

Leading Change in Early Childhood Education as a Systems Thinker

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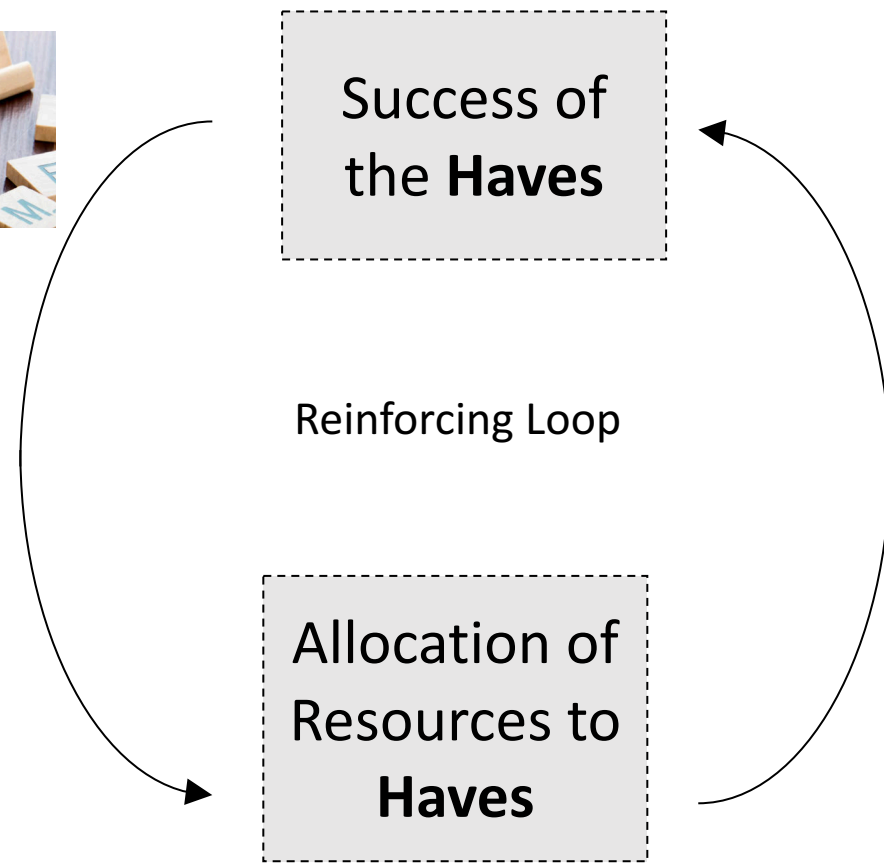
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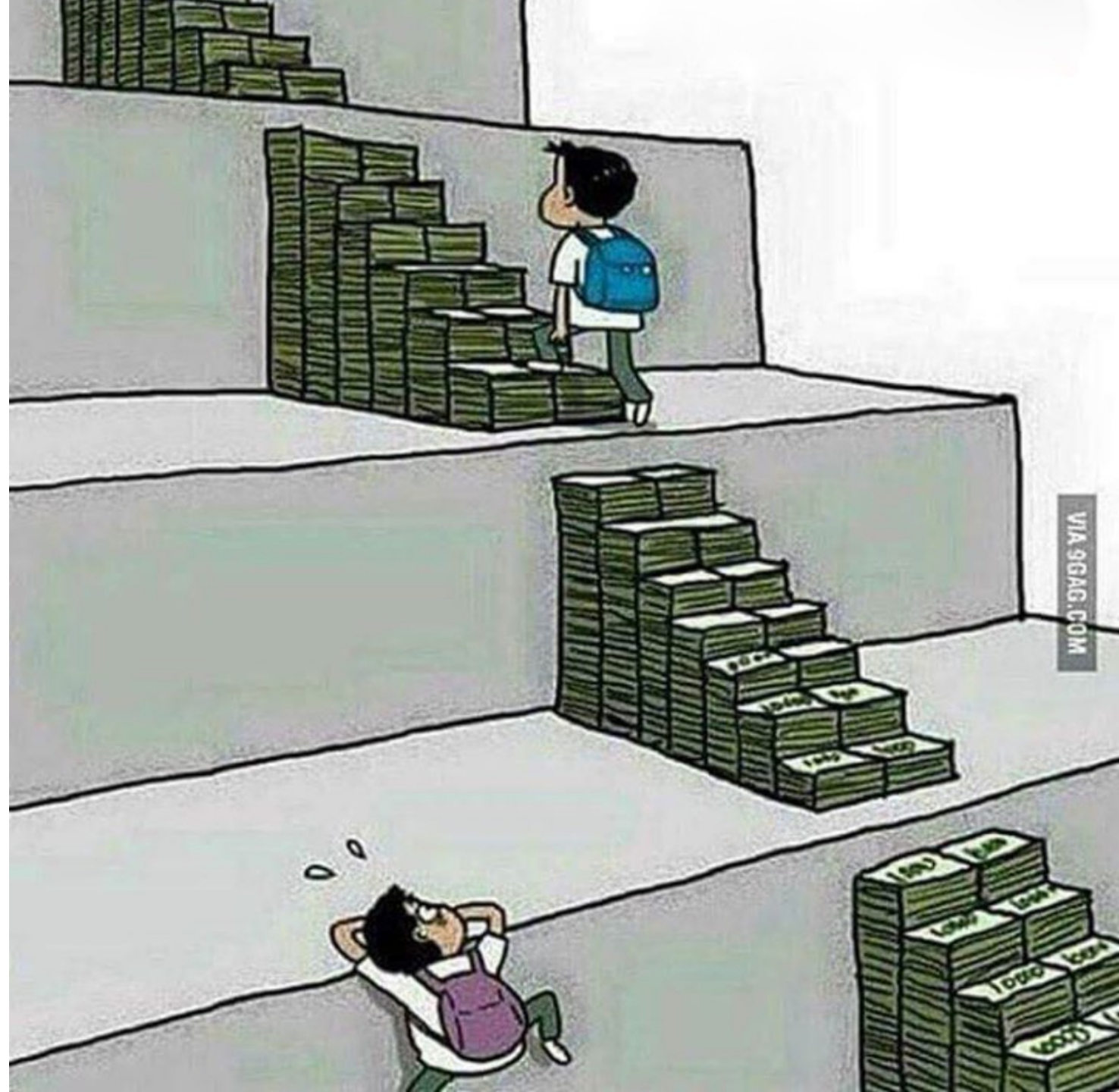


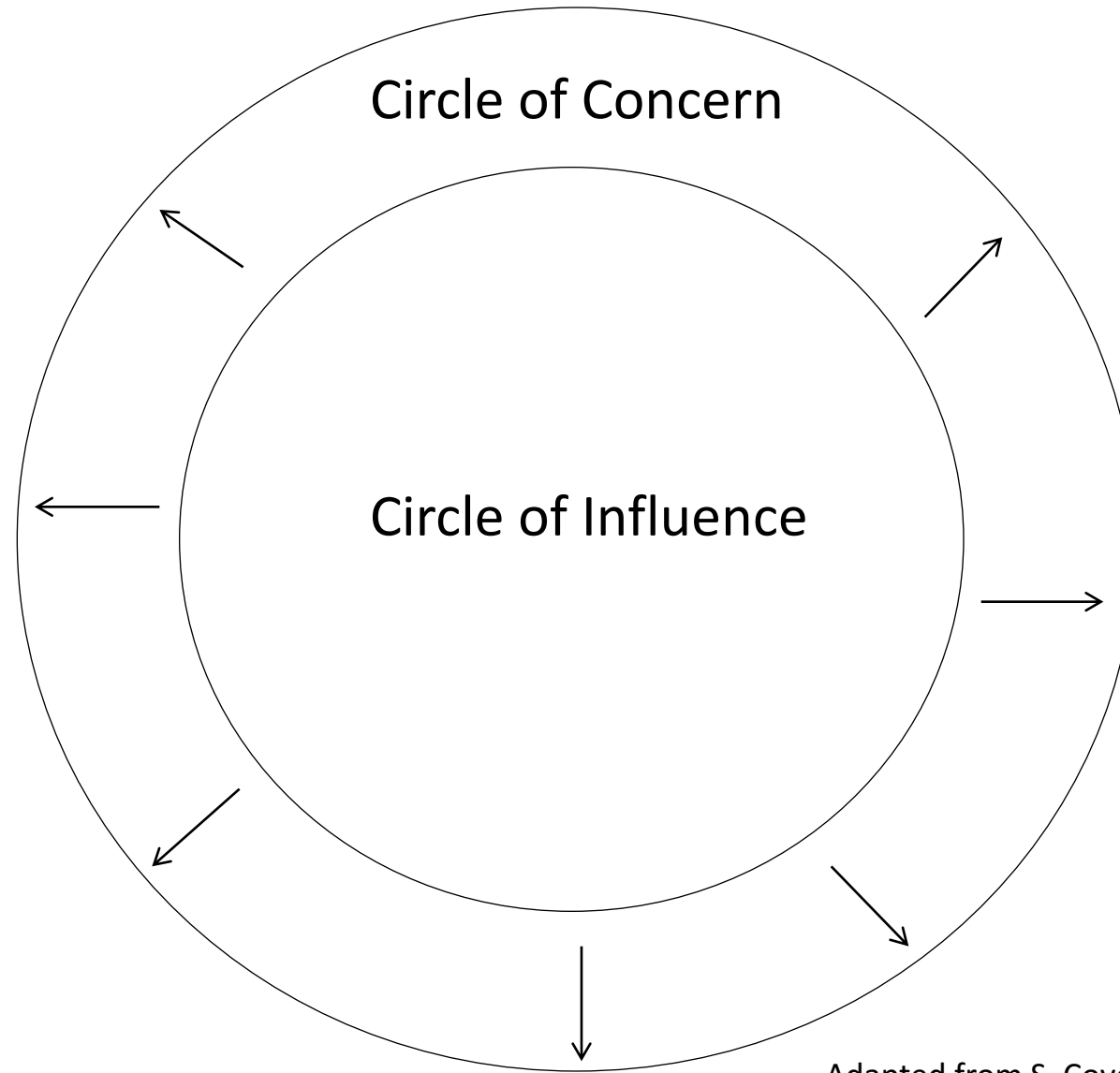
Scramble for Words





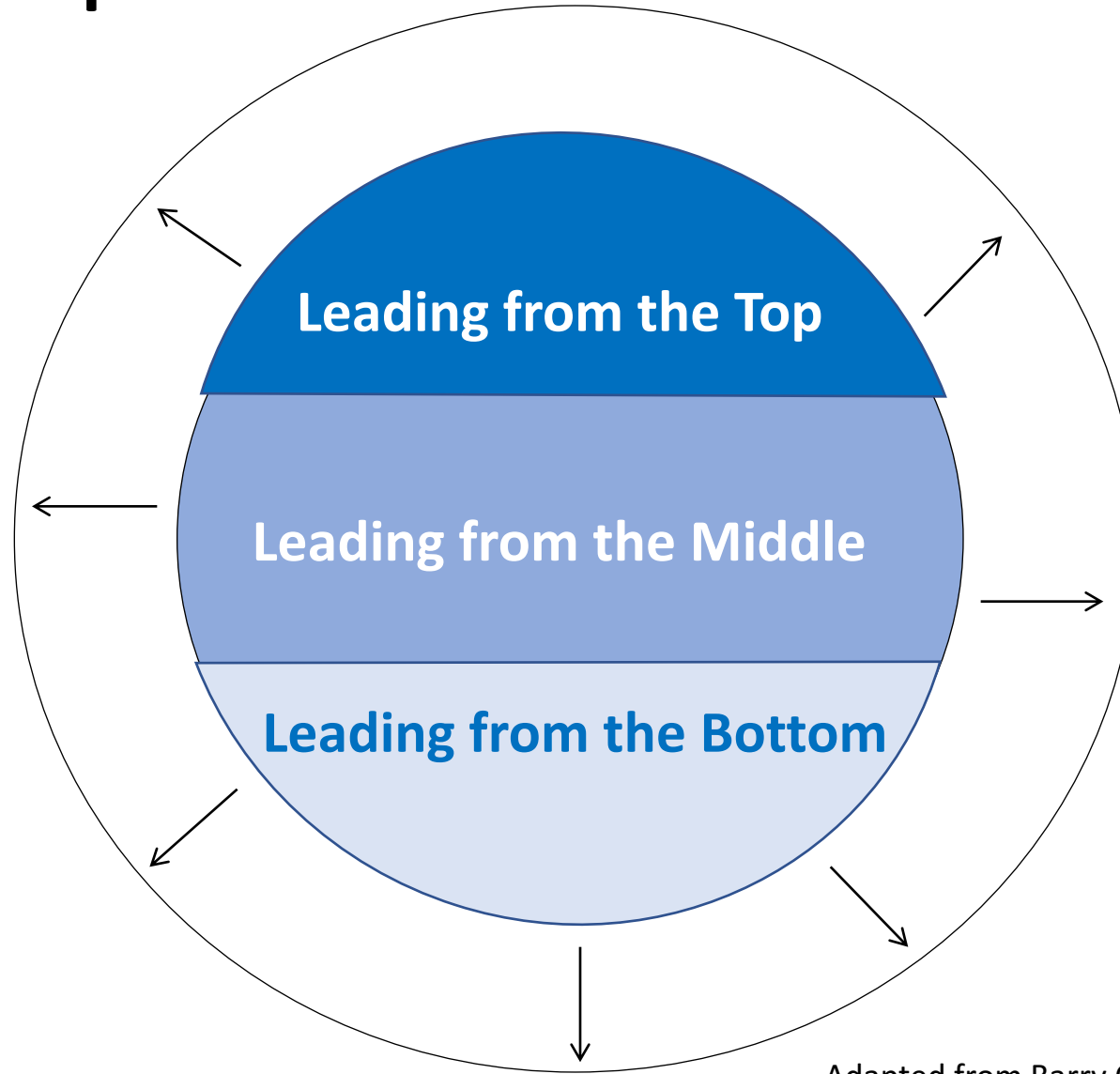
What happens to the Have Nots?





