









Managing Challenging Conversations & Conflict



Objectives

At the end of the session, you will be able to....

-  Identify and use techniques to overcome communication barriers
-  Prepare and structure effectively in order to communicate difficult messages and manage challenging conversations
-  Define and describe how to identify conflict
-  Explain positions and interests and why conflict is so hard to resolve
-  Identify the stages of and use the five methods of dealing with conflict
-  Facilitate effective communication in difficult circumstances

Conversation – Social Care Context?



‘an oral exchange of sentiments, observations, opinions or ideas’

‘communication is more than a simple exchange of information’

What People Want

1

They want to talk about their fears

3

They want a role in deciding the outcome

5

They want a good reason for any decided outcome



They want you to acknowledge that their concerns are valid

2

4

They want to hold on to the familiar, what they know, like and/or want

Planning & Prep – Results

Language

Objectives

Information

Resources

Location

Age

Gender

Previous
Contact

Roles

Welfare

Refreshments

Trauma

Post
Meeting?

Culture
Diversity

Conflict

Barriers

Ground
Rules

Route Map

Forms
Templates

Purpose

Entry/Exit
Plan

Record

Who Else?

Topics

Structure

Me, 'You' and 'Us' ?

Question	Me	You
Why are we having this conversation? What is the legal and practical context of this meeting?		
What is the aim of the conversation? What do we want to happen? What needs to change?		
What emotions might be triggered? Both parties may feel strongly about the issues raised in different ways. How can this be supported safely?		
How does previous experience impact on this conversation? What assumptions or inferences might be made based on past experiences? How does this situation compare?		

Table 1: Questions to support planning for conversations in practice.

The conversation itself represents 'US' coming together.

