Ethical Decision Making & A Caring Response

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April 2020

VCU
College of Health
Professions
Gerontology

Learning Objectives

Compare and contrast	Recognize	Identify	Recognize	Apply
Compare and contrast morality and ethics.	Recognize a caring response in the context of person centered care.	Identify ethical principles that are important in guiding our everyday practice and individuals and as professionals.	Recognize types of ethical problems.	Apply the PAUSE model of ethical decision making.

Today let's agree to...

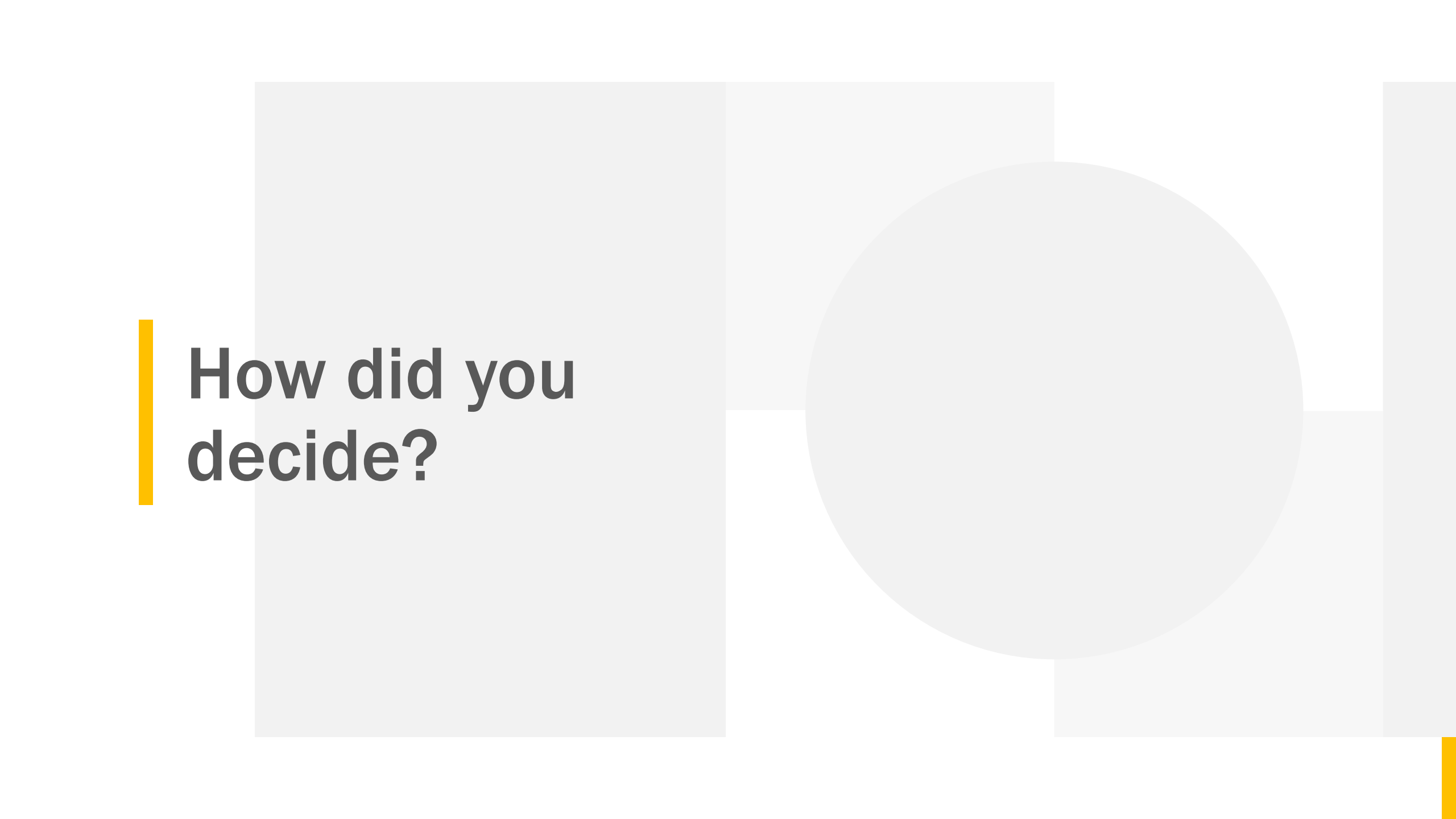|		
be courteous and attentive	*be reflective*	*slow down!*
make space for all voices	*respect silences*	*participate*

What else?

Culture

How did you decide?
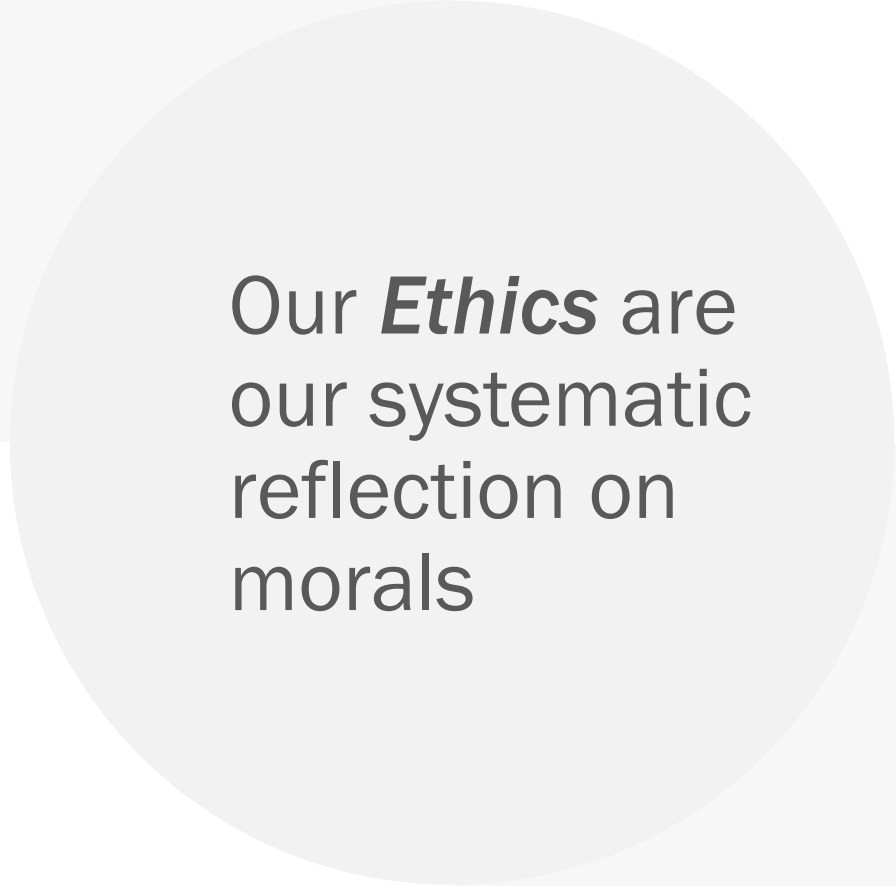
Compare and contrast *morality* and *ethics*

Morality and our "On Alert" moments

Our personal *Morality* consists of our personal principles of what we perceive as right/wrong, good/bad. These are acquired over a lifetime.

Our *Ethics* are our systematic reflection on morals

Our *morality* may only take us only so far – when our personal "alert" sounds, we need an *ethical* decision-making process to help us go further. Ethics gives us *that process* to decide what to do next.

