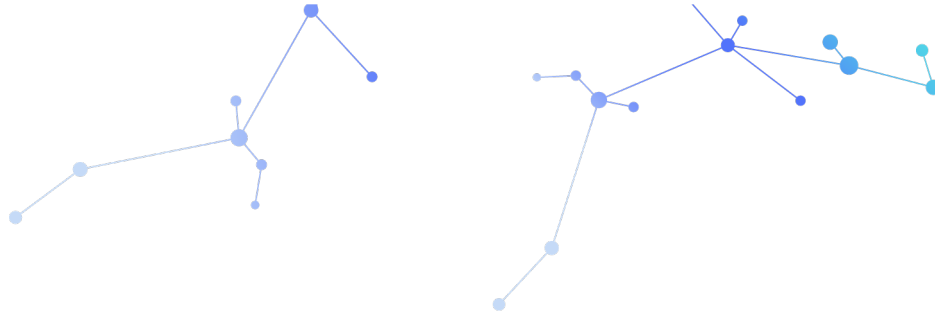


Reflection questions

Close your eyes and think about a time you were angry or anxious at work, in other words your threat state was triggered. Now that you recall that, where do you feel it in your body? What were you saying to yourself? What did you say to others?

What about a time when you were in drive state? Where do you feel it in your body? What were you saying to yourself? What did you say to others?

Now think of a time you were in contented / connected state. Where do you feel it in your body? What were you saying to yourself? What did you say to others? What would it take for you to spend more time in that state? What would you gain?



Above the line

Seeing when you're above or below the line can transform your life, and the lives of everyone around you

Being able to identify how you're showing up and why is an artform that takes practice. I like the Conscious Leadership Group's Jim Dethmer's above / below the line framework as a super simple but incredibly powerful tool to help people see where they're at.

When we're above the line we're taking responsibility for our thoughts, feelings and actions. That means no-one or nothing can make us feel sad, angry or happy, for example. Every feeling we have is of our own making and accepted as just a sensation. That's not to say that external force won't trigger reactions. But we make the choice to add thoughts, which in turn impacts how long we hold onto that emotional energy. The longer we hold on, the more that emotion becomes our mood. What actions we then take are also of our making.

When we own our 'stuff' we are in a place of acceptance.

Being in a place of acceptance, as opposed to being defensive and threatened, lays the groundwork for being open, curious and trusting. That then translates into a commitment to listen and learn.

A team that operates below the line, distracts itself with petty dramas. Well-worn scripts consistently feature a victim, villain and hero. Each ineffectual stance is fuelled by the pay-off each person receives when they adopt their position in the drama. These triangulations are dissolved by calling out the drama and in doing so depriving the players of their pay-off.

Doing the work to be OK with being wrong is incredibly important to live a life above the line. The need to be right impacts all of us to various degrees. For me, it was probably the biggest interference I had to resolve if I wanted to live an extraordinary life.

I hated being wrong and conversely loved being right. It made me an overly controlling friend, sister and partner, and meant I always had to be the first and last person to talk. I did a lot of work to shift that default mode and I'm proud to say it no longer drives me. That's not to say it doesn't creep in from time to time. These days, my biggest risk is being righteous about being wrong. It's a fake till you make it strategy that I need to keep a watch on.

Owens thoughts, feelings and actions

Open, curious and trusting

Committed to listening and learning

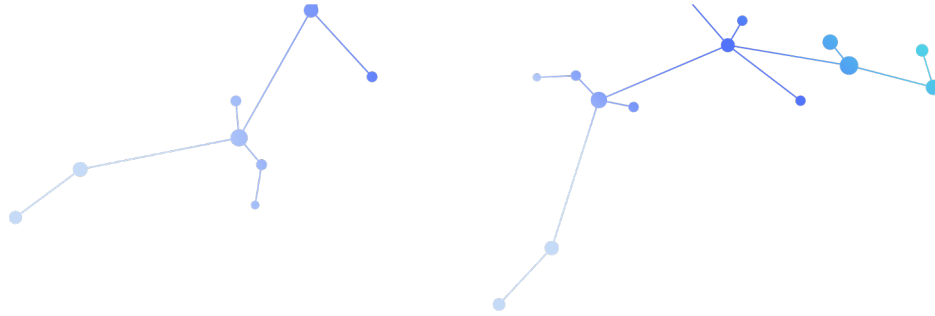
Above the line

Below the line

Addicted to drama as the victim, hero or villain

Closed, defensive and threatened

Committed to proving yourself right



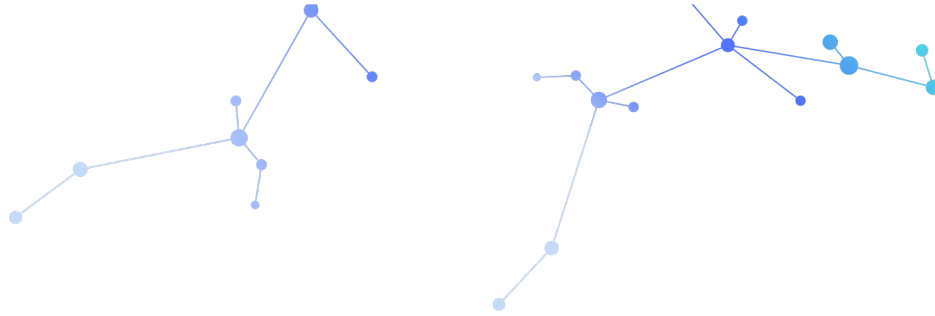
Reflection questions

When do you go below the line? Give a specific example. How do you know you're there?

What does it cost? What do you gain?

What could you do help you see when you're below the line? What could you do to move above the line? How can you support each other as a team?

What change could you make to stay above the line?



Personality

Getting curious about personality can deepen your understanding of how you show up for others

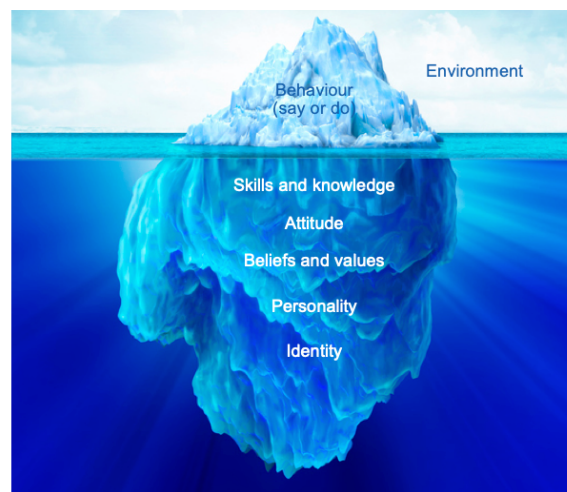
Personality preferences shape our perceptions and behaviours (what you say and do). Knowing yours and others is incredibly helpful for understanding how you show up for others. This in turn revolutionises interpersonal relationships.

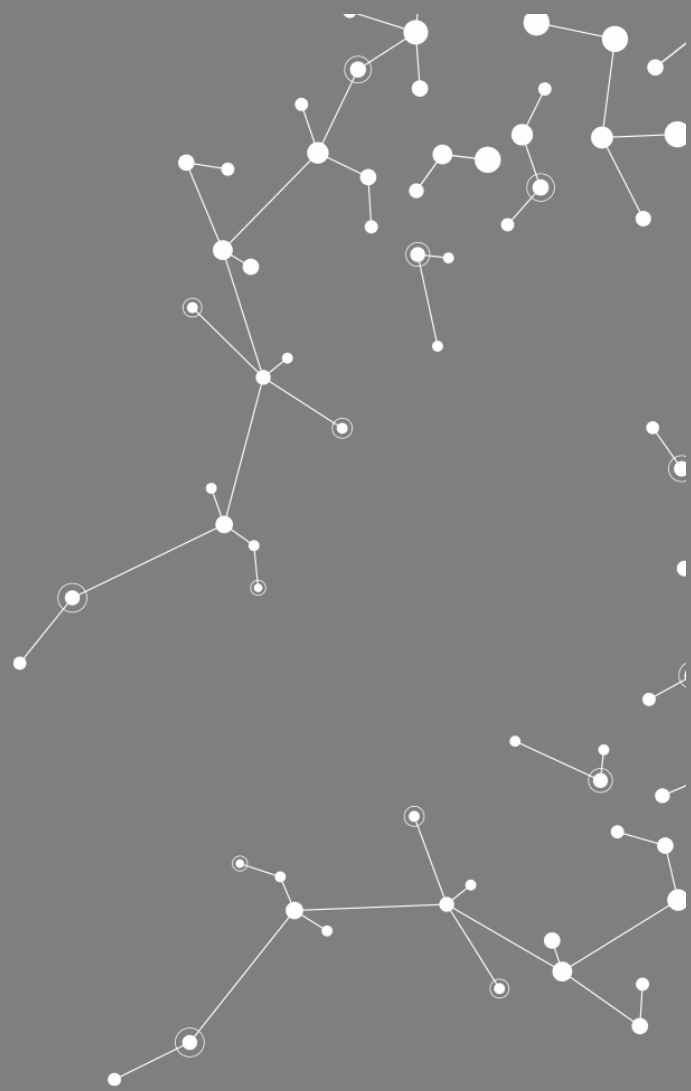
We'll be using the Clarity 4D personal profile framework to quickly touch on this. Based on Jungian psychology, Clarity 4D generates personality insights based on our preferences for gathering information (sensing / intuition), making decisions (thinking / feeling) and responding to situations (introversion / extraversion). These preferences are then translated into four 'colour energies'.

People who have the same colour energy preferences are likely to feel like familiar friends the moment they meet. That's because their automatic brain processes their common styles as safe and likeable (aka affinity bias). People with opposite colour energy preferences are more likely to be perceived as a threat or annoyance. Perception means there are generally two sides to any personality trait. Decisive / insensitive, factual / cold, animated / self-promoting, caring / submissive are all examples of how two different people can perceive the same personality.

Being conscious about how your personality might be perceived and how you might be perceiving others can avoid a whole lot of misunderstandings and upset. Taking it one step further and adapting our style to suit the preferences of others can dramatically improve how ability to influence.

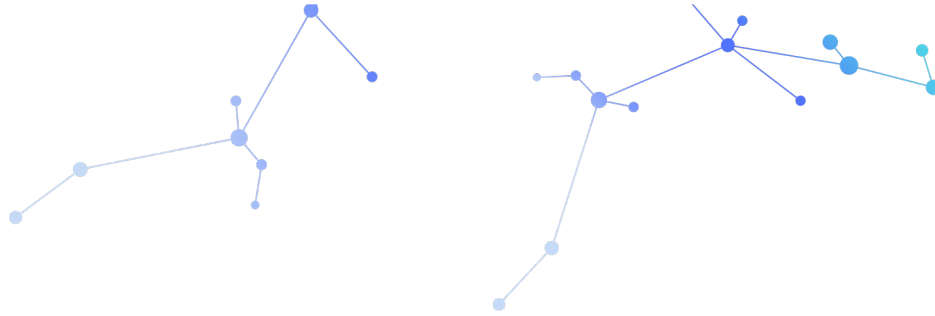
Your personality impacts your behaviour





Section 2

How we value people



Empathy

Connecting to feeling and meaning on the other person's terms

I have to admit empathy often doesn't come naturally to me. It's most at bay when I'm talking with people who have an opposing view to my own or I'm in drive state, meaning my motivation is to get stuff done, achieve and succeed. When I'm in this mode I can be great at making stuff happen but I can miss the opportunities and wisdom that comes from seeking first to understand.

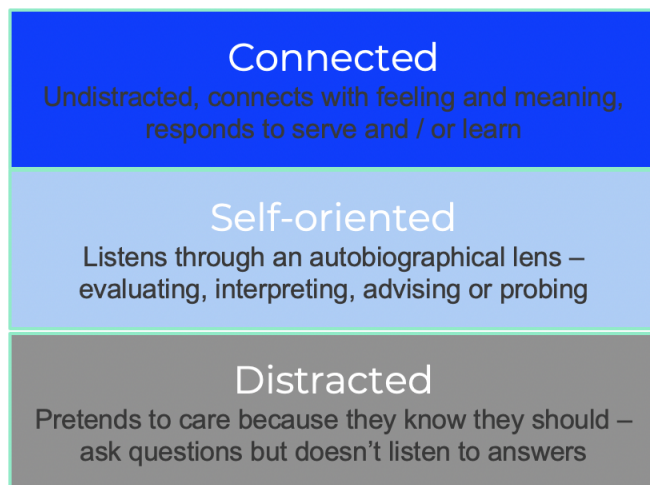
Stephen Covey's work on seeking first to understand, then be understood (habit 5 of his 7 habits) offers brilliant insights into what empathy is and what it's not. Here's a summary:

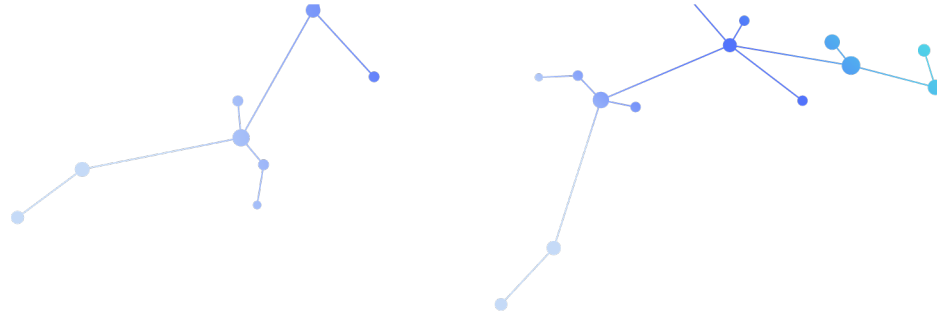
- Intent matters - is your intent to understand (ie be above the line) or to reply (often with the pursuit of being right, ie below the line)?
- Listen for feeling and meaning - Connect with the feelings behind what's being said and the other person's perceptions or frames of reference that are shaping their view (as opposed to just the words and content)
- Empathy is not evaluating (right/wrong, good/bad), interpreting (explaining from your own frame of reference), advising (do this or that) or probing (asking questions to apply logic, usually from your viewpoint). All of these positions are autobiographical projections of your story usually loaded with judgement and often also come from being below the line.

In sum, being empathic is connecting with a person's feeling and meaning without applying your own perspective. I've created this empathy ladder to help you reflect on where you're at in any given moment and what it takes to dial up your empath-o-meter.

I think it's helpful to note not all opportunities for being other-aware are loaded with feelings. Sometimes just creating the time and space to truly hear the other person's position, without the desire or intent to change it, can transform relationships, teams and communities. In a world that's deeply polarised on so many levels, where fear and outrage are becoming the norm, this type of practice can really change humanity.

Empathy ladder





Making empathy a habit

I've learnt that being other-aware is like any other habit - it can be trained and practiced so that it becomes second nature. For people like me, it's definitely harder and takes more discipline. For all of us training our empathy muscle will deliver valuable rewards - on every measure. Here's a framework for making empathy a habit.

1. *Get really clear on what you lose from not being empathic and what you gain from seeking first to understand*

Empathy is the lubricant that smooths all of your interpersonal relationships. That means your gains and losses will be measured in those terms. Think about all of the relationships that matter to you. Your kids, family, partner, friends, colleagues and clients. It's highly likely any conflict or distance in those relationships is the result of one or both of you failing to connect with the other's feelings.

All of your aspirations for these relationships - an amazing relationship with your kids, a strong and lasting marriage, a vibrant and trusting team environment or clients who want to do more and more business with you - are more likely to be achieved if you practice seeking first to understand.

But there's more than trust, love, connection and influence at stake here. Learning new perspectives and insights, particularly in areas where you have strident views, can only come when you seek first to understand.

2. *Know your empathy Achilles heel*

Unless you're a sociopath, all of us can show some degree of empathy. But really powerful empathy is a progression for most of us. I've adapted Covey's framework into a progression scale to help you reflect on where you sit on the empathy ladder.

3. *Reflect on when empathy eludes you*

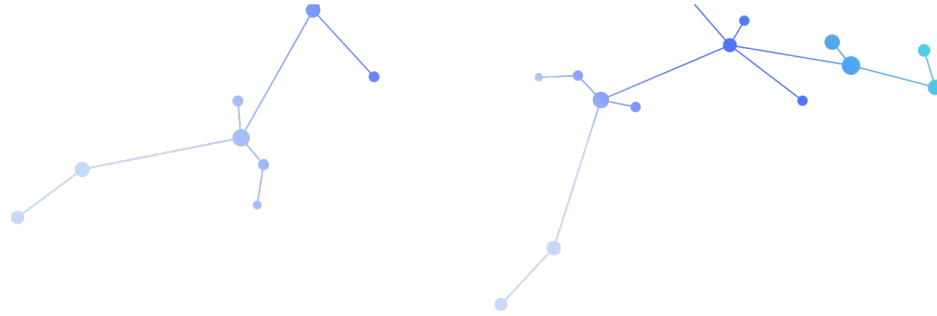
When you know when empathy is most likely to elude you, it will help you detect when you need to consciously switch on your brain's empathy mode. And if you fall short in the moment, you'll be more likely to patch it up later.

For most people the triggers are:

- When you're tired, hungry, sad or stressed
- When the other person's personality type or views are opposing
- When your views are strongly held and your committed to being right (AKA below the line)
- You're easily distracted ie unable to engage your pre-frontal cortex to be focused on one thing at a time. This might be because your phone is nearby, for example.

4. *Train your mind*

We rely on our pre-frontal context (PFC) for empathy. That why being tired, hungry, stressed or sad impairs our empathic capacity. As we know, when this threat state is activated, the PFC shuts down.



A mindfulness practice soothes this threat state and builds grey and white matter in the PFC. It strengthens your ability to manage your automatic reactions (ie your tendency to evaluate, advise, probe or interpret) so that you can be conscious in your response and choose to connect with the persons feelings with the intent of understanding.

5. *Mimic, rephrase, reflect*

I love Covey's framework on how to practice empathy. He recommends starting with mimicking content, then rephrase what's said to confirm meaning and reflect the feeling behind the words.

Intent is really important here. If we're actually motivated to influence and not understand, these steps will be seen as manipulative and insincere.

Taking responsibility for being understood

Seeking to be understood follows seeking first to understand. Covey refers to the old Greek phrases ethos (credibility), pathos (feeling) and logos (logic) as the hallmarks of being understood with a view to influencing others.

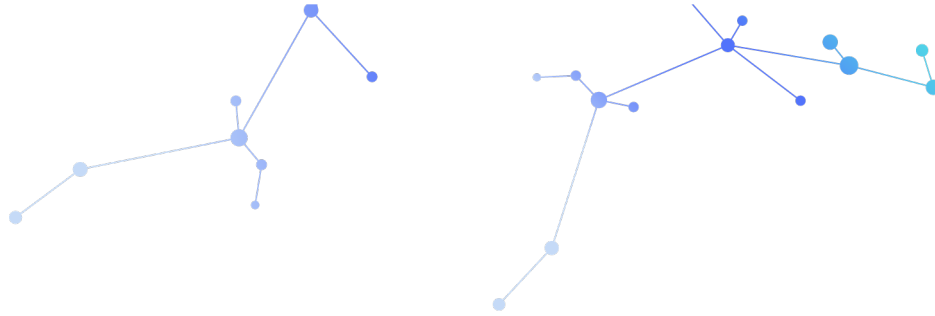
In the workplace we've been conditioned to praise credibility and logic, and subvert or ignore the feelings of others. Yet, it's a basic human need to have our feelings recognised and valued. When we communicate our position in the context of what others are feeling, as well as our credibility and the logic of the argument, our ability to influence the outcome improves dramatically.

I think there's another role for feeling in the pursuit of being understood. That is, being open about how we're actually feeling about a situation. This requires a big dose of vulnerability, a beautiful human condition that has been trained out of us in the workplace. Yet without it, we'll never be fully understood.

I grew up in a family that prided talking about our feelings. I remember being really sad one day about nothing in particular and apologising to my mother about crying over nothing. I was about 12 I think. She comforted me by reaffirming that's it OK to just be sad, "Cry it out!" She said. "We talk about our feeling in this house, never be ashamed about that."

Not everyone has had the benefit of my mother's warm embrace of open vulnerability. Which is why engaging in open and honest conversation about how we're really feeling is so bloody hard for some people. But you simple can't get what you need and want out of your relationships, if you're not clear about your feelings.

I need to make a caveat on this point. Before we share our feelings, especially in the workplace, we need to own them. By that I mean taking responsibility for how they're affecting us. That goes back to living above the line. Otherwise we'll end up projecting our mess on others, leading to a counter-productive conversation.



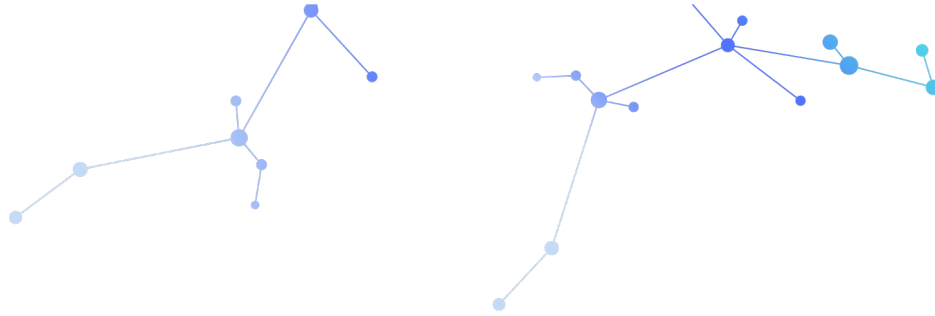
Reflection exercise

Pick a relationship that matters and describe a recent situation where there was an opportunity to connect with feelings and meaning but you didn't.

What did you do instead? Were you distracted? Did you get defensive?

What was the cost in the moment?

What might be the cost over time?