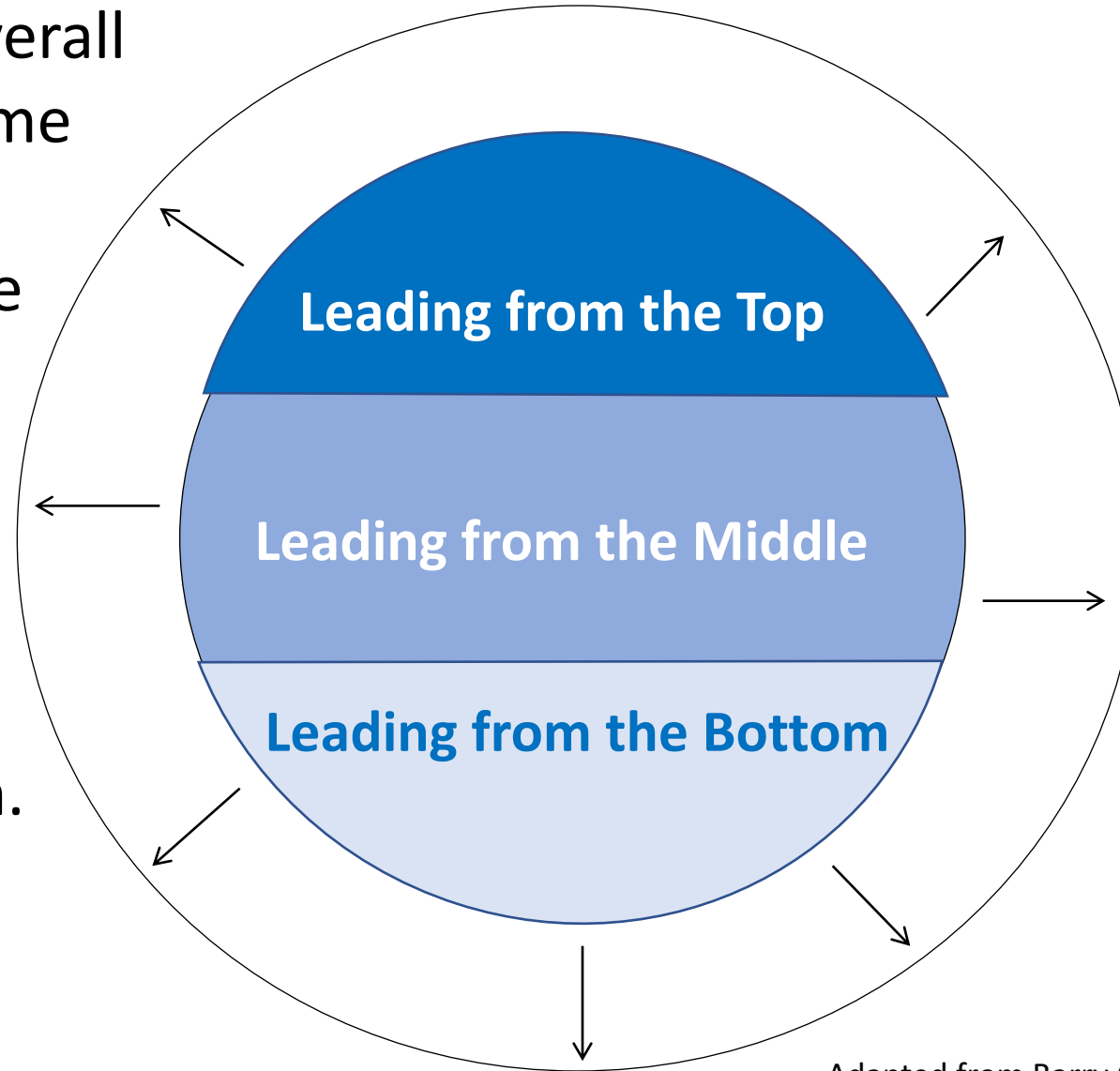
Adapted from S. Covey
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Influential Leadership Positions



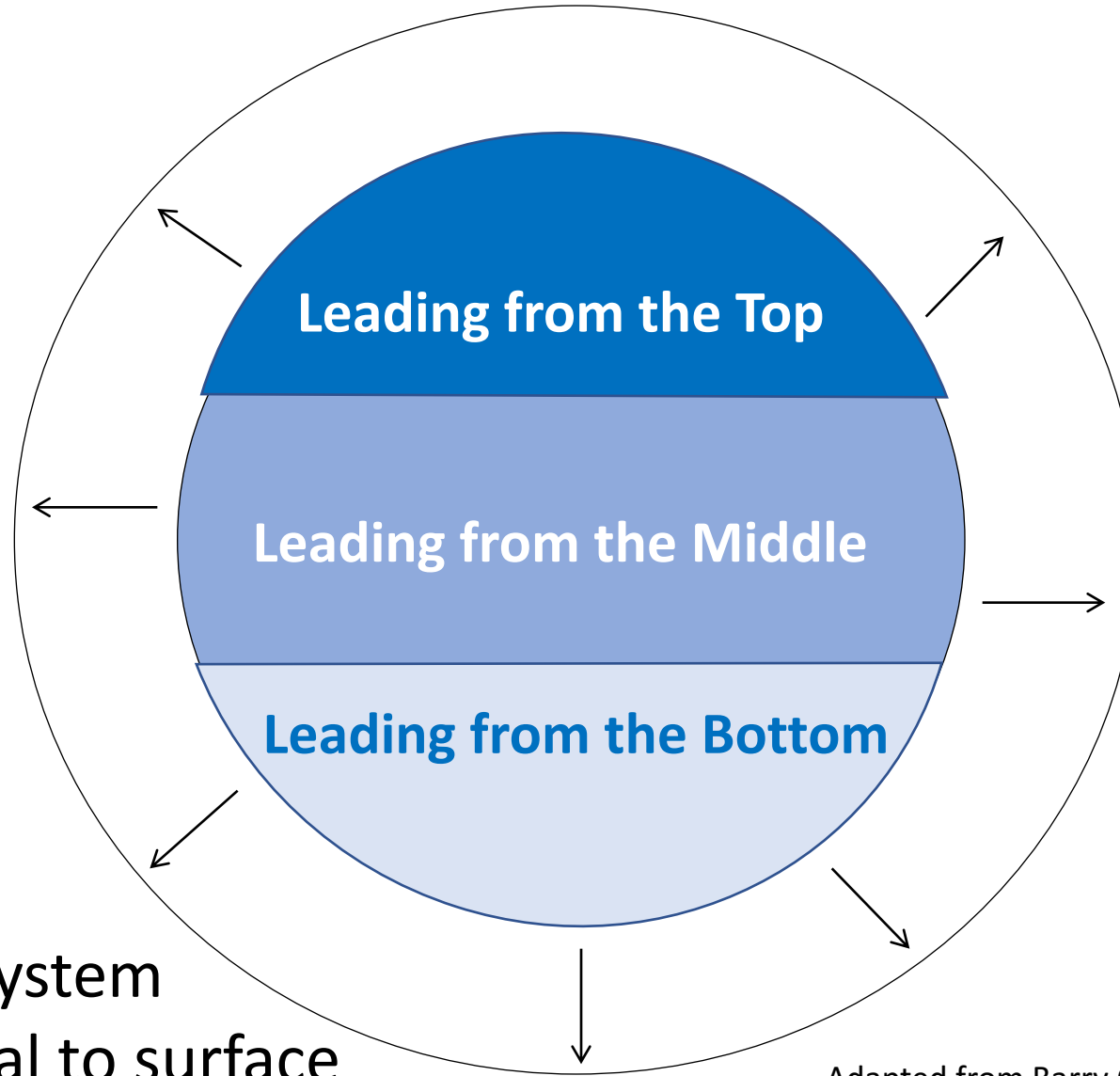
Adapted from Barry Oshry and David DeVane

Top Leaders have overall responsibility for some segment of the organization or some organizational function, whether as division head, project manager, team leader, instructor, and so on.



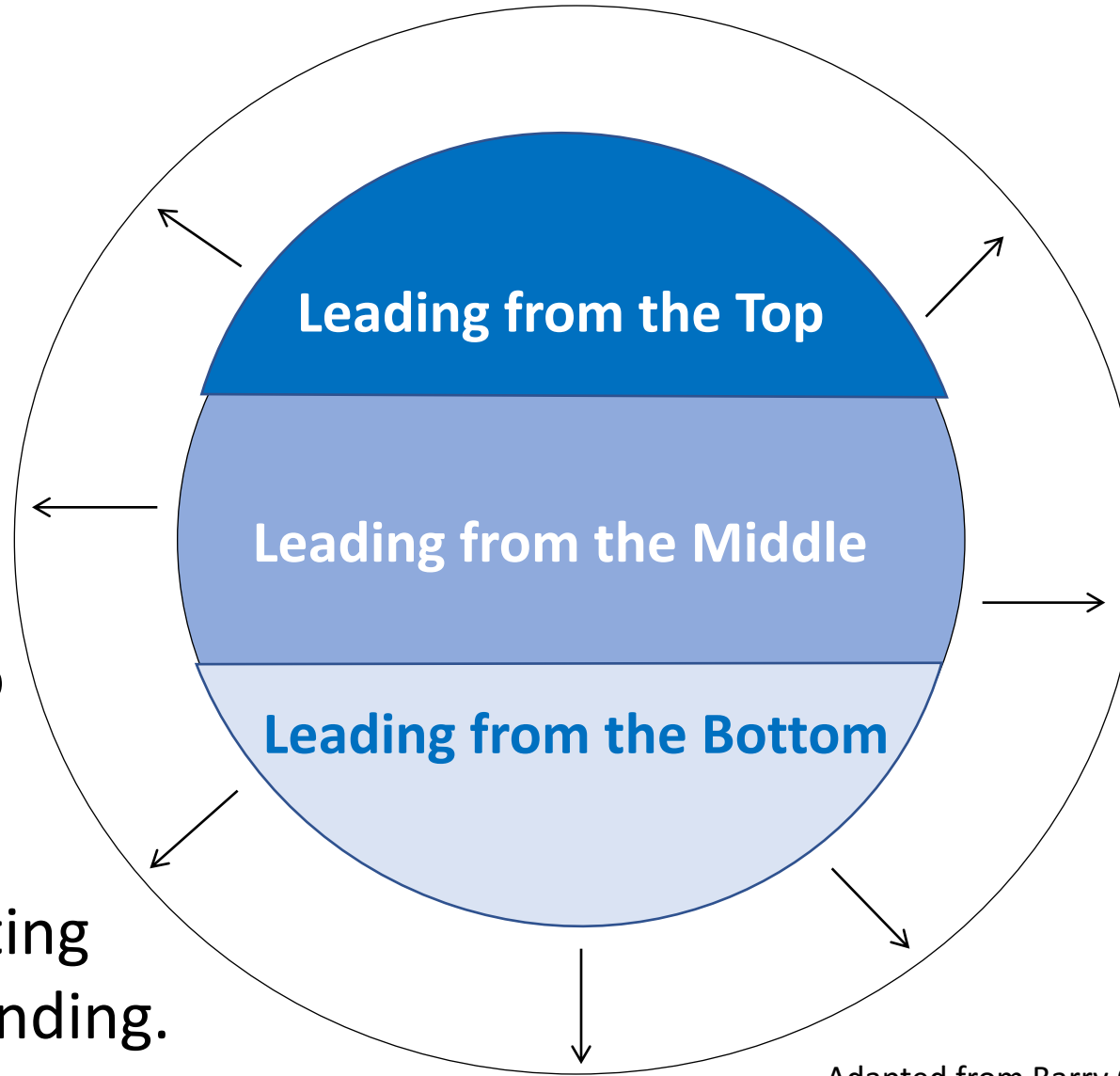
Adapted from Barry Oshry and David DeVane

