

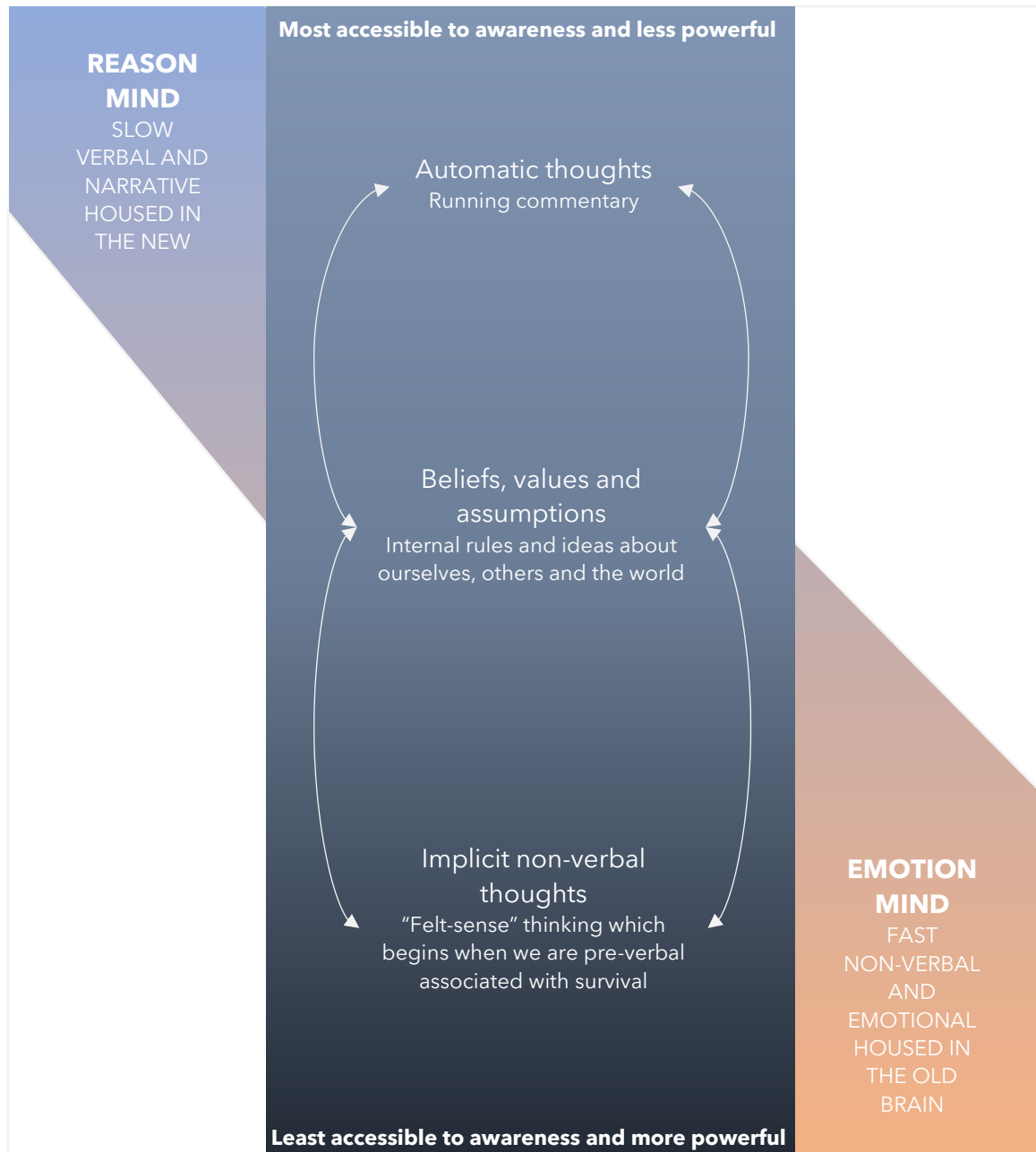
Cultivate: Thinking 2

Thoughts or thinking can be understood as a type of activity that takes place in the mind.

One way of understanding thinking is to classify "levels" of thinking. These thoughts can be understood in terms of accessibility and are made up of our sense experience.

The Two systems

Psychologists often use a model of thinking as being made up of two systems. The first is verbal or propositional system which we are more aware of, and we actively examine to make choices. The second is the non-verbal implacational system which we are less aware of, but often kicks in quickly to influence our behaviour to keep us safe.



By paying more attention to our thoughts or spending time examining the relationship between how we feel and what we do in various situations we can start to make the less accessible thoughts more accessible.

What am I thinking - Examining my beliefs and assumptions

Now that you have practiced paying attention to your most accessible (automatic) thoughts you can have a go at the exercise below to go a little deeper. Take 10-15 minutes (or longer) to examine the following questions. Record your responses on the page or keep a separate journal or notebook.

Why does it worries me?

Think about something that often makes you scared or worried enough that that you often avoid it. Write this in the first part, then ask yourself the "then" questions to see if it helps you identify your beliefs/values/assumptions:

If I avoid _____

then _____

If I don't avoid _____

then _____

Why does it makes me sad?

Write something that makes you sad when you think about losing it in the first part. Ask yourself the "then" question to see if it helps you identify you beliefs/values/assumptions:

If I lose _____

then _____

If I don't lose _____

then _____

Why does it makes me angry?

Write something that often makes you angry in the first part. Ask yourself the "then" questions to see if it helps you identify your beliefs/values/assumptions:

If _____

then it means _____

If this does not happen then it means _____

Why does it makes me feel good?

Write something that often makes you feel good in the first part. Ask yourself the "then" questions to see if it helps you identify your beliefs/values/assumptions:

If _____

then it means _____

If this does not happen then it means _____

Why do I do that?

You can apply this exercise to anything that you do which you would like to do differently but for an unknown reason continue to do. Write the behaviour/action in the first part, and as before ask yourself the "then" question for the second part:

If _____

then _____

If I don't _____

then _____

If _____

then _____

If I don't _____

then _____

Were you able to get any closer to your underlying beliefs/assumptions/values? What was it like doing this exercise did you find it easy or hard? Give us some feedback if you have any thoughts.

Notes on the exercise: