

## **Overview: Psycognition**

### **Psycognition**

Psycognition is a methodological approach for eliciting and studying subconscious behaviors. It is based on a systems theory model - people are self-organizing systems, organized psychologically around core memories and beliefs. Psycognition is based on the theoretical notion that behavioral forces originate from the subconscious and therefore directly influence individual perceptions and conscious behaviors. Psycognition is underpinned by the theory that a set of core beliefs, consisting of beliefs and emotional responses formed early in development are implicitly held in the subconscious.

These core beliefs continuously influence an individual's feelings, perceptions and actions. Furthermore, they result in certain behavioral strategies. These strategies are semi-predictable, if the underlying core beliefs are identified and understood.

These core beliefs can be categorized around certain behavioral themes, which are called character strategies or characterology. With this comes the notion that individuals will revert to their character strategy when under extreme stress, operating in survival mode, in life threatening situations or when their core beliefs are compromised.

### **Application**

Psycognition is intended for application areas where there is a requirement for a deeper understanding of what drives individuals, the strategies they adopt and their potential behaviors in critical situations. It has been applied to corporate environments, critical high profile situations, user requirements capture and in cognitive adaptive system design.

### **Framework**

Core to the Psycognitive approach is characterology. The term characterology refers to a gestalt of belief structures consisting of emotional responses that are semi-predictable and reside in the subconscious. The Psycognitive framework consists of a set of tools and techniques for eliciting information from individuals and models with which to analyze and structure the data. By moving beyond the field of cognitive psychology to the paradigm of humanistic psychology, Psycognition is able to gain new perspectives on human behavior.

## **Summary**

The methodological and theoretical framework upon which Psycognition is based is a powerful one for developing a deeper understanding of what universally drives humans. The purpose of Psycognition isn't to classify individuals according to their characterological type, instead it is to illuminate the individual patterns of behavior. Characterology is intended as a starting point for developing hypotheses about individual strategic behaviors, and thereby make predictions about the kinds of strategies individuals will drawn upon in certain situations.