

Boundaries

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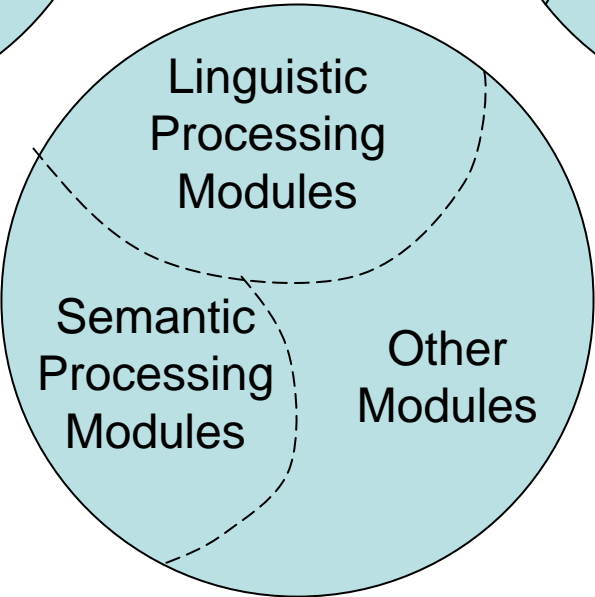
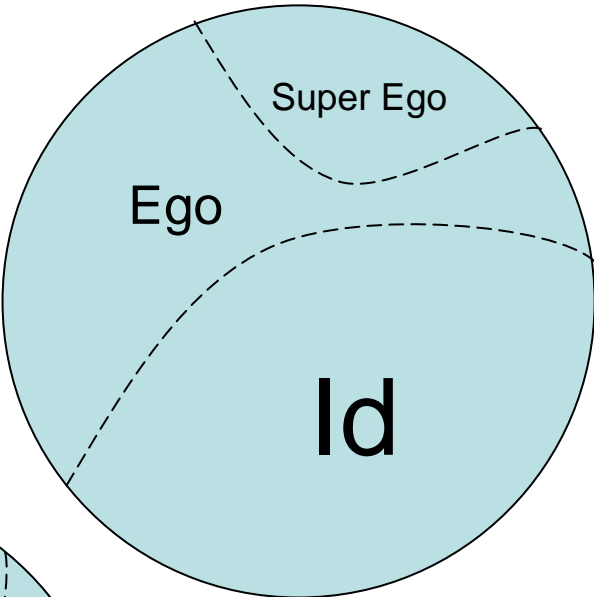
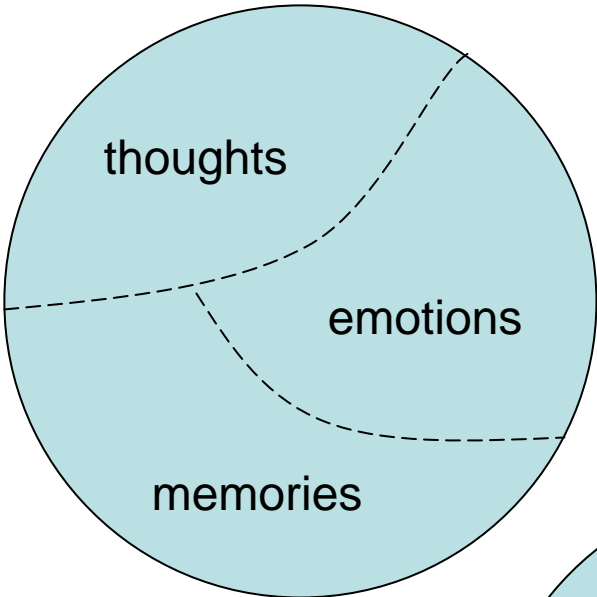
Boundaries

- The physical world, the world of our knowledge, and the world of our minds are all composed of entities, separated by some kind of boundary.
- The entities are carefully studied. The boundaries are usually ignored. The boundaries are considered one-dimensional lines. What is there to study?

Boundaries in the Mind

- No. Boundaries can be studied. They are not one-dimensional lines. They have thickness – they can be thicker (more solid, impermeable) or thinner (permeable).
- We have been studying boundaries in the mind for almost 20 years.

Views of the Mind



Types of Boundaries in the Mind

- Bs between different sensory inputs
- Bs between thoughts, between emotions, between thoughts and emotions
- Bs between sleep/waking/dreaming
- Bs between conscious, uncounscious
- Defense mechanisms as Bs
- Body Bs, Bs around one's self
- Bs related to memory: personal past, present, future.

Types of Boundaries, continued

- Interpersonal Bs. Bs in relationships
- Bs related to Identity: sex, adult vs child, etc.
- Group Bs. Bs around families, tribes, ethnic groups, races, nations
- Bs in opinions and judgements about what is true, what is beautiful, what is good, etc.

A few Questions from the BQ

- My feelings blend into one another
- A good organization is one in which all the lines of responsibility are precise and clearly established
- I can easily imagine myself as an animal or what it might be like to be an animal
- When something happens to a friend of mine or to a lover, it is almost as if it happened to me
- I am a down-to-earth no-nonsense kind of person
- I have had the experience of someone calling me or speaking my name and not being sure whether it was really happening or whether I was imagining it

A person with very thick Bs

- I am awake or I'm asleep. That's it. No in-between states.
- I don't let my emotions interfere with my thinking. They get in the way.
- I'm a man, you're a woman. Vive la difference!
- The accused is guilty, or he's innocent! A person is sane, or insane! No in-betweens.
- A good relationship (or organization) is one where everything is clearly defined.
- My group is this way. Other groups are totally different. Groups should remain separate.

A person with very thin boundaries

- Sometimes I'm not sure whether I'm awake, or still asleep and dreaming.
- There's no such thing as thought without emotion. My emotions are always involved
- I'm a man, but there's a lot of feminine in me too.
- We're all a little bit crazy. There are no sharp dividing lines.
- I'm a member of group A, but also sometimes groups B and C. Groups should mix more.

Coherence of Boundaries

- Of course some people have thick boundaries in certain areas and thin boundaries in others. However there is surprisingly good statistical coherence in boundaries. Those who score thin in one area are statistically very likely to score thin in other areas as well.

Groups Scoring “Thick” on the BQ

- Naval Officers
- Lawyers
- Patients with Bruxism
- Patients with Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder
- Students in Buffalo, compared to students in Boston
- Swiss(?) Estonians(?)

Groups Scoring Very “Thin” on the BQ

- Art students
- Nightmare sufferers
- Patients with Borderline Personality Disorder
- Patients with Schizotypal Personality Disorder

Boundaries and Dreaming

- People with thin boundaries remember more dreams and have more vivid emotional and sometimes nightmare-like dreams

