

Foundations for Systems Leadership ***California Community of Practice***

December 3, 2020

The Systems Thinking Iceberg Participant Handout

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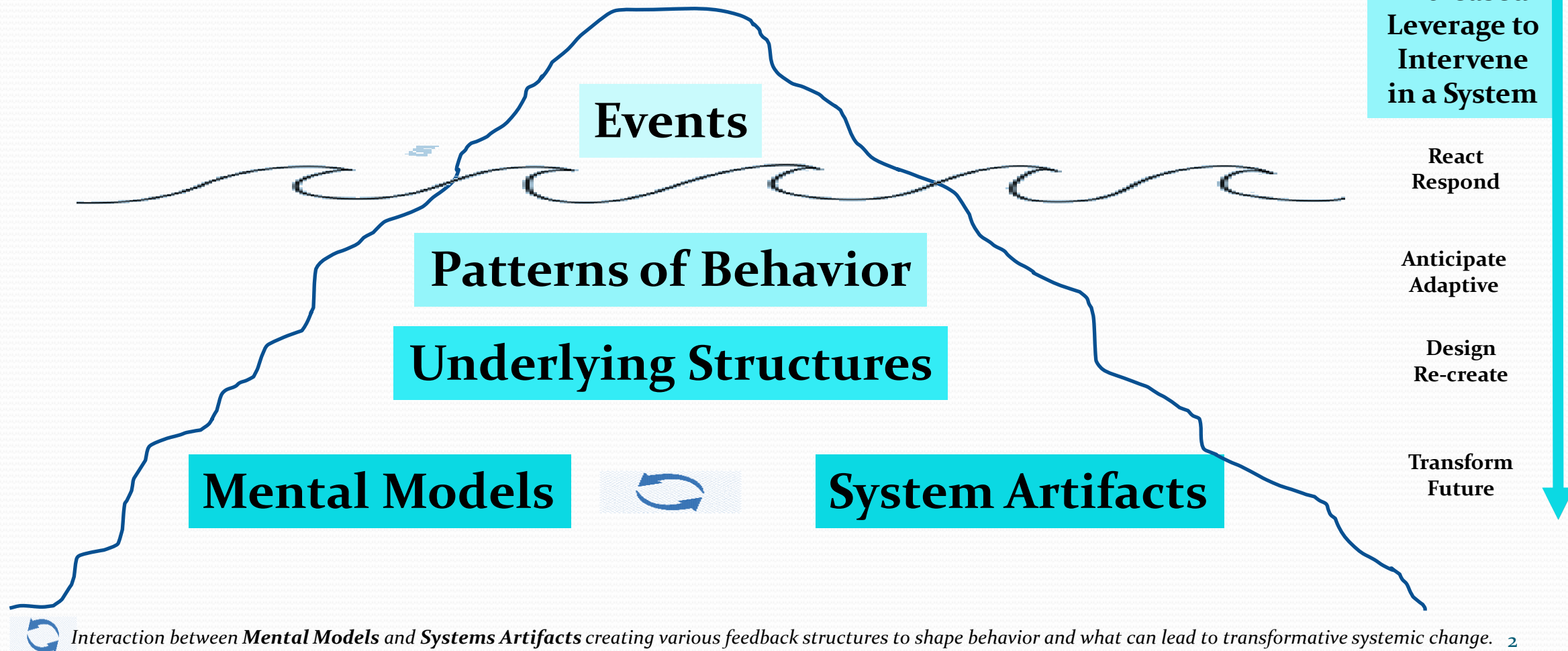
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Systems Thinking Iceberg: Archetype

Senge, P.M. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, 1st ed.; Doubleday/Currency: New York, NY, USA, 1990.

Meadows, D.M. *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System*; Sustainability Institute: Hartland, VT, USA, 1999.

With Adaptations: Perrenoud, M.R., August 2020



Interaction between **Mental Models** and **Systems Artifacts** creating various feedback structures to shape behavior and what can lead to transformative systemic change. 2

Systems Thinking Iceberg: Example

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EVENTS

- Teachers are experiencing behavior challenges in the middle school classrooms
- Behavior management strategies do not work

PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR

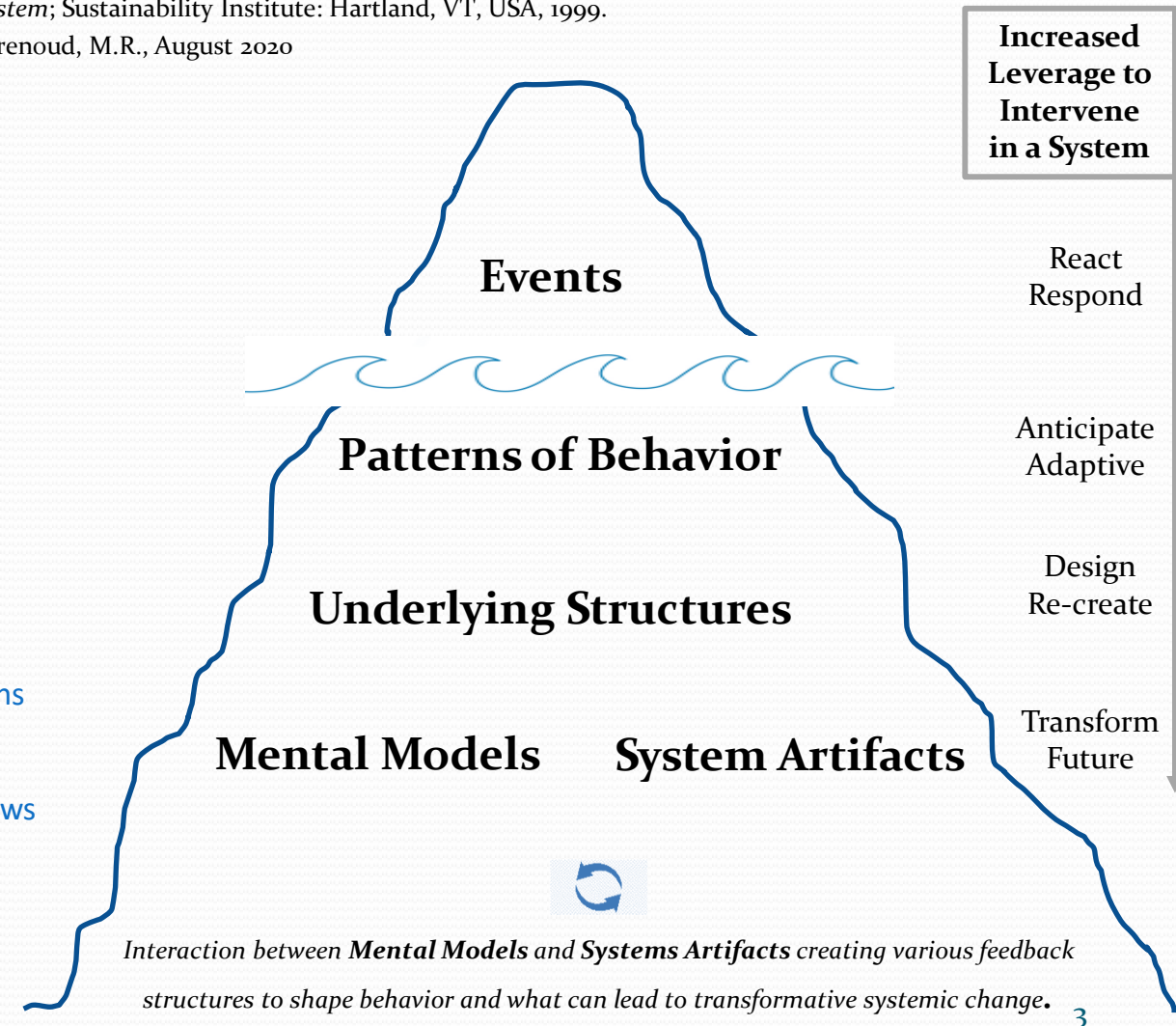
- Behavior challenges steadily increase over the year(s)
- Students are outspoken, loud, and disruptive to one another during learning time
- More students are disengaged in class and the curriculum
- District changes behavior management curriculum again

MENTAL MODELS

- Students should speak softly and not shout, be seated and not running around
- Shouting and running equals disruptive behavior for learning
- The curriculum is what everyone needs to learn and understand
- The behavior management strategies are about teachers correcting students' actions

SYSTEM ARTIFACTS

- The classroom is organized in such a way it constrains students from connecting, rows
- The schedule does not permit time for students to gather or work collaboratively
- The curriculum is outdated and lacking relevance to today's early teen
- There is a code of conduct and behavior form for infractions
- Behavior management curriculum is driven by external forces



Activity

- Create an Iceberg
- Person 1 - share with Coach
- Coach responds
- Switch roles
- Person 2 – share with Coach
- Coach responds



5 mins



2 mins



1 min



2 mins



1 min

The Coach's Role

Reflection

Do I understand my partner's Iceberg and can I share it back so it can be understood?

Activity

Using words, gestures and images, capture your thoughts and feelings to describe to your partner the essence of what you heard and were sensing as they shared their iceberg.

Points of Integration

- What were your AH-HA moments?
- In what ways do you see the application of this archetype in the work you do?
- What level of impact will this have for you in your work?



Thank you!



For choosing to be a compassionate systems leader and making a difference in the lives of the students you serve every day.

cheers!
michelle ♥

Systems Thinking Iceberg: Practice Overview

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Events as outcomes, are driven by behavior

- What just happened?

Patterns of Behavior are driven over time by the structure of the system within which individuals operate

- What's been happening?
- How have we (I) been here or someplace similar before?

Underlying Structures in turn are driven by Mental Models and Artifacts

- What is shaping behavior and causing these patterns to happen over time?

Mental Models of people, about how things should work

- What is the thinking that creates or allows these structures, patterns or events to occur? (collective and individual)
- What assumptions, beliefs and values do people (I) hold about the system?
- How does our (my) thinking allow this situation to persist?

System Artifacts shaping/influencing the relationship(s) among parts

- What are the cultural or institutional values that are instilled in the organization or community that are shaping this behavior?
- What elements, tangible items, are influencing the patterns (policies, laws, norms, physical structures, etc.)?

