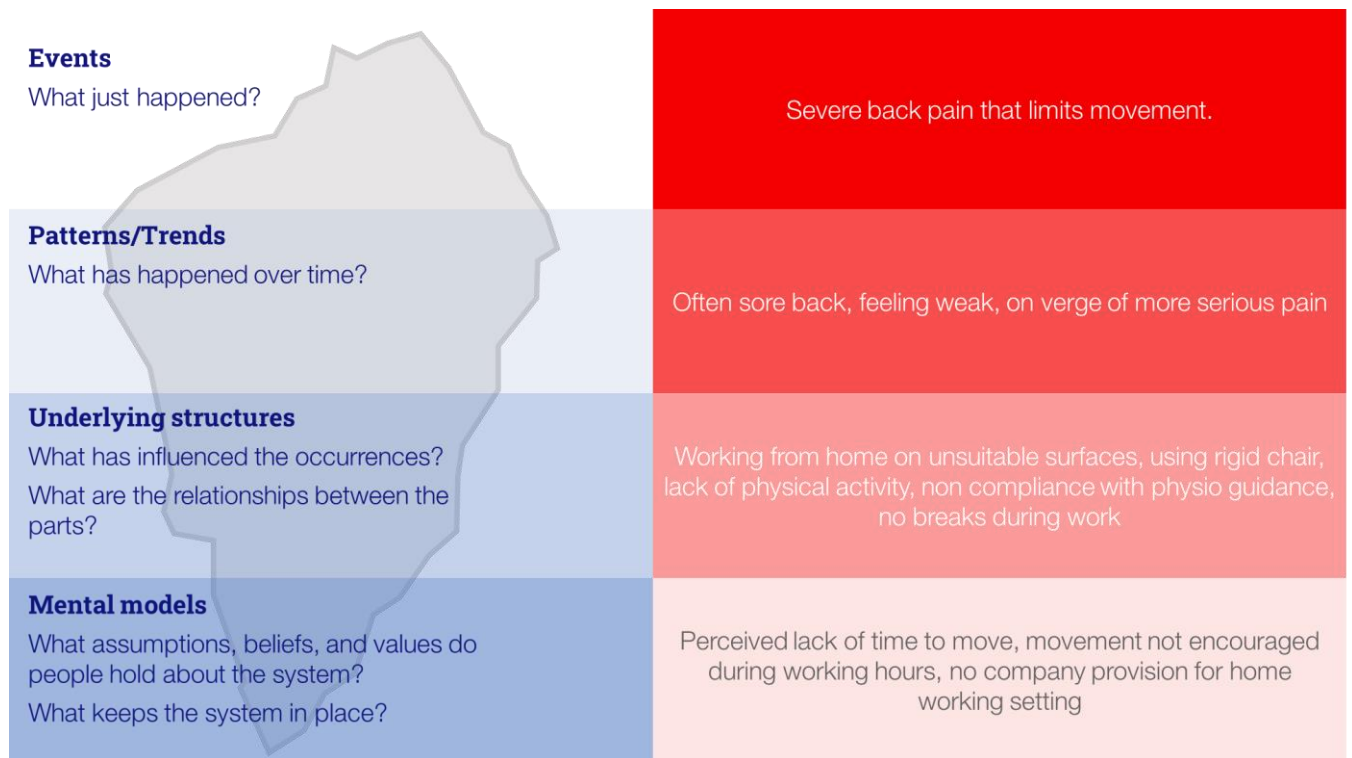


DISCOVERING LEADERSHIP SESSION 3: UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

The Iceberg Model

- A tool for guiding systemic thinking that helps us uncover what is going on below the surface of what we initially see/hear. Explore before concluding.



Levels of Thinking

1. The Event Level

The event level is the level at which we typically perceive the world—for instance, waking up one morning to find we have caught a cold. While problems observed at the event level can often be addressed with a simple readjustment, the iceberg model pushes us not to assume that every issue can be solved by simply treating the symptom or adjusting at the event level.

2. The Pattern Level

If we look just below the event level to think – what might be contributing to causing this event? First ask: what are the patterns over time? We often notice patterns. Similar events have been taking place over time – we may have been catching more colds when we have not been resting enough. Observing patterns allows us to forecast and forestall events.

3. The Structure Level

Below the pattern level lies the structure level. When we ask, “What is causing the pattern we are observing?” the answer is usually some kind of structure. Increased stress at work due to the new promotion policy, the habit of eating poorly when under stress, or the inconvenient location of healthy food sources could all be structures at play in our catching a cold. Structures can include the following:

- Physical things — like vending machines, roads, traffic lights or terrain.
- Organizations — like corporations, governments, and schools.
- Policies — like laws, regulations, and tax structures.
- Ritual — habitual behaviours so ingrained that they are not conscious.

4. The Mental Model Level

Mental models are the attitudes, beliefs, morals, expectations, and values that allow structures to continue functioning as they are. These are the beliefs that we often learn subconsciously from our society or family and are unaware of. Mental models that could be involved in us catching a cold could include: a belief that career is deeply important to our identity, that healthy food is too expensive, or that rest is for the unmotivated.

This all leads us to then question ourselves:

- What would this tell us about the event?
- What actions might we need to take?
- What are our next steps?

What, so what, now what?

The model is useful to show you what is going on and learning more about the challenge. But doesn't help bring you to a decision about next step. When applying the model, remember:

What?

- Describe the situation?
- What happened? What you have seen?
- Remain objective, don't attach judgement at this point.

So what?

- What did you learn? This could be about yourself, relationships, others, processes, models etc.
- What was important about the situation for you?

Now what?

- What are you going to do next?
- How will you think or act differently because of what you have learnt?

Next session

Change Management – 1st June. If you can't make it let us know.

Any questions or concerns about the programme please contact leadership@diabetes.org.uk