Bottom Leaders have limited control over the resources needed to move projects or initiatives forward, yet have a unique perspective of the system that may be essential to surface when making decisions and taking action.



Adapted from Barry Oshry and David DeVane

Middle Leaders attempt to function between the conflicting needs, demands and priorities of others. They, too have unique perspectives that are key in contributing to system understanding.

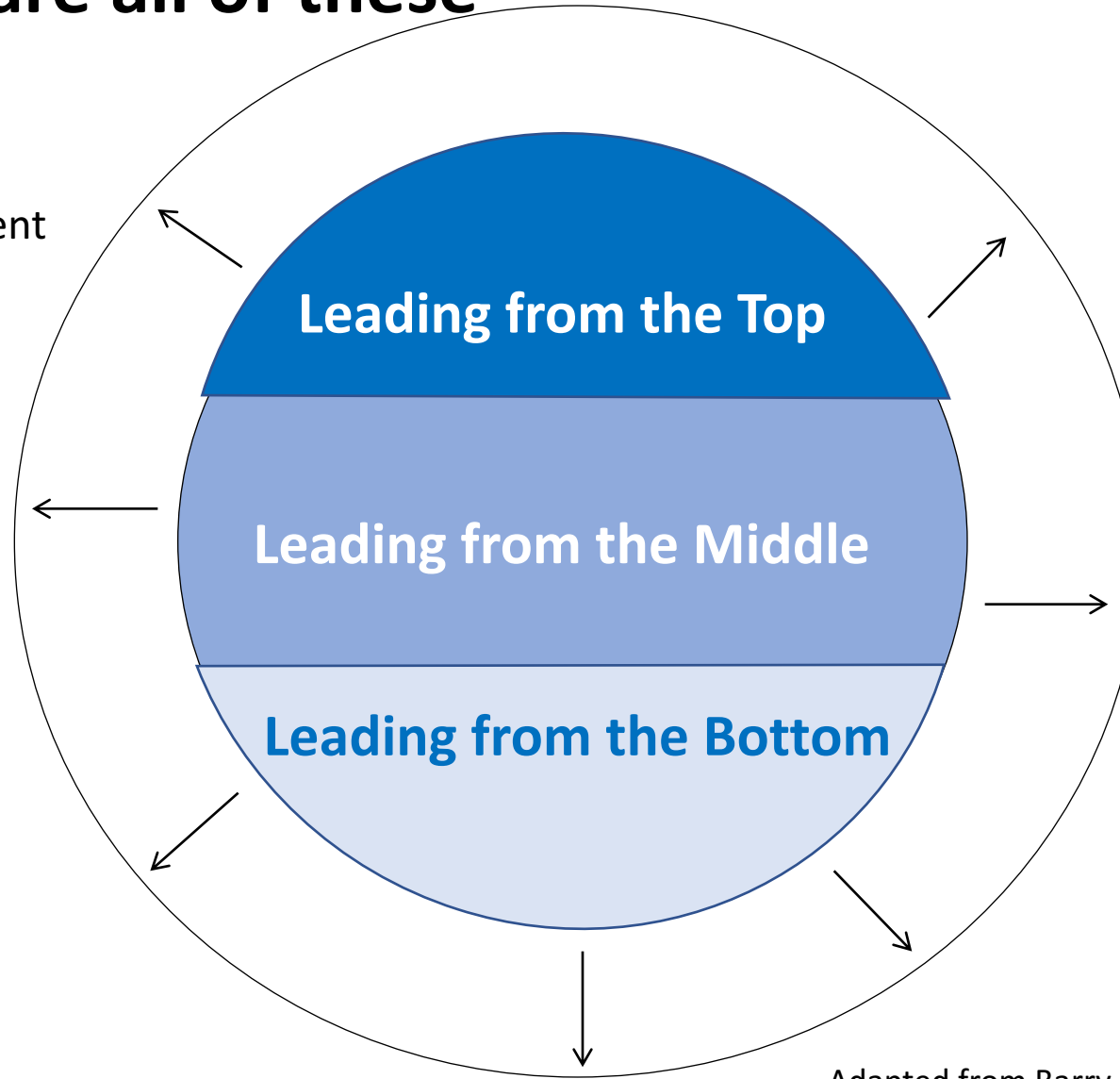


Adapted from Barry Oshry and David DeVane

Most likely you are all of these

Top Leaders have overall responsibility for some segment of the organization or some organizational function, whether as division head, project manager, team leader, instructor, and so on.

Bottom Leaders have limited control over the resources needed to move projects or initiatives forward.



Middle Leaders attempt to function between the conflicting needs, demands, and priorities of others.

Adapted from Barry Oshry and David DeVane

What is Systems Thinking?

Systems thinking utilizes **habits, tools and concepts** to develop an understanding of the **interdependent connections** within systems for the purpose of finding **leverage points** to solve problems.



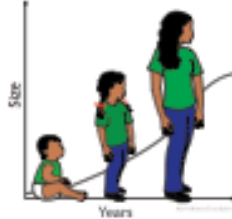
Your system...any system is
perfectly designed to produce
the results you are obtaining.

(Adapted from Carr, 2008)

Seeks to understand the big picture



Observes how elements within systems change over time, generating patterns and trends



Recognizes that a system's structure generates its behavior



Identifies the circular nature of complex cause and effect relationships



Makes meaningful connections within and between systems



Habits of a Systems Thinker



Changes perspectives to increase understanding



Surfaces and tests assumptions



Considers an issue fully and resists the urge to come to a quick conclusion



Considers how mental models affect current reality and the future



Uses understanding of system structure to identify possible leverage actions



Considers short-term, long-term and unintended consequences of actions



Pays attention to accumulations and their rates of change



Recognizes the impact of time delays when exploring cause and effect relationships



Checks results and changes actions if needed: "successive approximation"





Which Habits of a Systems Thinker would help deepen our understanding of this case?

Which habits would help the leaders of the Cambridge School system?

