

**March 24,
2020**

A Deep Dive Into the Ladder of Inference






**A Webinar for PA Care Partnership
Hosted by The Coach Approach Partners
and PA Care Partnership**

1

Welcome

2

**Can you remember a time when
you made a decision based on a
belief you had that turned out not
to be true?**



2

Recap of Key Coach Approach Mindsets

3

- ❑ **We have deep respect for each individual's own learning and development – their “who-ness”**
- ❑ **We meet the person where they are and support them in growing**
- ❑ **Our intention is always to help the person be stronger, more independent, more in choice**
- ❑ **We are aware of our own biases and what we think the person should do, and we hold those lightly**



3

Setting the Context: What Neuroscience Tells Us

4

We all want:

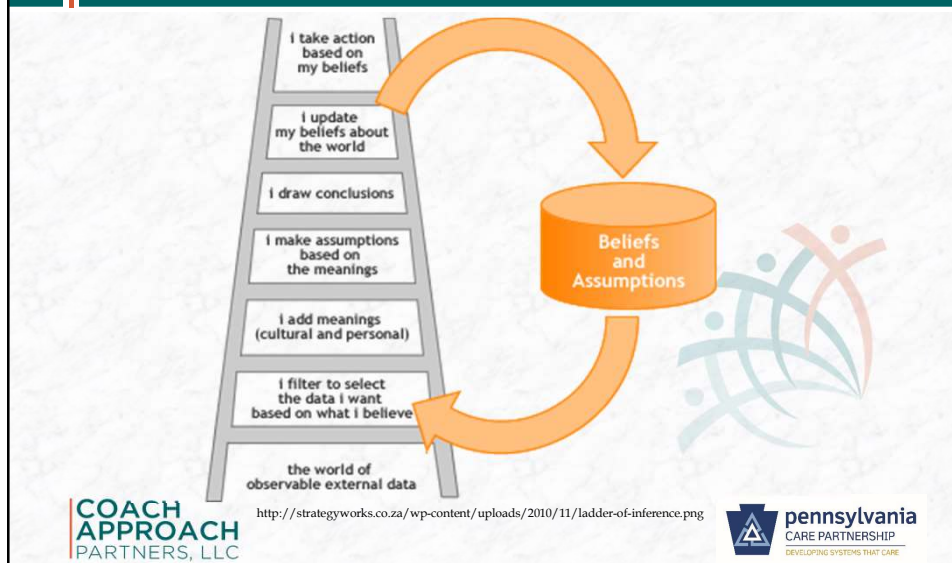
- ❑ **To feel safe and seen**
- ❑ **A sense of control**
- ❑ **A sense of certainty**
- ❑ **Things to be fair**



4

The Ladder of Inference

5



5

The World of Data

6

The world has an infinite amount of data that can be processed at any given time.

Even the room you're in has an infinite amount of data!

Not all this data is important, so we must pick and choose which data we need in order to function.

Example: Number of leaves on a tree may not be important, but number of leaves paired together could mean poison ivy!

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6

Our Filters

7

Different people are going to develop different filters over time based on any number of factors.

The filters are all technically subjective.

How we see has more impact than what we see.

Our filters are part of our identities.

Not all filters are equal, some are much more easily changed than others.

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7

Adding Meanings and Assumptions To Filtered Data

8

We take our filtered information and assign meaning and make assumptions to fill in gaps in available data.

Example: My boss sent me a short email asking to see me in her office as soon as I can. I must have done something wrong.

- **Information: Boss sent a short email asking to see me**
- **Meaning: I must have done something wrong**
- **Assumption: I should prepare to be reprimanded**

This helps our ability to act quickly to respond to threats, and it all happens very quickly!

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8

60 Seconds of Neurobiology

Frontal Lobe

Frontal lobe

- Reasoning
- Planning
- Movement
- Parts of speech
- Judgment
- Problem-solving
- Planning
- Rationalizing

Amygdala (2)

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Emotions

Amygdala Hippocampus

Your Amygdala activate faster than your frontal lobe, which explains why we fear faster than we think!

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9

Drawing Conclusions, Updating Beliefs, and Taking Action

10

With the STORY we've created for ourselves, we draw conclusions, update how we see the world, and take action.

Example: My boss sent me a short email asking to see me in her office as soon as I can. I must have done something wrong. I must be bad because I'm being told I do bad things. I should probably do less since I'll probably just mess things up. I'll try to avoid my boss until the end of the day to delay the conversation.

Again, The Ladder of Inference help us act quickly to protect ourselves from threats, before we know if they're real or imagined!

10

Everyday Example of The Ladder of Inference

11

1. **Filtered Data** - It's raining, and it normally takes me 20 minutes to get to work
2. **Adding Meaning** - Raining means that the roads will be less clear and slippery
3. **Assumption** - There will likely be more traffic today
4. **Conclusion** - I should prepare for slower traffic
5. **Action** - I will leave for work 15 minutes early to make sure I get to work on time

11

When Does the Ladder of Inference Get Us Into Trouble?

12

- ❑ **We are inherently limited by our perspective**
- ❑ **We react faster than we can respond**
- ❑ **We don't always examine our filters**
- ❑ **We can make decisions based on the stories that we create instead of the truth**

12

Tips for Using The Ladder of Inference

13

- ❑ **Listen for conclusions and opinions (your own and others)**
- ❑ **Look for data (what's your data, can you give me an example?) Make explicit the steps in your reasoning (my conclusion is...my assumptions are...)**
- ❑ **Ask others to be explicit in their reasoning, even when you agree with their conclusions (80/20 rule).**
- ❑ **Be patient with others when they are up the ladder, offer presence to give them a time to center and reset.**
- ❑ **Hold our judgments lightly and allow yourself to be surprised! This is how we grow and learn!**

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13

Building a Coach Approach Culture

14

1. **Keep an open mind – be aware of what assumptions that you're making (both positive and negative) and be open to other perspectives.**
2. **Celebrate a spirit of inquiry – share not only your conclusions but also your meaning making process. Appreciate others exposing you to different ways of thinking.**
3. **Receive input from all people within the organization. Roles and positions should not be barriers from expressing thoughts and ideas. Each person's perspective is important to consider before deciding on paths forward.**
4. **Use the model in your conversations to make the steps in your meaning-making clear ("I jumped up the ladder" is an easy way to say "my bad")**

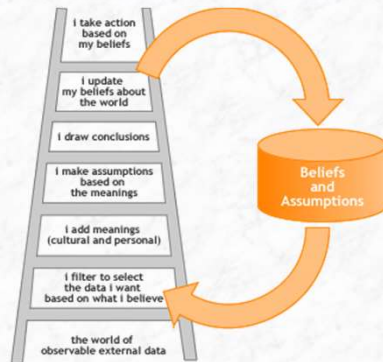
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14

Questions

15



What questions do you have about the model or how we use it?

What can we do to use this model and take it forward in our work and our lives?

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15