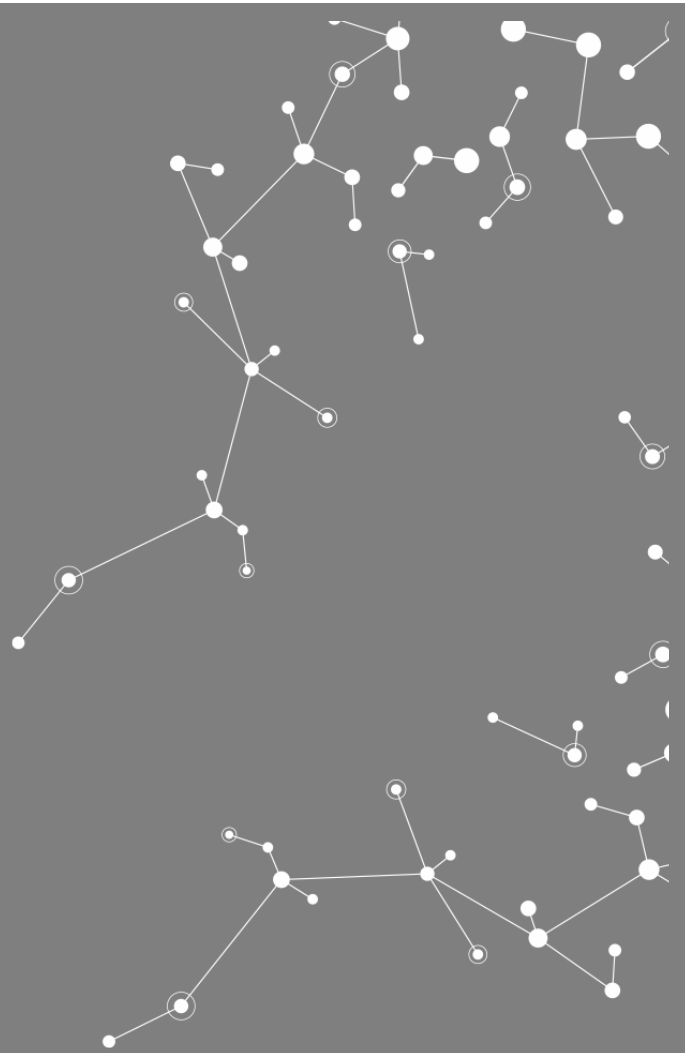


What could you do now to acknowledge and address that? Will you?

How could you approach it differently next time?

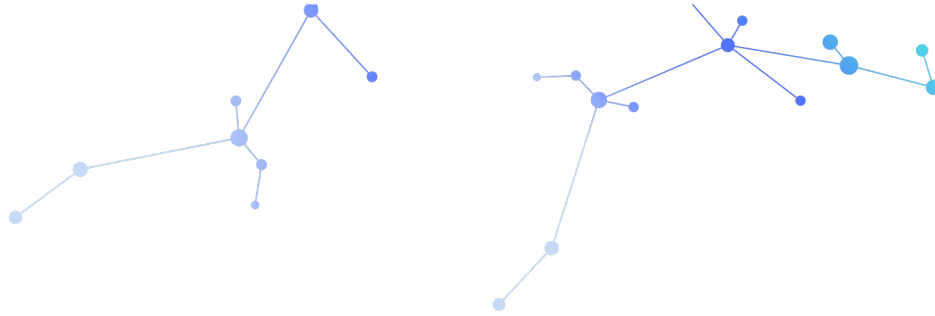
What would you gain?

What change could you make to have more empathy with your colleagues?



Section 3

How we work together



Integrity with agreements

Having integrity with agreements creates the fertile ground on which trust can flourish

According to The Conscious Leadership Group, most people in most organisations only keep about 25% of their agreements. We break agreements in all sorts of ways. We say yes when we don't really mean it. We mean yes at the time and then change our mind or situations change but don't reset the agreement. Or we set agreements with one person and then set opposing agreements with another, effectively undermining the agreement.

When we break and/or undermine agreements, we lose credibility, break trust and waste a whole heap of time.

To unpack this topic, I'll be referring mostly to the work of The Conscious Leadership Group (CLG).

What is an agreement?

Simply put, an agreement determines who will do what by when.

It requires a commitment to gather one's energy and move it in a chosen direction. In this context, commitments are about an energetic experience over and above any moral commitment. That's because when you break agreements, including agreements you make with yourself, you break the flow of energy.

Crafting impeccable agreements

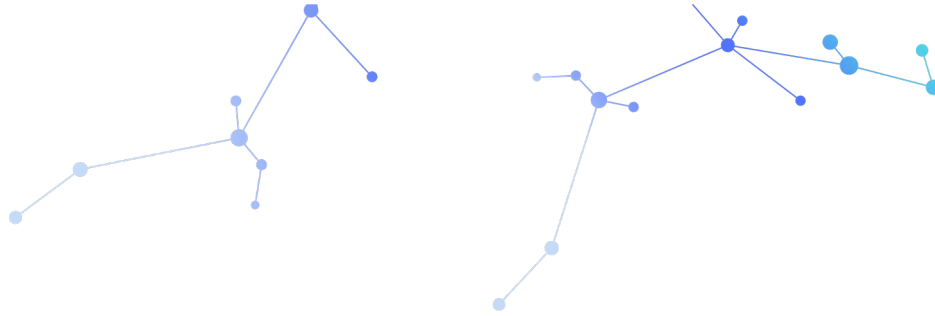
Impeccable agreements require the people involved in the agreement showing up and taking full responsibility for their actions and feelings. In other words, being above the line.

Feelings play an important role in setting agreements – a lot more than we give them credit for. They're a signal that tells us if we'll stick to the agreement and they let us know the cost of failing to. This is another reason why routinely tuning into our mind and body is so important.

We create impeccable agreements when we give a whole body yes. That's happens when your head, heart, and guts are fully aligned. If they're not, you're much more likely to break the agreement in whole or in part.

That means crafting impeccable agreements requires you to take a moment to tune into your mind and body to check they're aligned. If your head is saying yes (perhaps for fear of saying no) but your heart is saying no (because you can't or don't want to fulfil the agreement), then the answer should be no.

Decision rights matter in this context too. Some decisions need to be made by the leader, others are about consensus, with a range of options falling in between.



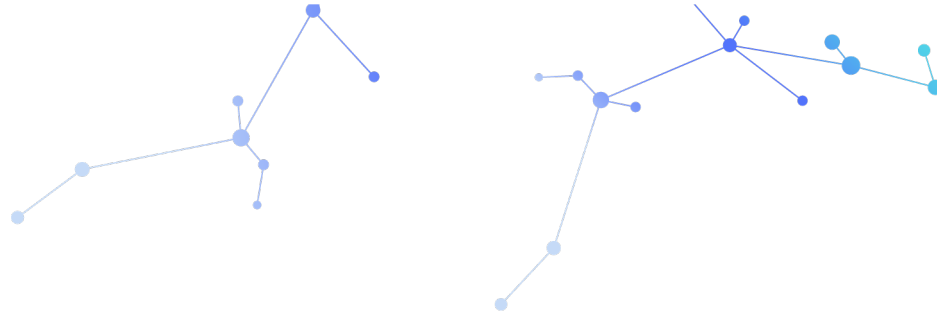
Reflection exercise

Think about a time when you last broke an agreement? How did you break it? What was the cost? Why didn't you say no at the outset?