Considers how mental models
affect current reality
and the future



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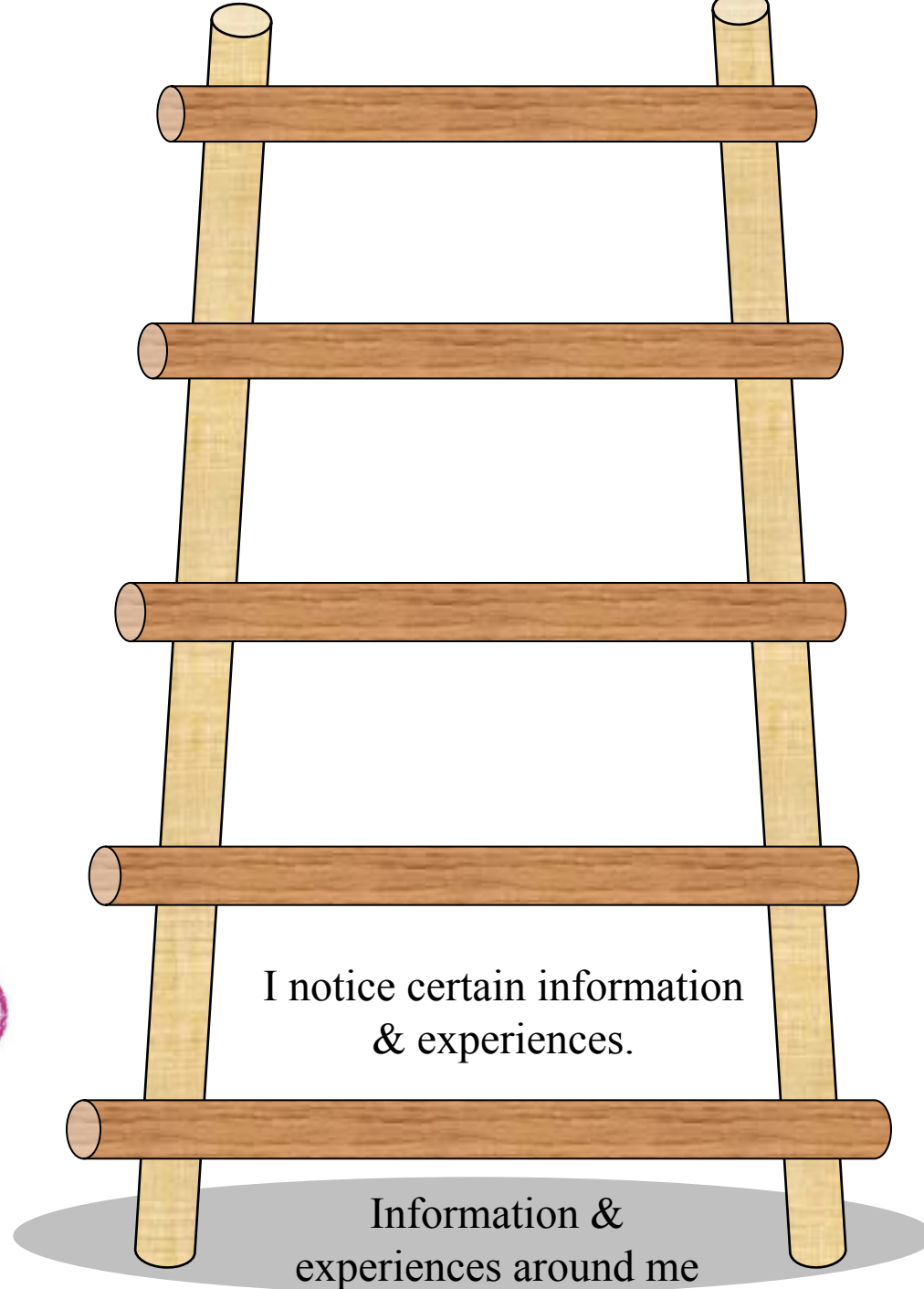
Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action.

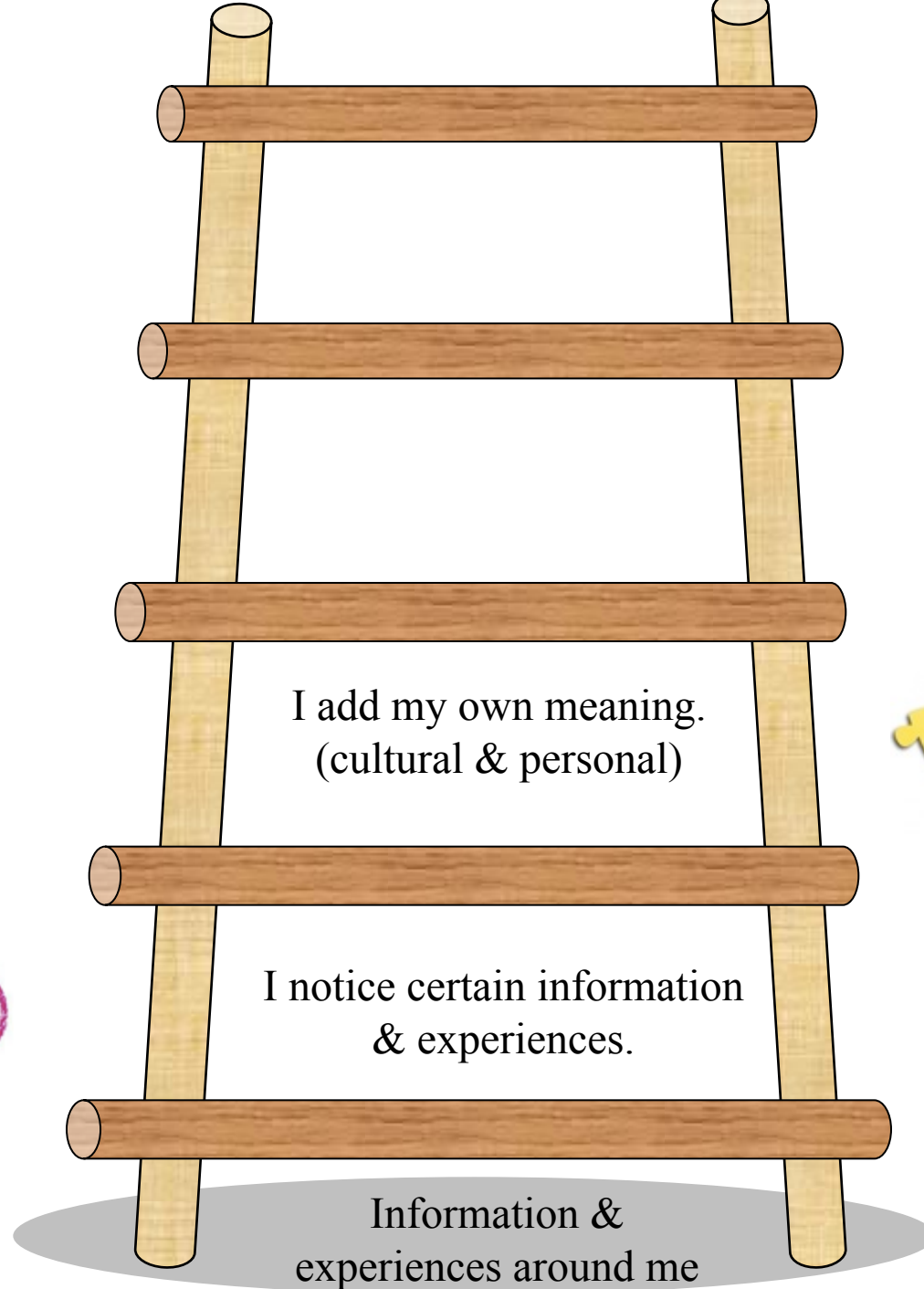
Peter Senge, MIT

Mind Grooving Exercises

Developing
Awareness
of our own
Mental Models







I add my own meaning.
(cultural & personal)

I notice certain information
& experiences.

