

The Three Levels of Thinking

Confidence, week 5: 10-31-22

Three levels of thinking are:

1. Inferences
2. Evaluations
3. Core Beliefs

Inferences

This level of thinking identifies “what is happening”. Your mind processes what is happening around you and makes an assumption based on what you know, which may be limited, and whether it meets your expectations and demands. You then take your conclusion as a fact. This interpretation and perspective about reality all happens automatically and in a split second.

Evaluations

This level of thinking identifies “what does it mean?” Based on what your mind concludes about what is happening, it then evaluates the situation to determine what it means. It goes beyond simply the fact of reality, it assigns meaning to it. If your needs and rules are met, it labels it good. If they’re unmet, it labels it bad. And, depending on this final judgment, we will feel good or bad.

Core Beliefs

This level of thinking identifies “how life should be” and it exists at the unconscious level. In fact, all 3 levels of thinking are usually unconscious, however the beliefs or rules are the deepest level, meaning we’re totally unaware we hold these beliefs. Let’s look at the interference and evaluations, which are easier to identify, in order to figure out the core beliefs that drive the assumptions and judgments. The beliefs we hold about how life should be can be thought of as musts or demands. They are the rules we’ve developed for ourselves that tell us how we NEED things to be in life.

One example could be that we believe we need to be approved of by others in order to be worthy.

The evaluation level of thinking is where our power lies to create change. Normally, this assigning of meaning and the resulting emotional response, again, happens automatically and unconsciously. However, by becoming aware of our emotional reactions or disturbances, as well as knowing the faulty way our minds tend to evaluate life situations so you can avoid them, we can choose constructive, rational ways of assigning meaning to events.