Structuring Your Message

1. Context

2. The Headline

3. The Detail

4. Reason for Bad News

5. The Rationale

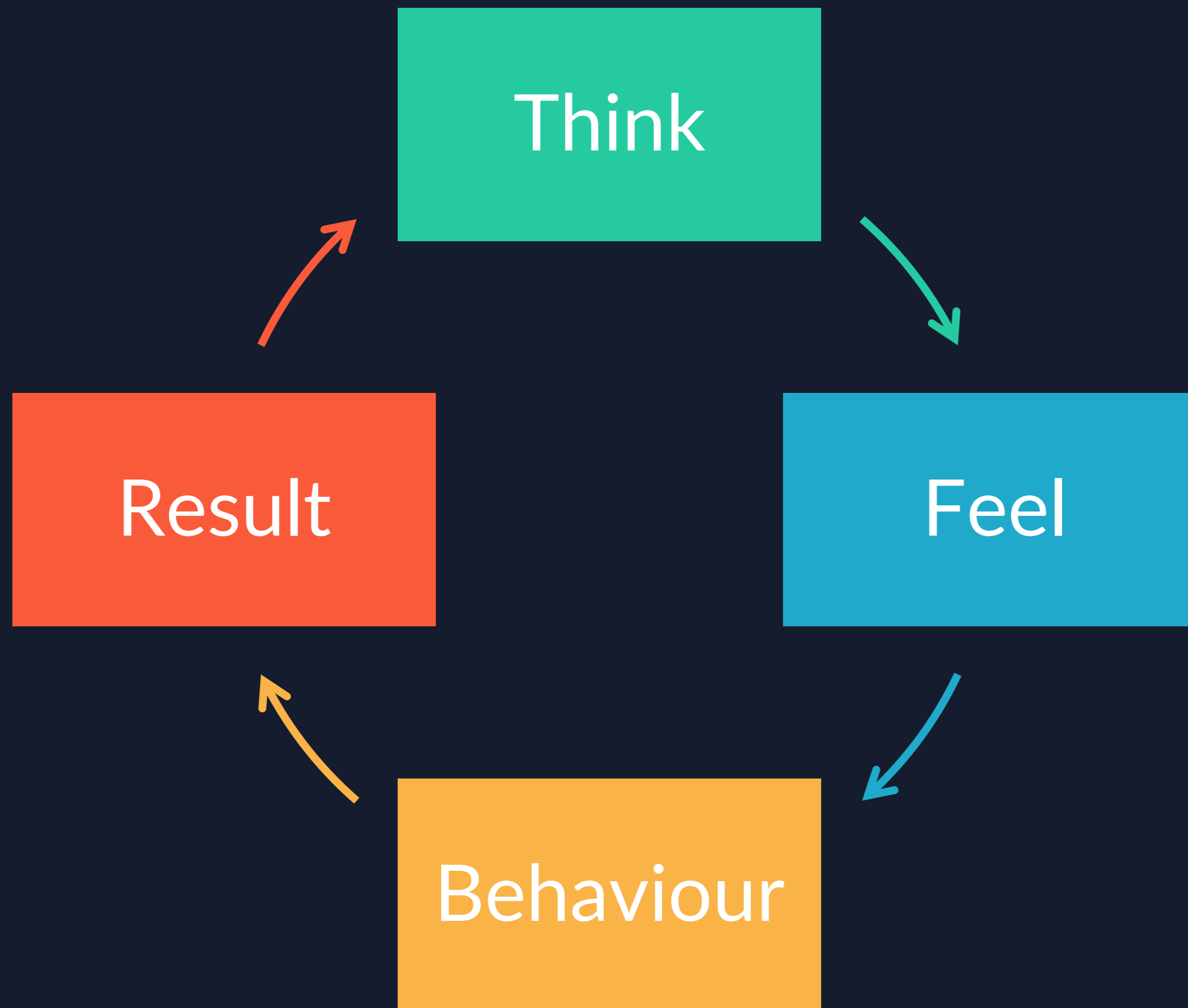
6. The Consequences

7. Alternative Actions

Internal Statements



Thinking Affects Results



Unhelpful Internal Statements



