The Self, Perception, & Communication

Chapter 2

The Self Concept

Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

- Self Concept: A set of relatively stable perceptions that we hold about ourselves
  - What is unique
  - What makes us similar/different to others
  - How we view ourselves

- Self Esteem: Our evaluation of our self-worth
  - Influences how we communicate
  - Influences how others view us

External Influence on Self-Concept

- Reflected Appraisal: how we develop an image of ourselves from the way others view us

- Significant others: their appraisals are especially important

- Social Evaluation: We compare ourselves to others
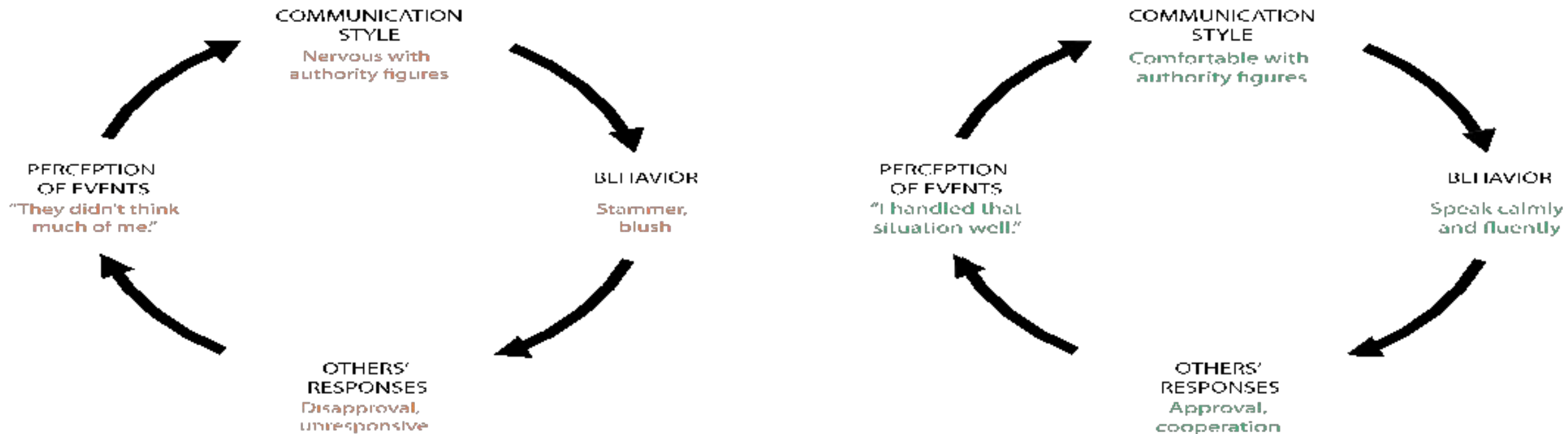 - Consider: The role of social media

Biology, Personality, and the Self

- Personality: characteristic ways you think and believe
  - 40% of personality is inherited
  - We can learn to improve these traits
 - Practice communication: Shy people can become extroverts

© Always/Likeagirl

Self-Concept and Behavior

- Self-concept and communication style influence our behavior and perception of events

COMMUNICATION STYLE — Nervous with authority figures

BEHAVIOR — Stammer, blush

OTHERS' RESPONSES — Disapproval, unresponsive

PERCEPTION OF EVENTS — "They didn't think much of me."

COMMUNICATION STYLE — Comfortable with authority figures

BEHAVIOR — Speak calmly and fluently

OTHERS' RESPONSES — Approval, cooperation

PERCEPTION OF EVENTS — "I handled that situation well."

The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

- When a person expects a certain outcome the person's behavior is more likely to lead to that outcome
- Shapes our self-concept and behaviors
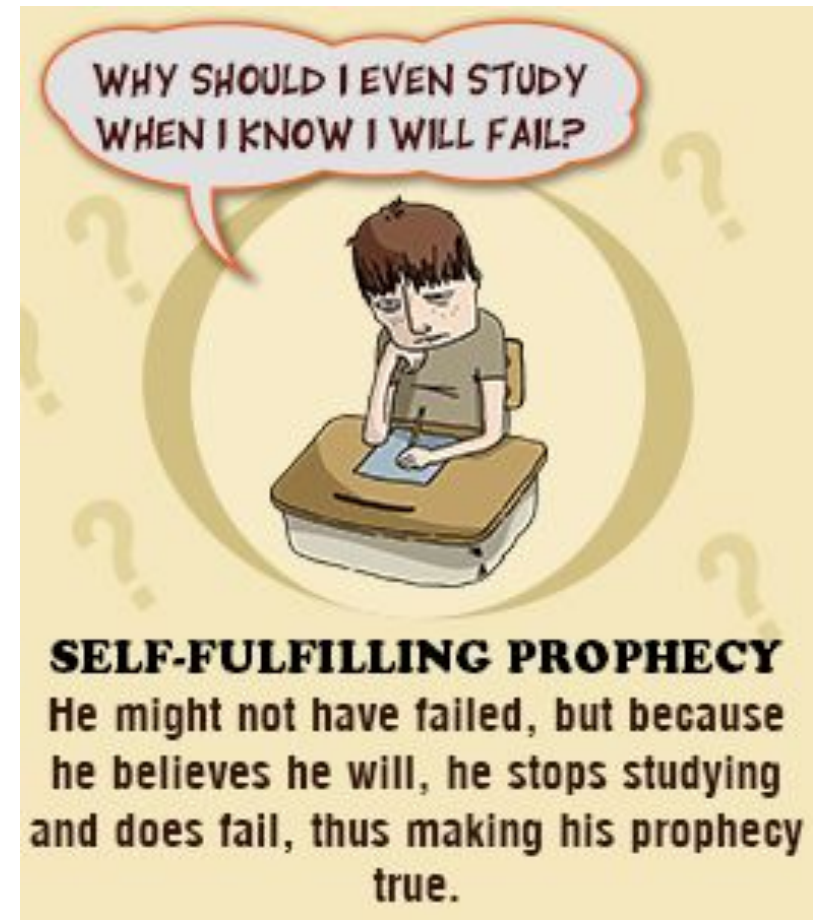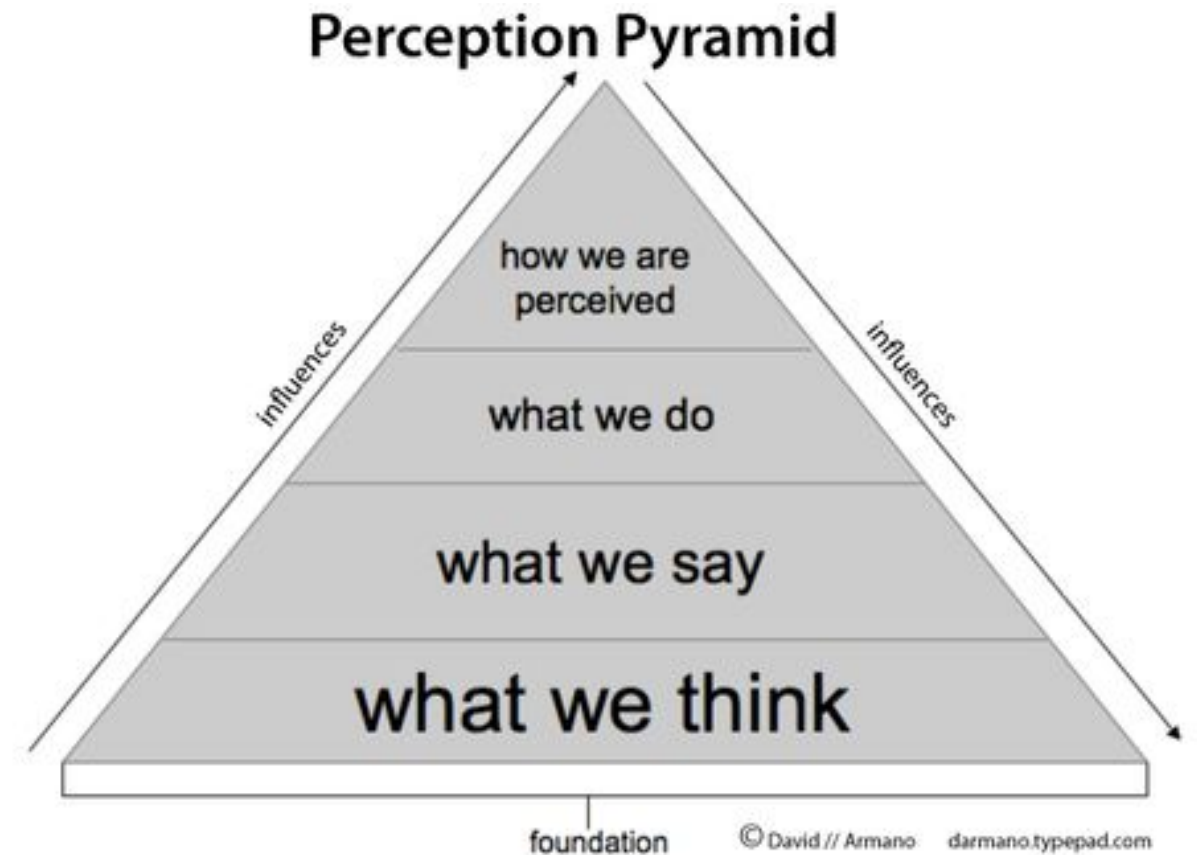
The Perception Process