How good are you at keeping agreements? How are they broken? What's the cost?

How good are you at saying no? What's the cost?

What change could you make to create impeccable agreements?



Share and discover

Invest in the conversations you have to create the biological conditions for co-creative problem solving

“Words are representations and symbols we use to view, think about and process our perceptions of reality, and they are the means of sharing this reality with others...conversations are vital to the health and productivity of a company’s culture”

– Judith Glaser

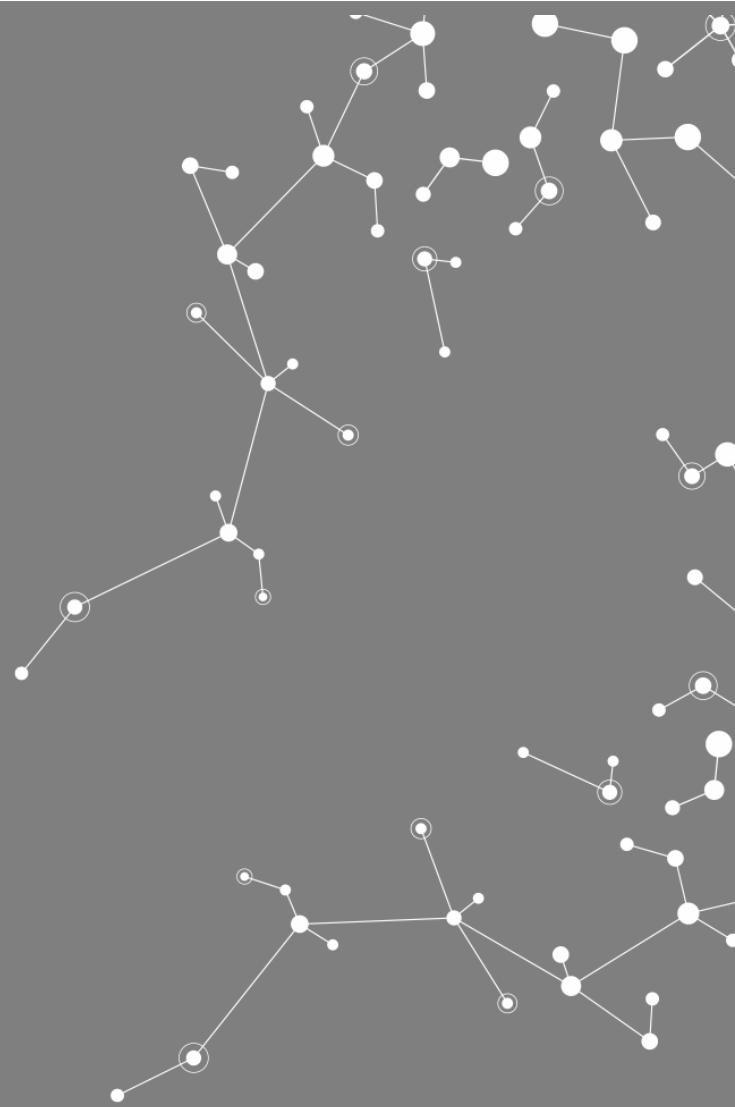
The conversations we have with ourselves and others impact our neurochemistry. In other words, they determine AND reflect if we’re above or below the line. This in turn impacts our relationships and our perceptions of reality.

Because our brain is wired to detect threats, we hold onto the negative five times more strongly as we hold onto the positive. That’s not to say that we have to avoid negative conversations. Quite the opposite! Leaning into difficult conversations is essential for create the culture of creative abrasion that breeds creativity. But it does mean we need to first invest in cultivating trust and professional intimacy that leads to the psychological safety which is essential for share and discover conversations.

Judith Glaser’s work on Conversational Intelligence™ provides a fantastic framework to reflect on the conversations we have, and what you can do to have level III conversations when it matters.