Information &
experiences around me





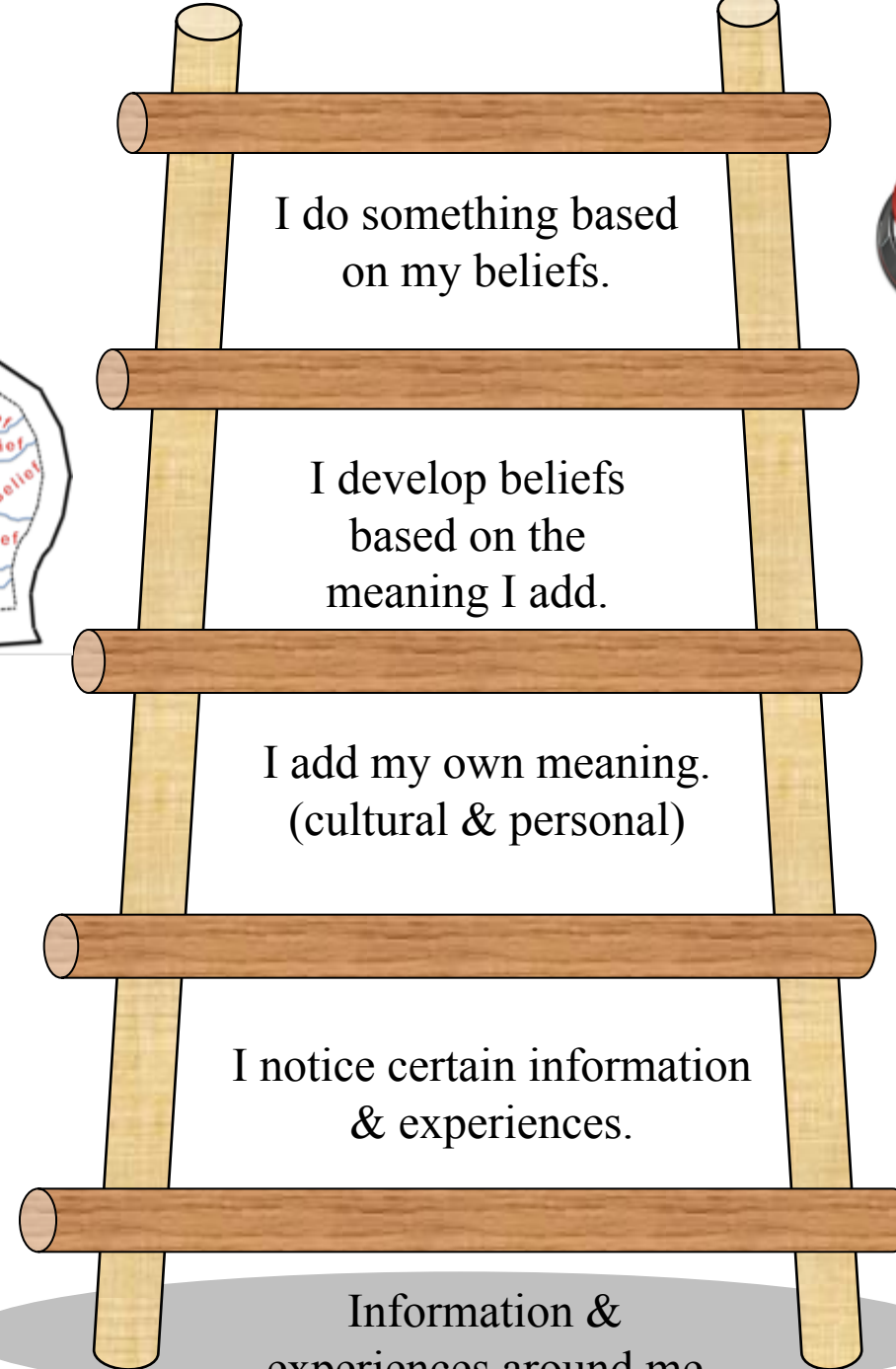
I develop beliefs
based on the
meaning I add.

I add my own meaning.
(cultural & personal)

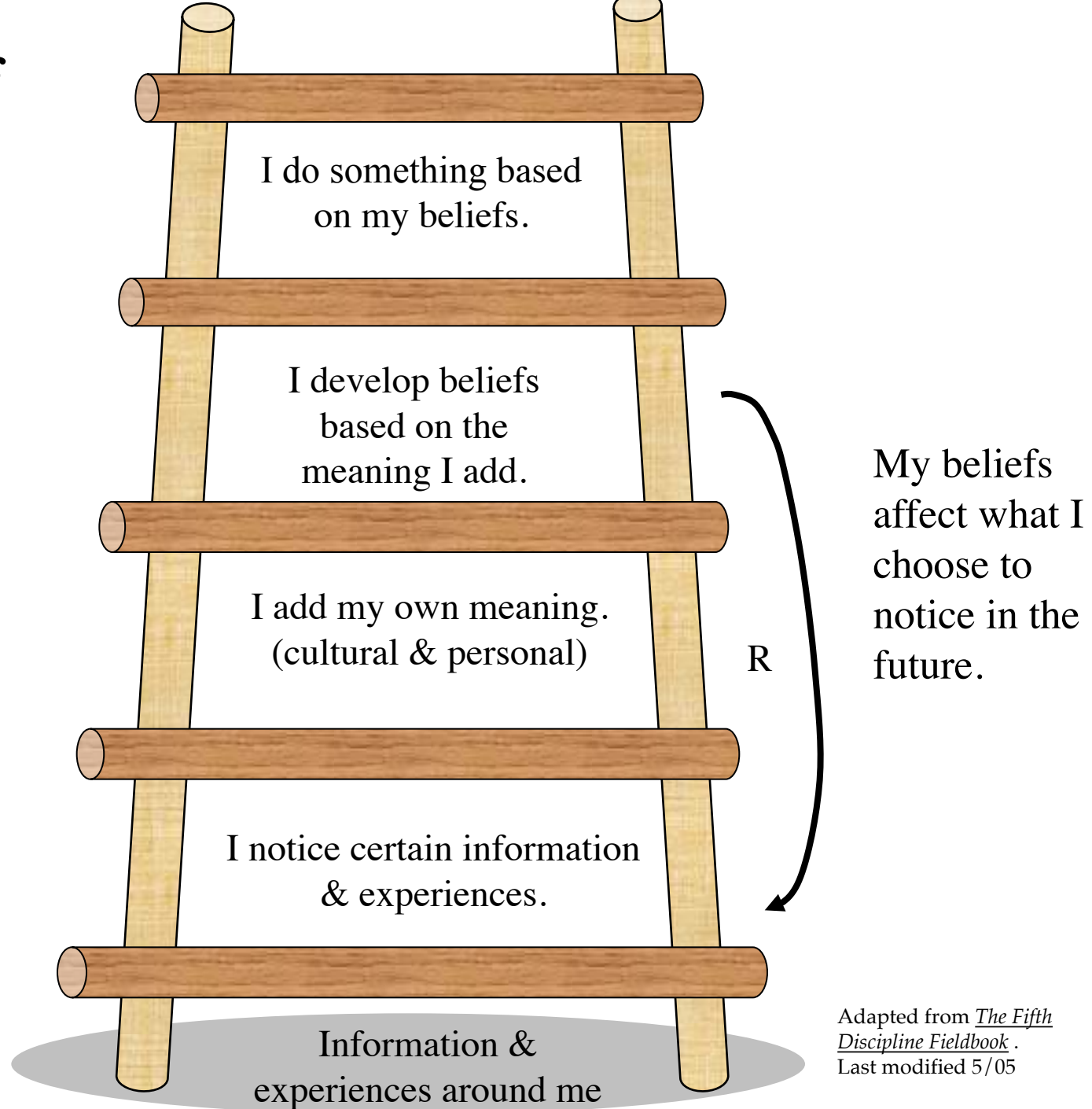


I notice certain information
& experiences.