1. **Selection**: select what information we will pay attention to

    a.   based on repetition, contrast, or similarity

2. **Organization**: we organize the data to make sense of it

    a.   into schemas: mental filing cabinets for later use

3. **Interpretation**: we interpret the meaning of the information

    a.   based on attribution - attaching meaning to behavior

4. **Negotiation**: we allow the narratives of others to influence our own thoughts, ideas, and beliefs

"We Don't See Things As They Are,

We See Them As We Are." - AN
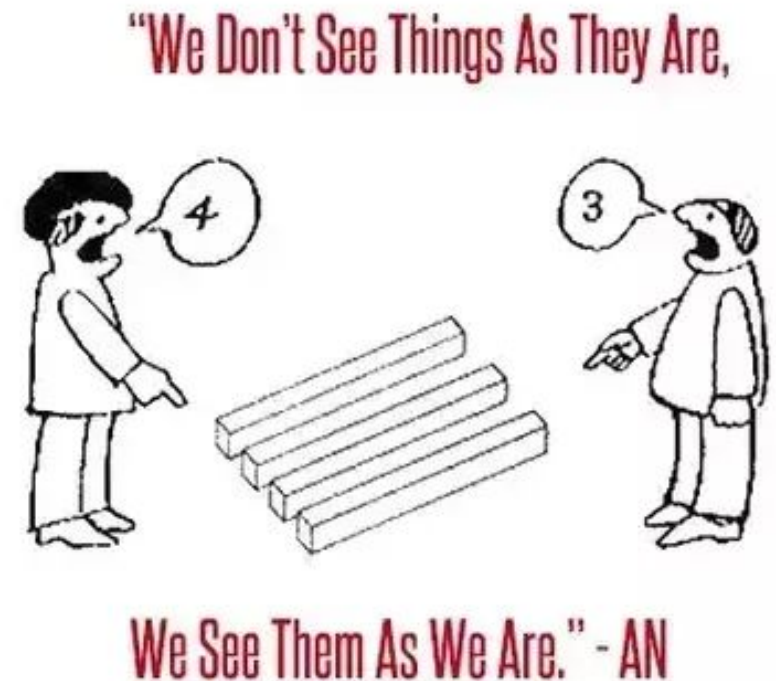
What influences our perceptions?

- Physiological influences
- Cultural and social influences
- Gender and Sex Roles
- Occupational Roles

Perception Pyramid

Narratives, Perception, and Communication

- Narratives: we all have our own stories about ourselves

- Attribution: the process of attaching meaning to behavior
  - We make snap judgments
  - Stereotyping
  - We judge ourselves in a more positive way than we do others (Self-Serving Bias
  - We pay more attention to negative impressions
  - We are influenced by what is the most obvious
  - We cling to 1st impressions
  - We assume others are similar to us

Empathy and Sympathy

- Empathy: the ability to re-create another's perspective

- Dimensions of Empathy
  - Perspective taking
  - Emotional feeling
  - Genuine concern

- Sympathy: Compassion for another's situation

Perception Checking

- A method to verify the accuracy of your interpretations

- Three Steps
  - Describe the behavior you noted
  - At least two interpretations of the behavior
  - Ask for clarification

Communication and Identity Management

- Identity Management: strategies we use to influence how others view us

- The Self
    - Perceived self: reflection of our self-concept
    - Presenting self: the public image (Face)
    - Facework: the work we do to create our public image

Identity Management

- We have multiple identities
- Identity management is collaborative
- Identity management can be conscious or unconscious
- People differ in their degrees of identity management

- Frame switching: we will change based on the situation
- Scripts: Over time we behave in predictable ways

Identity Management at Work

- Identities must be managed in the workplace
    - 1. Proceed with caution
    - 2. Assess the organization's culture
    - 3. Consider the consequences of not opening up
    - 4. Test the waters

Identity Management

- We must, others are forming impressions
- Social rules
- Mediated communication
- Being a competent communicator means choosing the best identity for the situation.