Boundaries and Dreaming

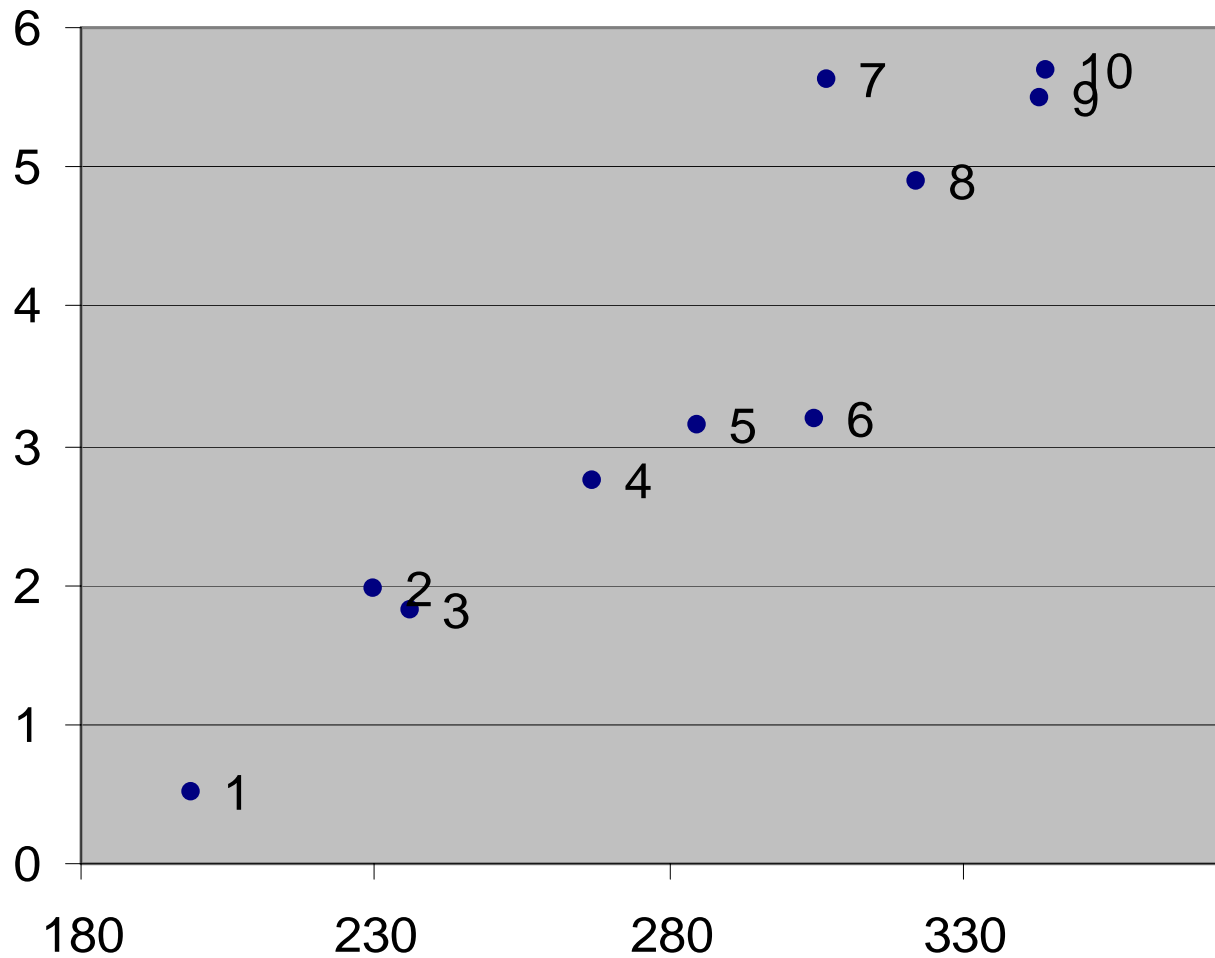


Figure 1. A CONTINUUM

	Focused Waking thought	Looser, Less-structured Waking thought	Reverie free association daydreaming	Dreaming
What dealt with?	perceptual input, math symbols signs, words		fewer words, signs, more visual-spatial imagery	almost pure imagery
How?	logical relationship — if A then B		less logic, more noting or picturing of similarities, more metaphor	almost pure picture- metaphor
Self- reflection:	highly self-reflective — “I know I am sitting here reading.”		less self-reflective, more “caught up” in the process, the imagery	in “typical dreams” total <u>thereness</u> , no self reflection
Boundaries:	solid divisions, categorizations, thick boundaries		less rigid categorization, thinner boundaries	merging condensation loosening of categories, thin boundaries

A CONTINUUM

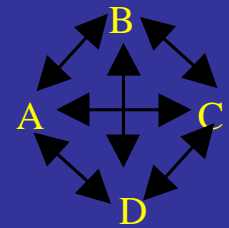
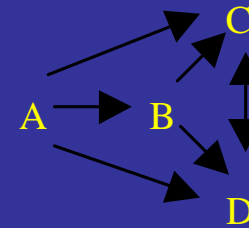
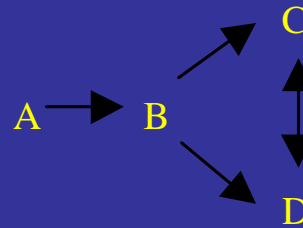
**Focused
Waking thought**

**Looser,
Less-structured
Waking thought**

**Reverie
free association
daydreaming**

Dreaming

**Sequence of
ideas or
images:**



Processing:

relatively serial; net functions chiefly as a feed-forward net.