“This is going to be awful”

“They are expecting something from me”

“They know more about this than me”

“They’ve already made their mind up that it won’t work”

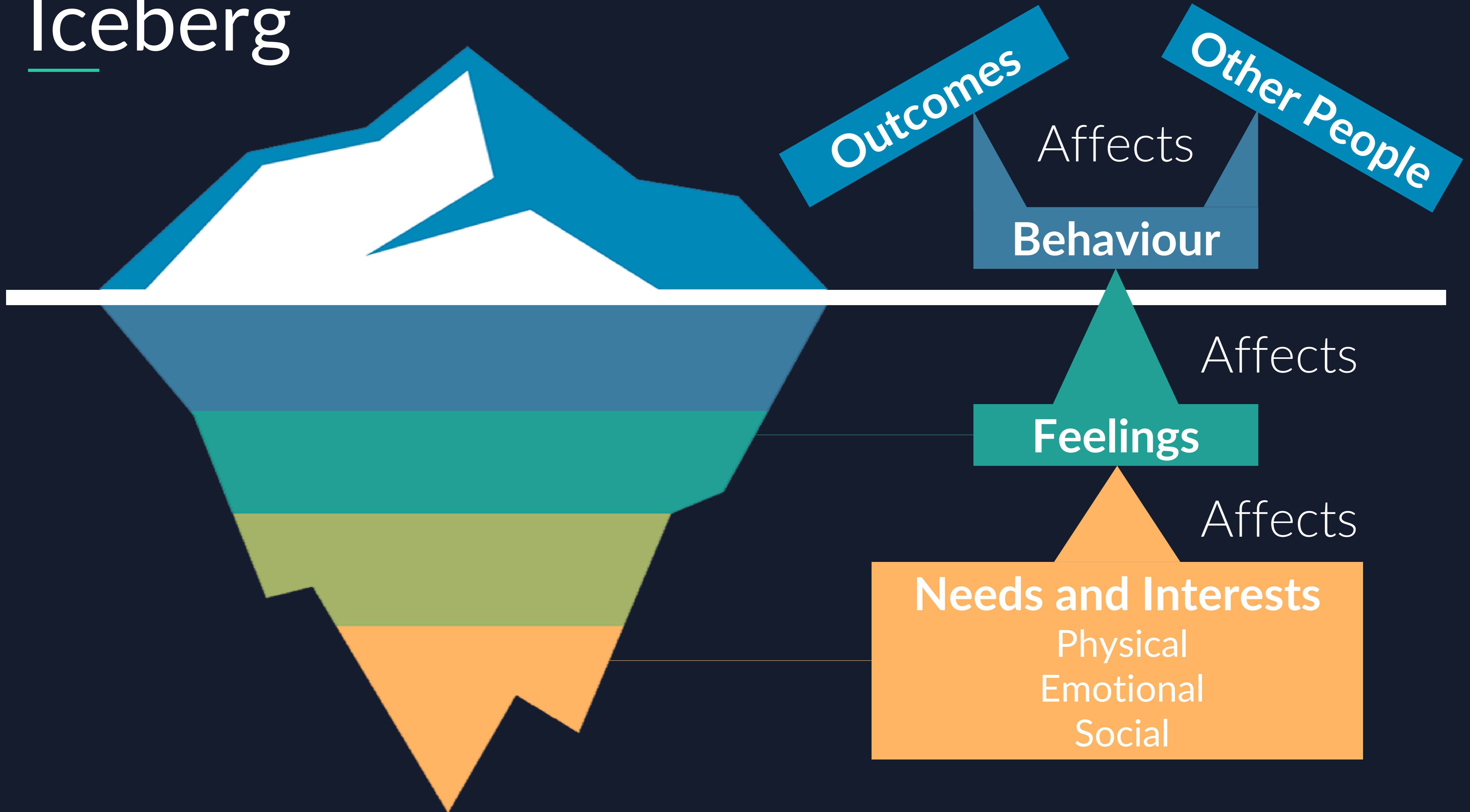
"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