POWER & INFLUENCE

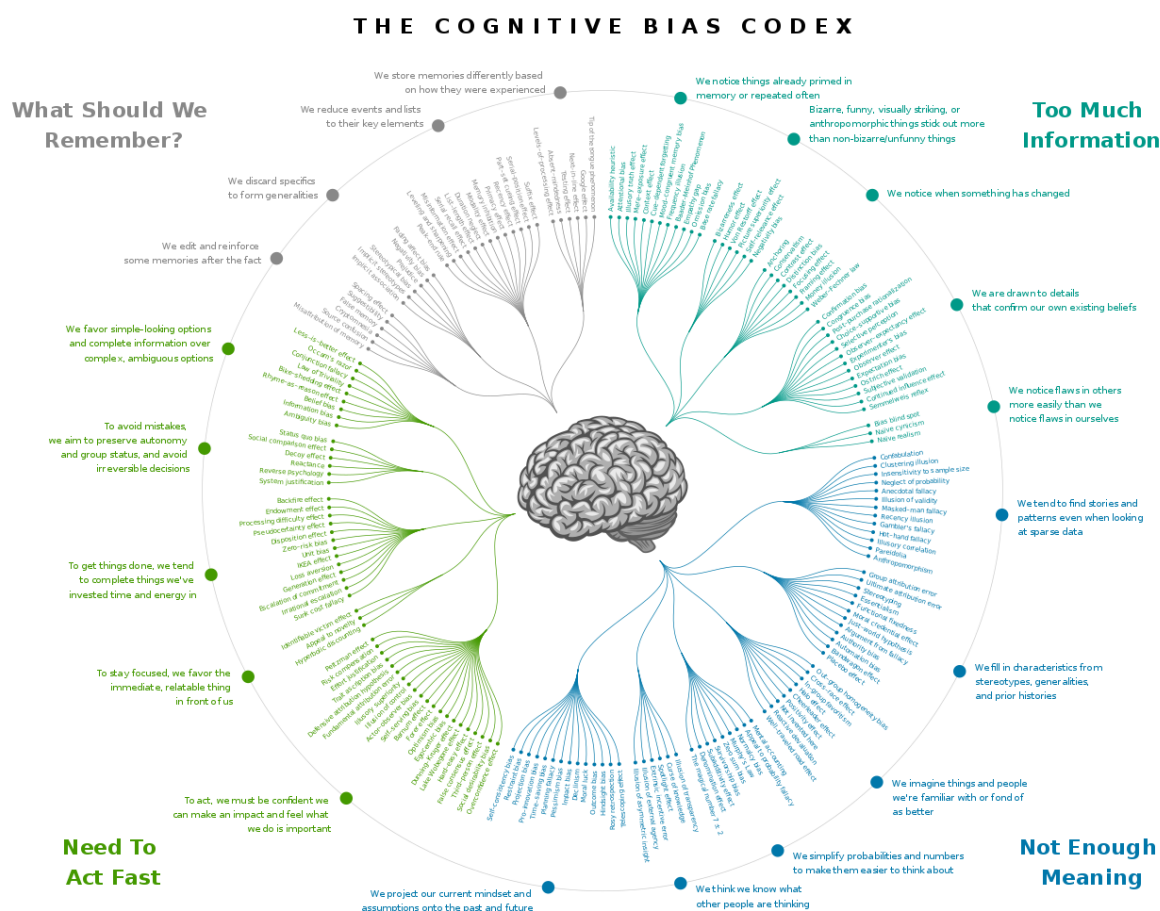
	INTERACTION DYNAMICS	IMPACT
LEVEL I 	“TELL & ASK” <i>Telling what is on your mind (I-centric)</i>	TRANSACTIONAL INFLUENCE <i>Influence through information sharing</i>
LEVEL II FINITE 	“ADVOCATE & INQUIRE” <i>Influence others to your position</i>	POSITIONAL INFLUENCE <i>Influence through personal or positional power</i>
LEVEL III INFINITE 	“SHARE & DISCOVER” <i>Releasing energy to co-create influence</i>	TRANSFORMATIONAL INFLUENCE <i>Influence through energy shifting</i>

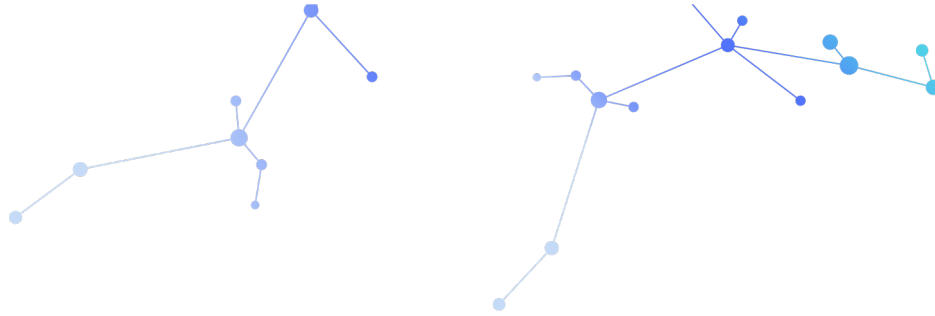


Section 4

How we make decisions

If you talk to the world-leader in decision making, Daniel Kahneman, he'll tell you our biased system 1 brain is impossible to re-wire. Biases are basically short cuts the brain uses to avoid information overload. And while you can't switch off the shortcuts, you can use mental models to engage your slow thinking, system 2 brain to offset the shortcuts.





Mental models

“Mental models are how we understand the world. Not only do they shape what we think and how we understand but they shape the connections and opportunities that we see. Mental models are how we simplify complexity, why we consider some things more relevant than others, and how we reason.”

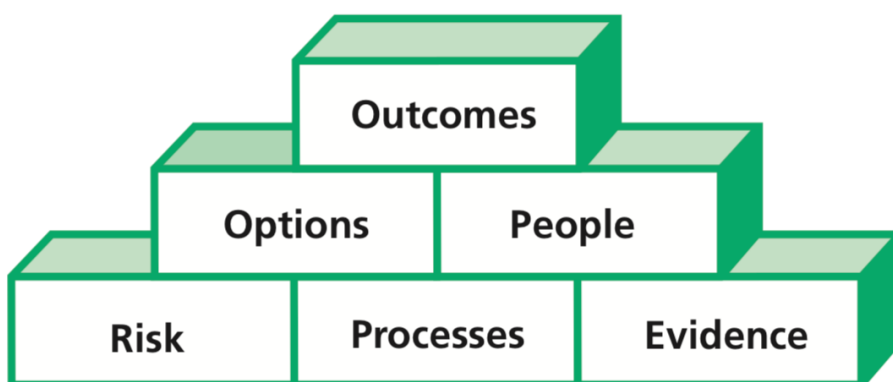
- Shane Parish and the team at the Farnam Street blog

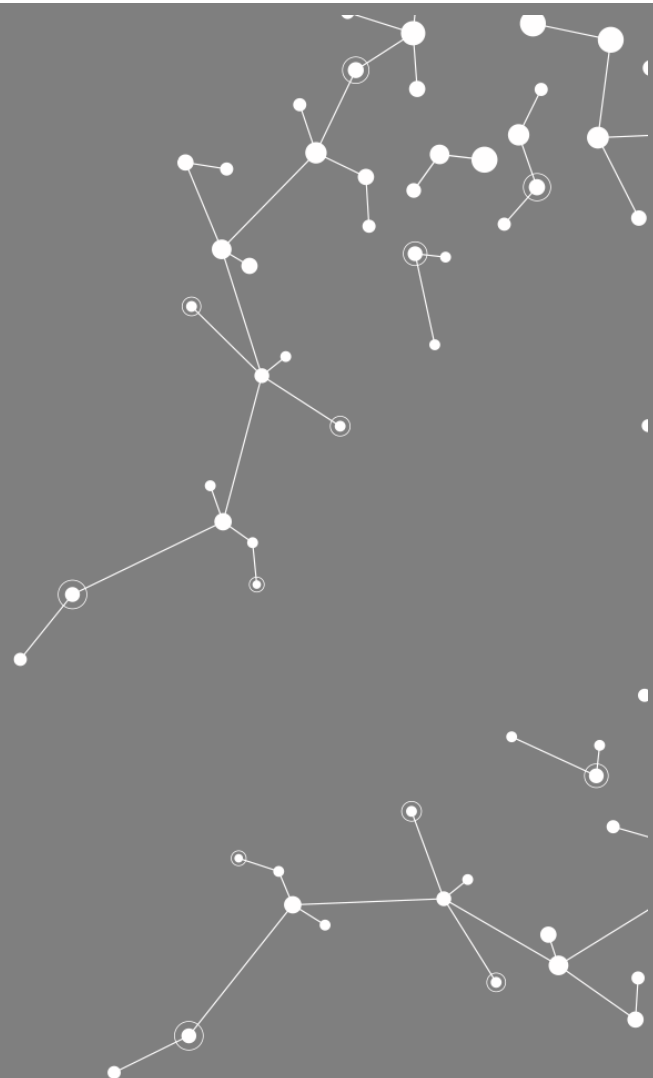
All of these inherent biases can be partially offset by mental models that encourage more disciplined decision making by shaping how we process complexity. There are as many mental models as there are problems to solve or decisions to make. In short, they are endless. All the frameworks and models in this paper are examples of mental models.

In my workshops, I help teams develop their own mental models for team decision making. These tools create a new language for surfacing unhelpful biases and behaviours.

Capturing diverse problem-solving preferences

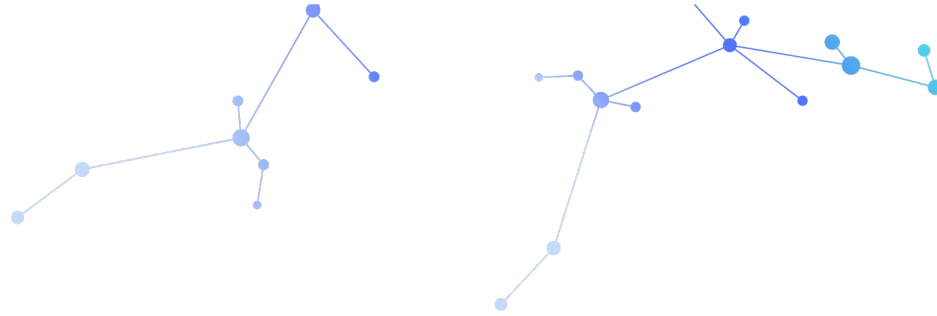
Strategy development or problem-solving tools like design thinking or business model canvases are also examples of mental models. One of the more useful frameworks for diverse problem solving I've come across is Deloitte's. Developed by Juliette Bourke, the model captures the different ways people come at problems and recognises most of us have a preference for two, which can result in us overlooking or minimising the rest. Bourke's research finds that being intentional about taking a 360 degree view by equally incorporating all factors will improve the end result.





Section 5

How we adapt and grow



Adapting over time

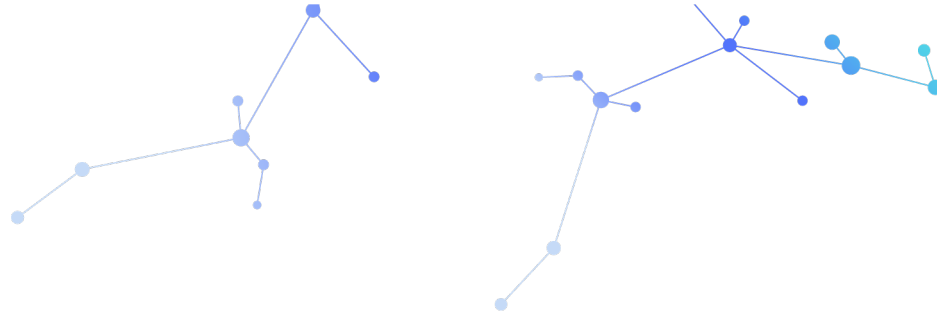
Change is hard and requires a deep investigation of our hidden competing commitments

Change is hard and most of us fail despite best efforts to shift behaviours, even when the stakes are high. Determined to change this common reality, behavioural psychologists Kegan and Lahey, developed a framework that uncovered the deeply embedded barriers to change and allowed leaders to map new ways of being in a format that encourages and enables feedback and shared discovery.

I've seen this tool dissolve learned behaviours from childhood and in the process transform people's life. I incorporate it throughout my programs, ensuring every participant has a detailed understanding of their biggest development opportunities, what gets in the way of making change and what progress looks like. Participants share the tool with their colleagues, creating a culture of accountability and support.

Your commitment goal and immunity to change

Commitment / improvement goal <i>What commitment can you make that will have the most significant impact on you and the team?</i>	Behaviours that work against my goal <i>What are you currently doing /saying? ie what needs to change?</i>	Hidden commitments <i>Worry box: What payoff do you get from your current behaviour? What might you lose if you change?</i>	Big assumptions <i>What are the big assumptions underpinning your concerns? This is likely to connect with your identity.</i>
I commit to...			
<i>What will you be doing / not doing when you achieve that commitment?</i>		<i>Therefore, what are your competing commitments? What do you gain from not changing?</i>	
		Currently, I'm actually committed to...	
<i>What will you and the team gain from you achieving this goal?</i>			



Where to from here?

I hope you're as inspired by these ideas as I am. Doing the work on ourselves so that the best of us shows up at work is an incredibly rewarding process but not for the fainthearted! If you think your team is up for the challenge, then let's chat.



Thank you

Yolanda Beattie
Director

Yo&Co Pty Ltd
T +61 (0)424 186 534
E yolanda@yoandco.com.au
www.yoandco.com.au