Information &
experiences around me



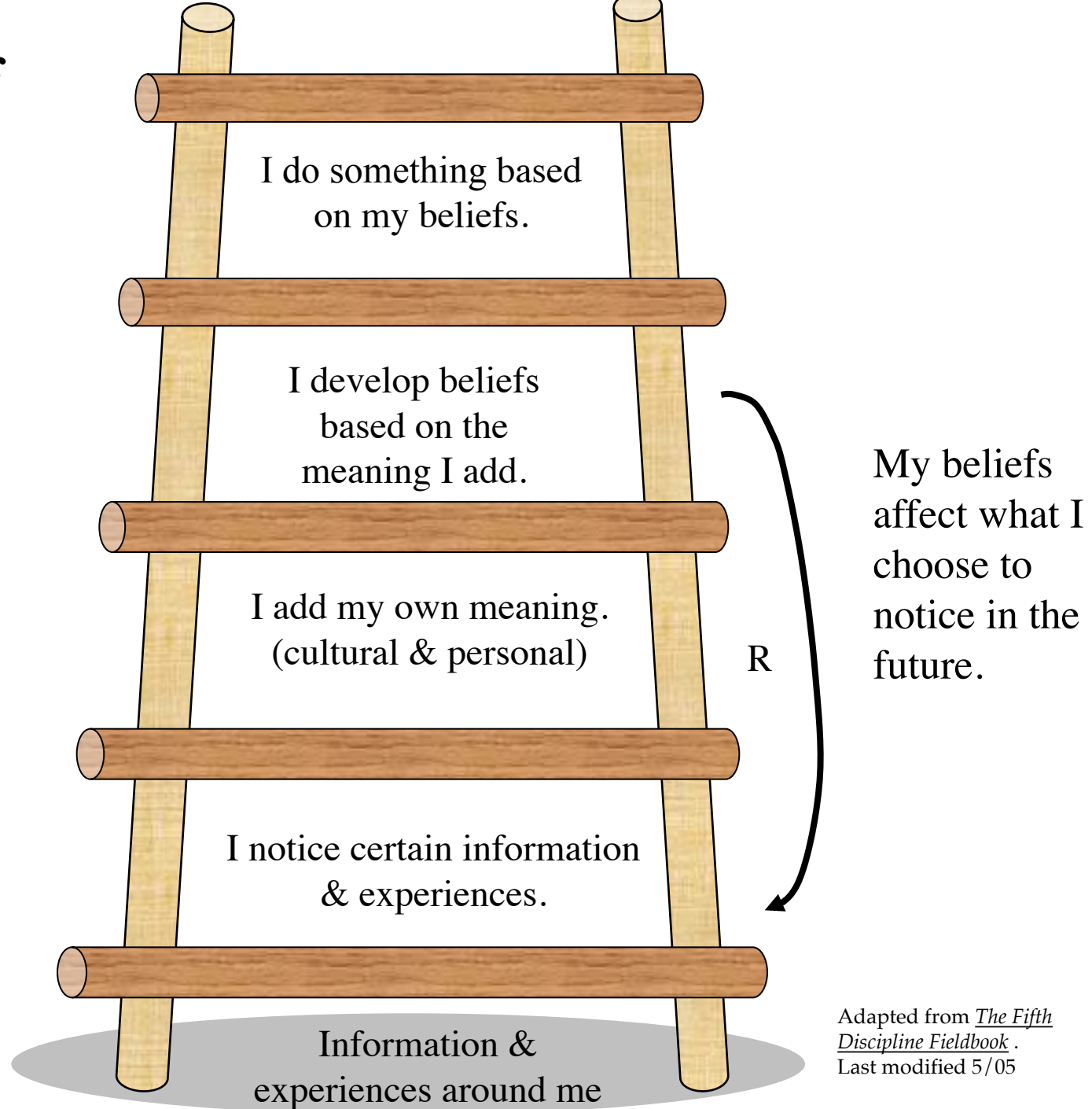
Ladder of Inference



Adapted from *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*.
Last modified 5/05



Ladder of Inference



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Managing your Ladder of Inference

- **Reflection**

- Try to suspend judgment
- Become more aware of your own thinking and broaden your observations



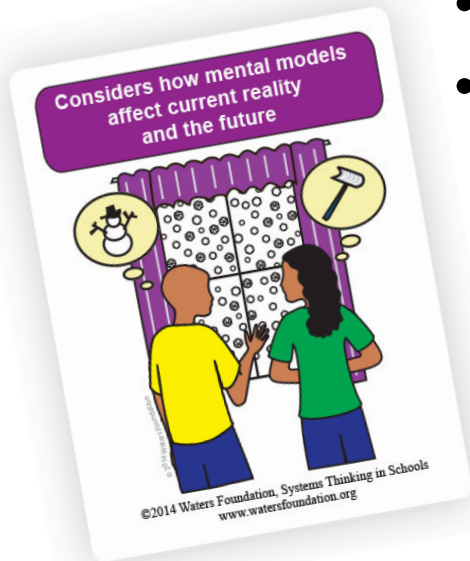
Using the Ladder of Inference

- **Reflection**

- Try to suspend judgment
- Become more aware of your own thinking and broaden your observations

- **Inquiry**

- Inquire into other's thinking and reasoning
- Ask open-ended questions that seek clarification



Using the Ladder of Inference

- **Reflection**

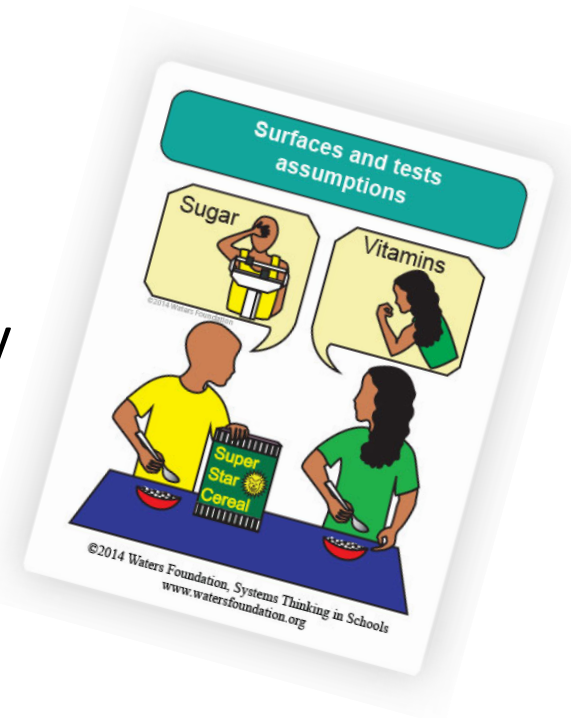
- Try to suspend judgment
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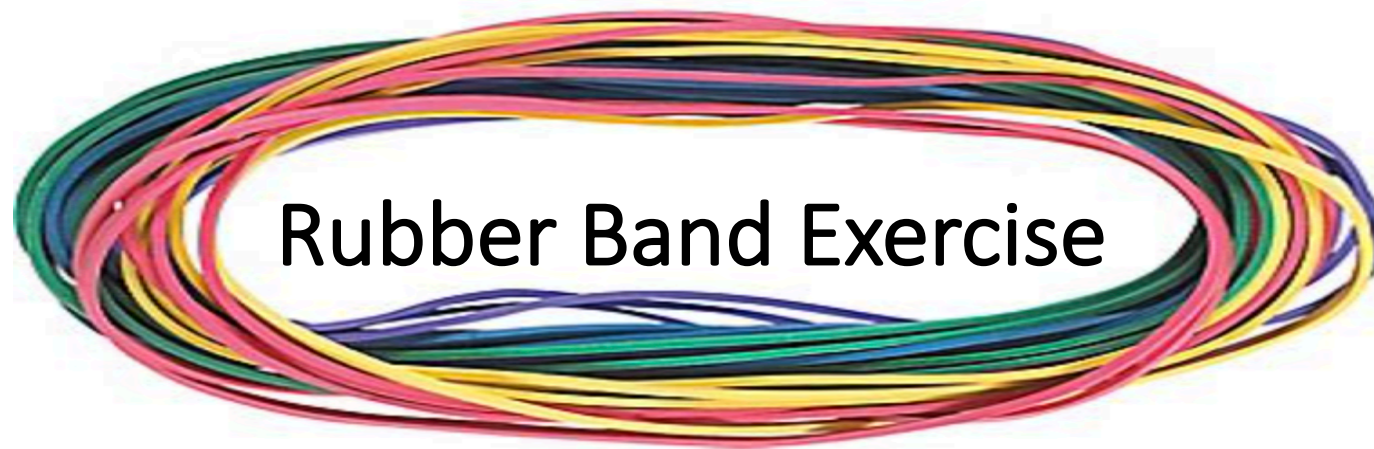
- **Inquiry**