- Maya Angelou

Definition of Conflict...

... a disagreement through which the people involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns.

Iceberg



Dialogic Practice? Garavan (2013)

Pg 19-20 Research in Practice - Difficult Conversations in Social Care



‘Strategy to enter into conversation with curiosity and uncertainty’

‘Gain full participation in defining and solving their own challenges’

‘Mutual interactive process of listening and responding’

Five Steps

‘Purpose, underlying principles, goals, core assumptions and working methodology’

The Wheelie Bin Debate!

Locals

“We oppose being forced to purchase wheelie bins for recycling.”

POSITIONS



Council

“If you don’t pay for wheelie bins we’ll tax you more for collection of recycling materials.”

INTERESTS

“Recycling is important.”

“We don’t want raised taxes.”

“We want to save money in the long term.”

“Wheelie bins are a good idea.”

“We would prefer no conflict.”

“We want recycling collections to continue.”

“We want a cheap resolution.”

Uncovering Interests



What's important to you about..?

You seem concerned about...tell me more...

How would that improve the situation?

What would that do for you?

What will be different when..?

.....?

Conflict Stages

Latent Conflict

Under the surface
Not yet happened
Not expressed
openly

New Equilibrium

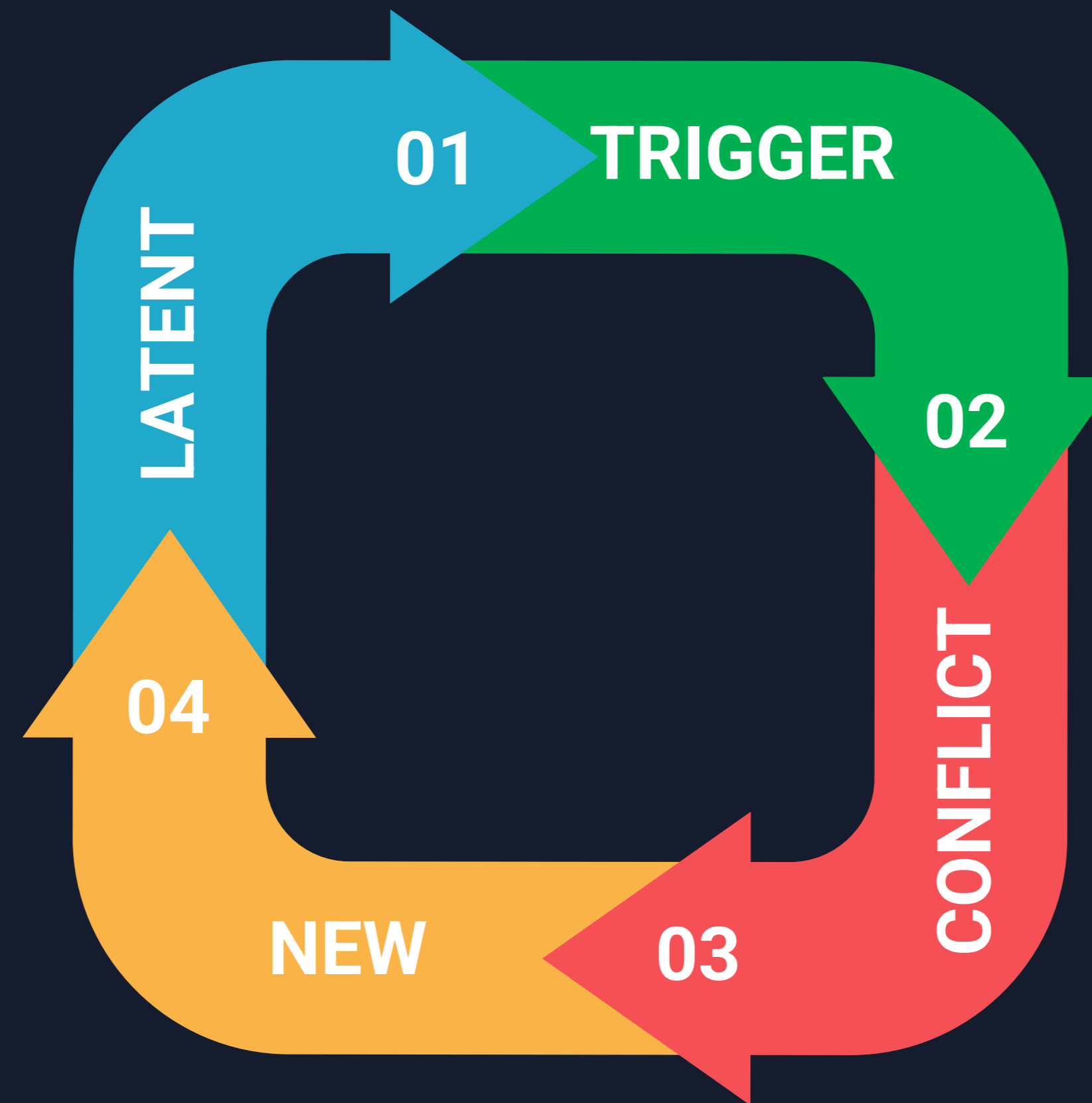
New understanding
Terms reached
Conflict resolved?