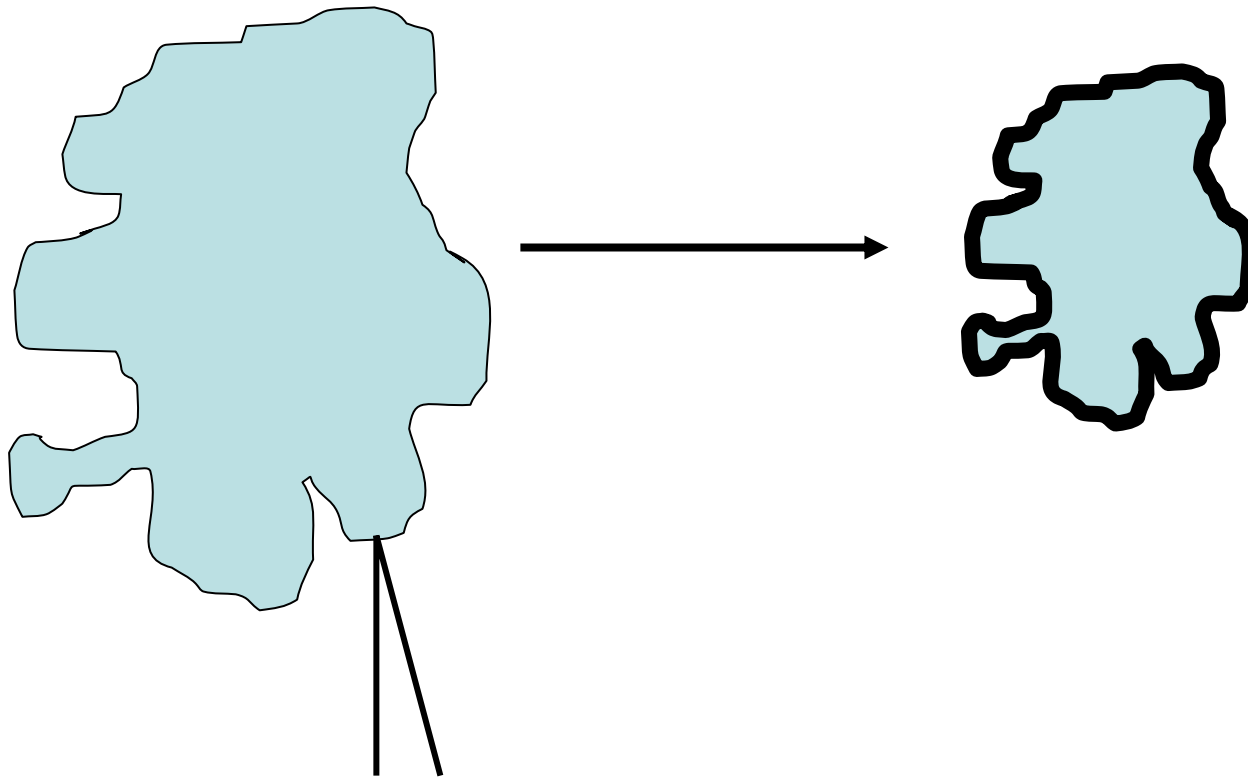
net functions more as an auto-associative net

Subsystems:

activity chiefly within structured subsystems

activity less within, more across or outside of structured subsystems

The Amoeba Principle



The Amoeba Principle

- Like the amoeba, the individual – and the society – “pulls itself together” when threatened. Under threat, boundaries become thicker.

Implications of Boundaries

- Relationships: a good relationship implies a thinning of boundaries within a thick boundary frame
- The individual , the group, the tribe, the nation
- Boundaries in religion and ethics
- Boundaries and philosophy, science, language, art
- War and peace, thick boundary peace and thin boundary peace