

## Deletion, Distortion and Generalisation

Human beings do not experience the world directly. We receive information through channels known commonly as the five senses; sight, sound, touch, smell and taste. The information is then filtered through the processes of Deletion, Distortion and Generalisation, to create a perception or Idea. Although this seems obvious when you consider that all information from 'out there' has to come in through these channels many people do not realise that the "act" of receiving information through these channels is in itself a process. This may be because it is happening all the time. It is worth considering that the filters of Deletion, Distortion and Generalisation are subject to conditioning, and what we are prepared to accept (or believe) gets in; what we are not prepared to accept (or don't believe) gets ignored.

### **Deletion:**

Read out loud the text inside the triangle below.



More than likely you said, "A bird in the bush," and if this is what you said, then you deleted one of the "the"s. This is deletion in action. Your brain has used the Deletion filter as there seems to be no requirement for two "the"s - look again.

Most people have had the experience of losing their car keys, and as you consider that now, you were probably saying to yourself things like, "I cant find my car keys" or " I cant remember where I put those". The process of Deletion will then ensure that you don't find them - Thankfully when you say the opposite you get *that* experience too.

### **Distortion**

Everyone's distortion filters are set depending on their own experiences.

What do you see here?



For some people the word 'Illusion' is clear immediately for others 'Optical'. Now, by applying the Distortion filter with purpose you will be able to alternate between the two. Another way of thinking about distortion is to consider your couch. Many designers will look at a room and vividly imagine how it will look with a different couch, colours and lighting. Even before the change has taken place you can imagine how it would look, you don't have to close your eyes to do this, you can Distort anything to see how it will look differently once a change has taken place.

## **Generalisation**

Have you ever tried to open a door by pushing it and discovered it needs to be pulled? – me too!

When you buy a different toothbrush do you ever get confused about which hole it goes in? –me neither.

The reason for this is that you have had lots of experiences of doors and toothbrushes (and of course many other things such as cars, toilets and windows). The fact is you have had so many experiences with similar 'objects' that your unconscious filter of generalisation knows how they all work, in general, or at least expects to. Sometimes when a door has a metal plate where you would expect to push it open, that is the behaviour you use only to discover that you have deleted the smaller handle or even the sign that says PULL. This is a great opportunity to learn how your filters work.

You could say that the information allowed in through our filters reaching the Idea stage has been taught (through experience) to us over many years and in some cases hundreds of years. These are our beliefs. So one way of thinking about it is that only the percept, (concepts or ideas that fit into the established 'grooves') gets in while all else which is outside our Map Of the World is either filtered out completely or ignored depending on your belief / point of view.

Or

What you believe to be true will be allowed to filtered through your senses; What you believe is possible gets in - what you don't doesn't.