Triggering Incident

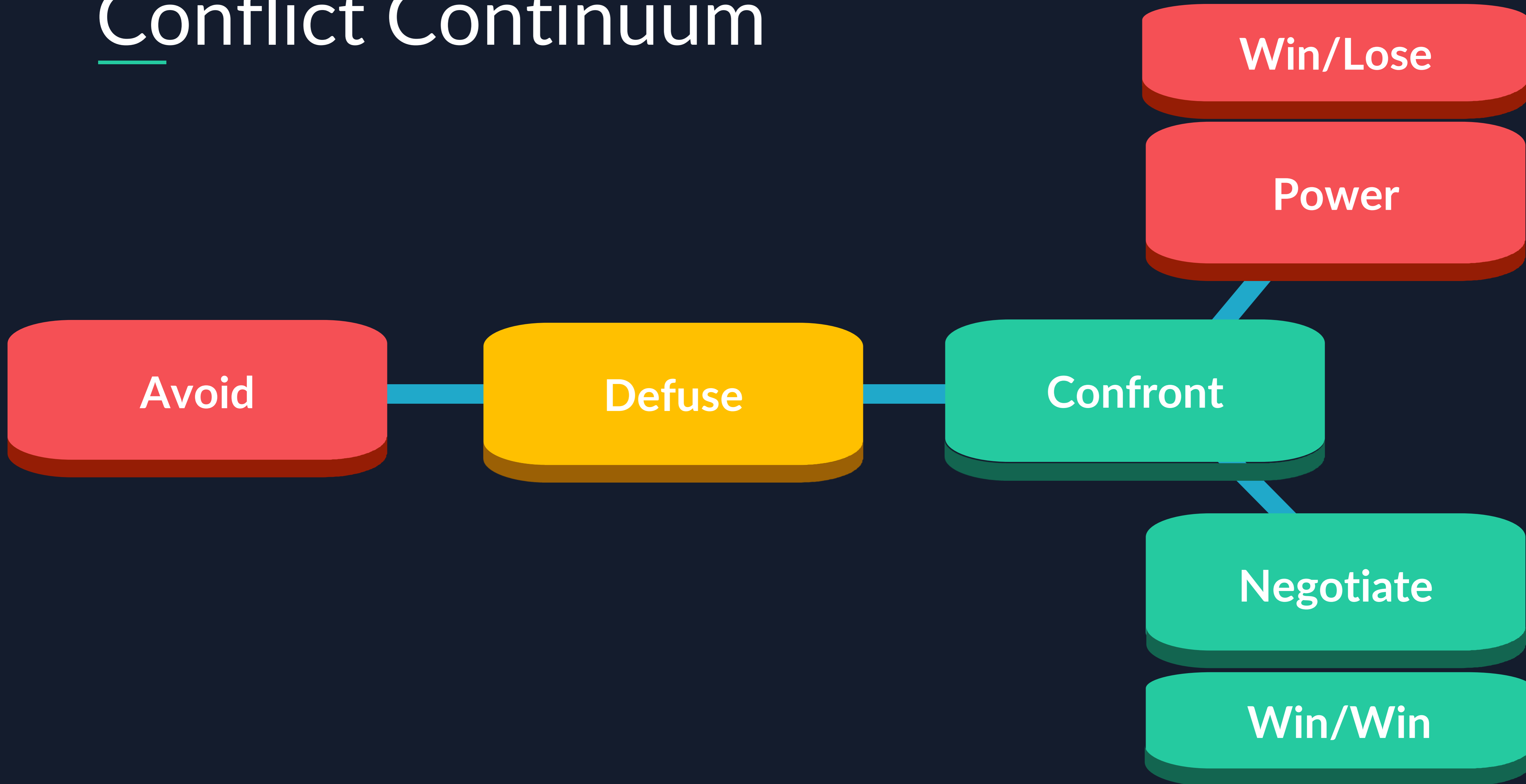
Spur of the moment
Specific incident
Moment of truth

Conflict

Assumptions/Labels
Attack and Blame
Alliance built
Entrenched



Conflict Continuum



Five Methods of Managing Conflict



Conflict Resolution Model

INTRODUCE

Explain the issue

Be specific and simple

Describe observations not beliefs

Avoid accusations

IMPACT

The effect

Explain how you felt/feel

Be specific

Remain calm

INFORM

The changes

Be clear and direct

Remain fair and realistic

Acknowledge other persons feelings

INCENTIVISE

The gain

Identify the benefit of resolution to the other person

Agree steps going forward

Resolving Conflict Between Others

Understand the source of the problem



Supervise dialogue between parties



Take appropriate action



Challenging Personalities – How to Deal?



Acknowledge the person and the way they are feeling

Acknowledge your position

Make it clear you understand their position by listening to their views with empathy

Where possible move the situation forward by putting the incident in the past tense if possible

Consider the most suitable method of communicating

Challenging Personality Types



Time Hog



Tangent



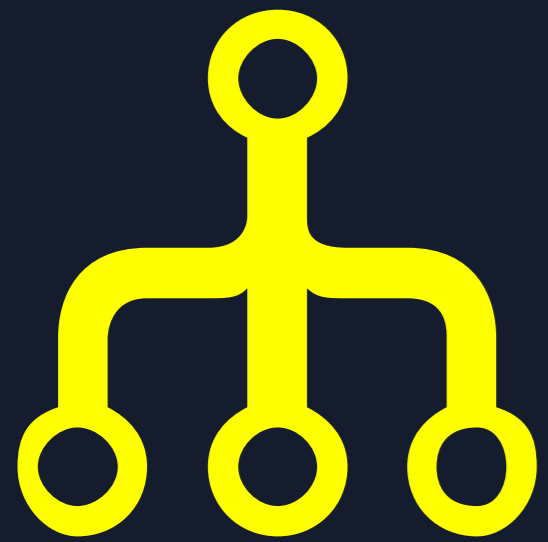
Blocker



Withdrawer



Recognition
Seeker



Topic
Jumper



Aggressor



Manipulator

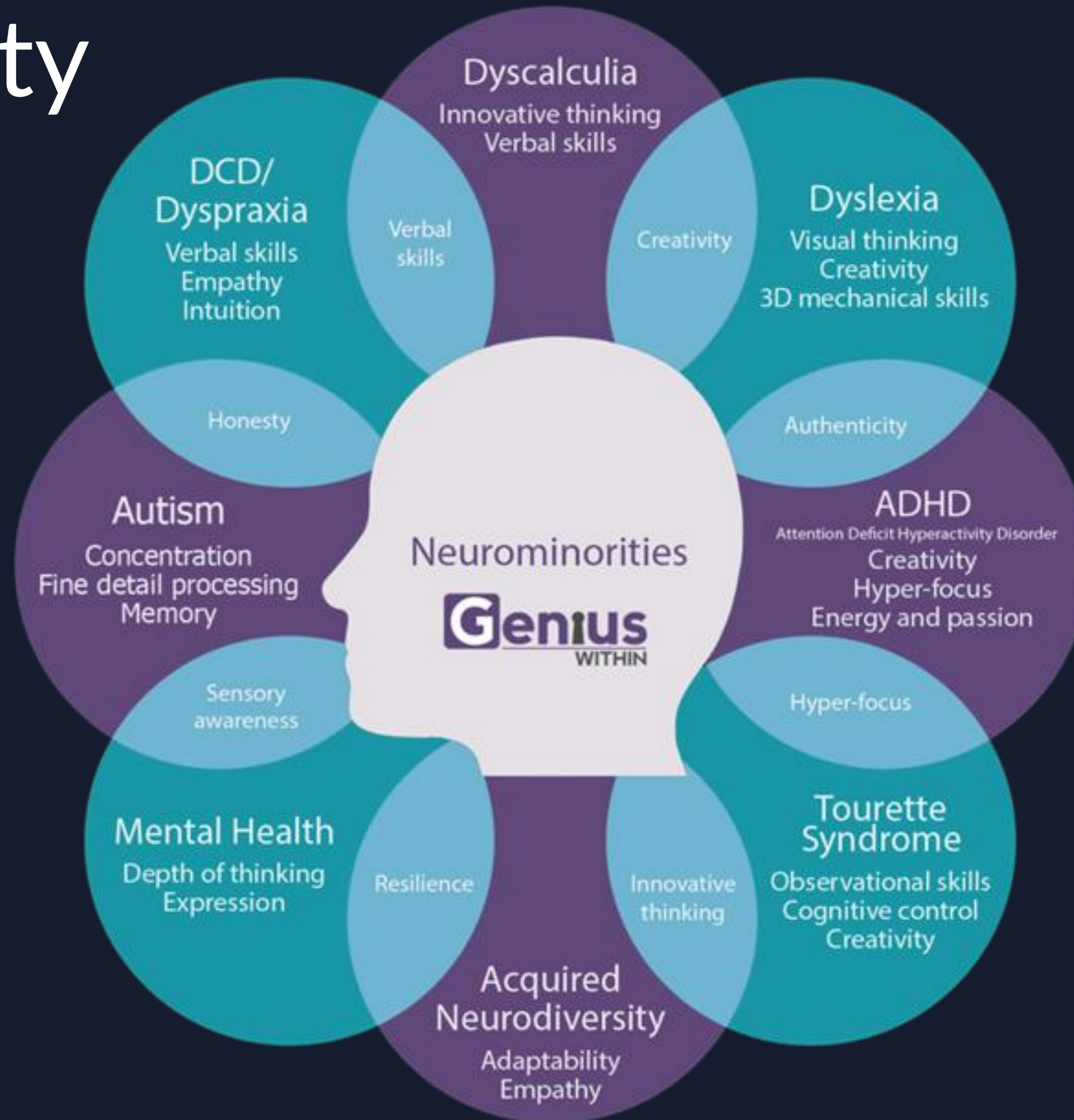


Devil's
Advocate



'Groups'