- Inquire into other's thinking and reasoning
- Ask open-ended questions that seek clarification

- **Advocacy**

- Make your thinking and reasoning visible to others by describing what influenced your thinking and your actions





Rubber Band Exercise

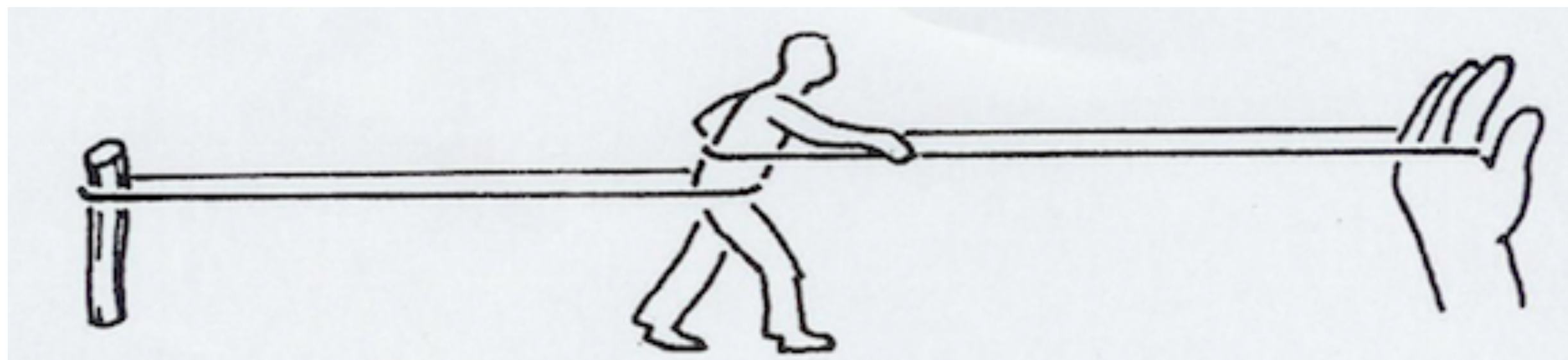
Person A: What is happening now?

Describe the current state of early childhood education, Birth to 8 yrs, in our system, being sure to talk about equity. (30 seconds)

Person B: What are your hopes for the future?

Describe the vision for an equitable early childhood education system. As you describe the vision, begin to move away from Person A (current state), so that you can show the gap between now and the desired future. This will create tension. (30 seconds)

Be sure to keep it safe!



Uses understanding of system structure to identify possible leverage actions



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No matter how small the step,
the time is now
to take action on behalf of
high quality
early childhood education
for all.

We thought the trouble people have in learning new theories may stem not so much from the inherent difficulty of the new theories as from the existing theories people have that already determine practices.

Argyris



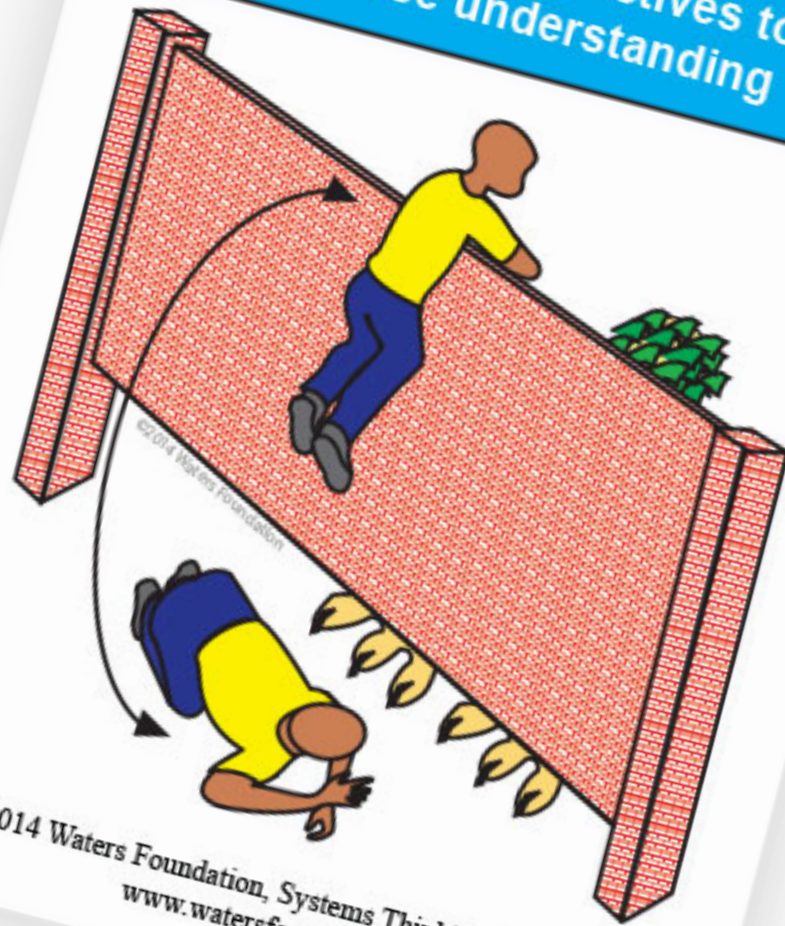
Old habits are strong and jealous.

Seeks to understand the
"big picture"



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Changes perspectives to
increase understanding



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consequences of actions



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Considers how mental models
affect current reality
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Makes meaningful connections
within and between systems



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Surfaces and tests
assumptions



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Checks results and changes actions if needed: "successive approximation"



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Recognizes that a system's structure generates its behavior



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Considers an issue fully and resists the urge to come to a quick conclusion



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A cartoon illustration of a young child with brown skin, wearing a yellow t-shirt and blue pants, sitting on the ground and looking at a large yellow flower with a red center. A bee is flying around the flower, and a curved arrow indicates the path of the bee. The background is white with a green stem for the flower. The text '© 2014 Water's Foundation' is written vertically along the stem.

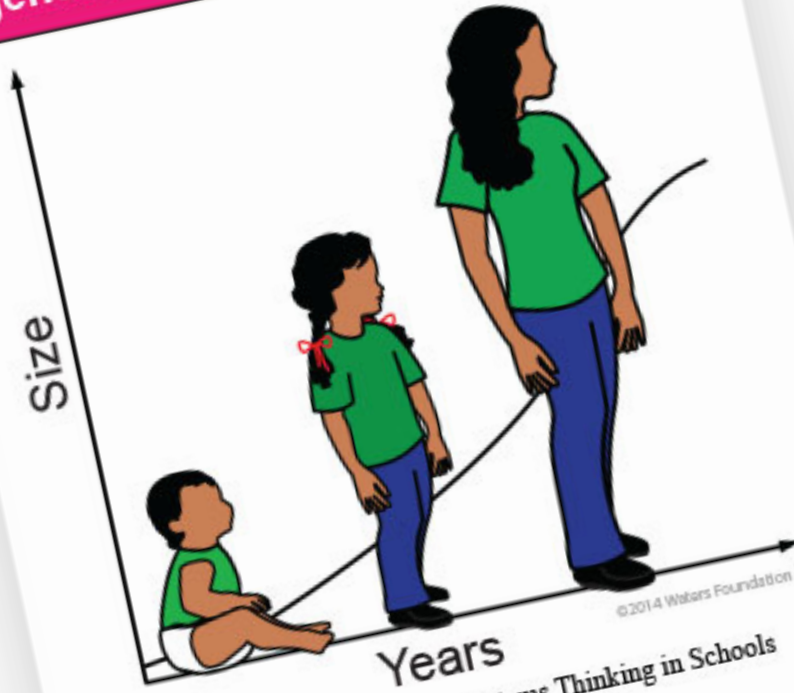
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A circular illustration showing a dentist in a white coat and purple tie examining a patient's teeth with a mirror. The patient is sitting in a dental chair, wearing a yellow shirt and blue pants. A dental light fixture is visible above the patient. The background is a solid yellow color. At the bottom of the circle, the text "©2014 Waters Foundation" is written.



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