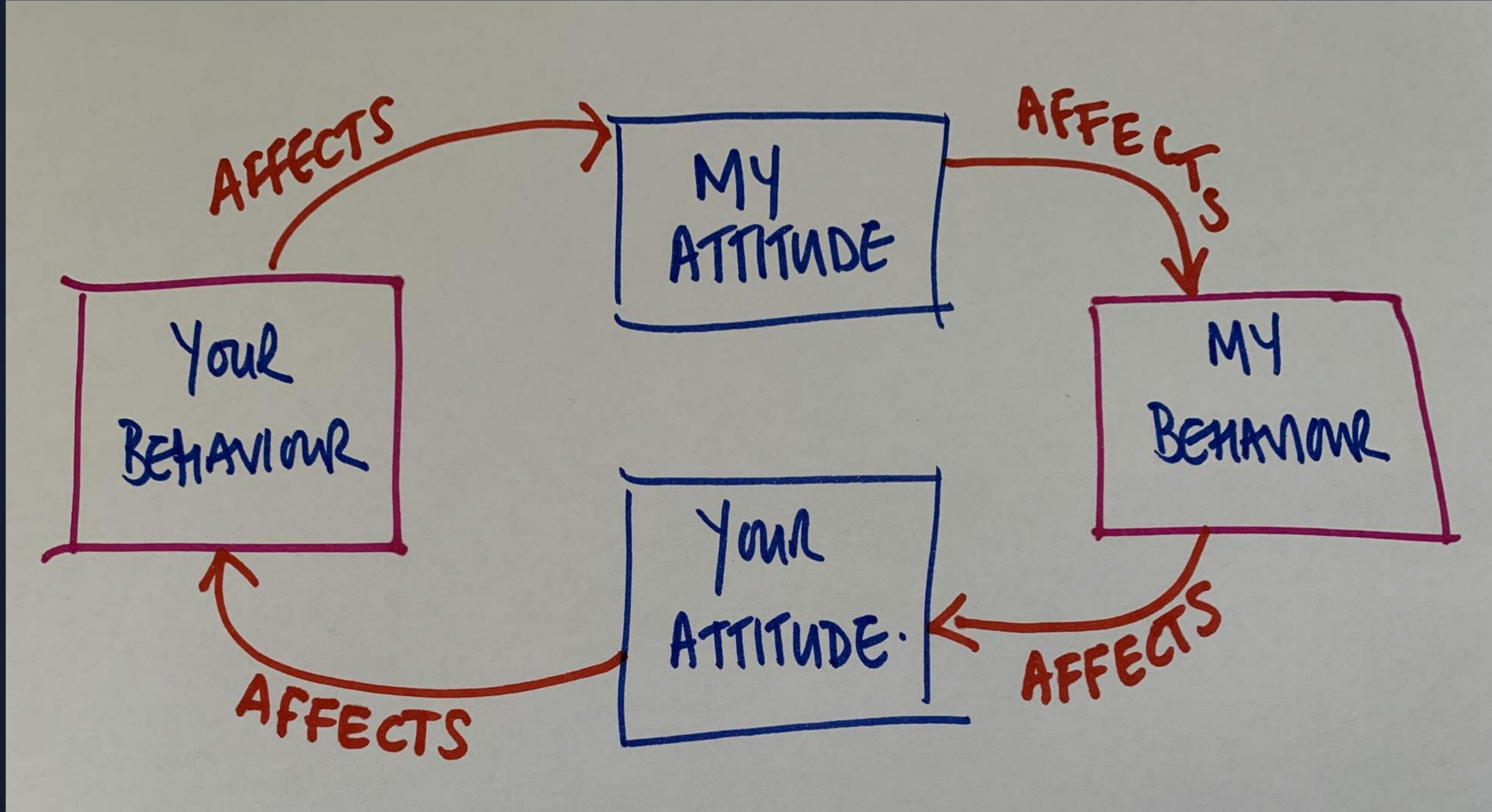
Neurodiversity



Cross Cultural Variations



Betaris Box



Behaviour Continuum



Self Awareness is the Key

How to DEAL with Disruptive Behaviour?



D - Describe

E - Explain

A - Action Required

L - Likely Consequences

Challenging – As Simple as ABC

A

‘Earlier you told us that you never leave your children alone at home at night’

B







‘The police inform me that last Wednesday they were called to your house at 01.30 a.m. and that the only people in the house were your two children’

C

‘Help me understand what happened?’

Objectives

Now you can.....

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