Morality vs Ethics

	MORALS	ETHICS
What are they?	Our personal compass of right and wrong (i.e., our personal beliefs).	Agreed upon rules of conduct of a particular group of people (e.g., a profession).
Where do they come from?	Held beliefs acquired across a lifetime (influenced by parents, teachers, religious leaders, society, culture).	Practiced set of principles or guidelines. Learned from a reflective process, external bodies, such as a profession of which we may be members.
Why might we act on them?	Often feel automatic or because we believe something is the right thing to do.	We have discerned a process of reflection or an external process, such as a belief system or profession presented a process or method.
Flexibility	Our morality is influenced by our experiences. Unless our beliefs about something change, our morality remains consistent.	Ethical positions can change based on changing views in society.
Conflicts	We may morally (personally) agree or disagree with the moral positions of others. We may agree or disagree with an ethical position of a group. We may also experience conflicts within ourselves when our own principles conflict. This is why it is so essential to be able to identify and name your own alerts of Ethical Distress.	Ethical decisions are based on shared understandings of morality.
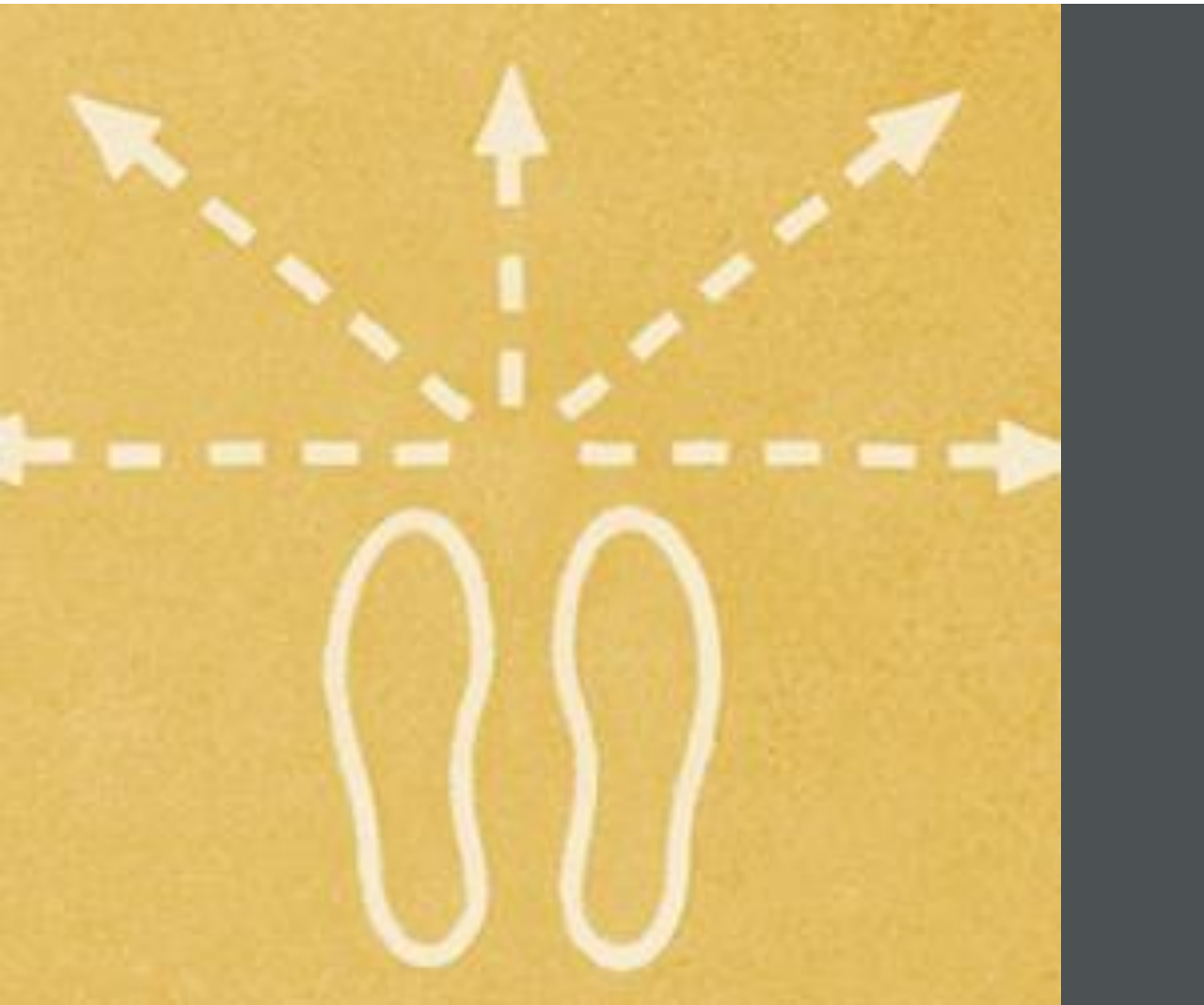
Recognize
a caring response in the
context of
person-centered care

1

Maintaining professional boundaries

(navigating skillfully between friendly & professional conduct)

2

Technical competence

(keeping skills up, knowing the limits of your role)

3

Professional responsibility

(accountability + responsiveness)

Person-Centered Care

What does person centered care mean to you?

Record for yourself your own definition

Person-Centered Care

Care is driven by the care recipient
(and supported by the care professional)

Upholds autonomy
(and avoids paternalism)

Fosters optimal aging
for the *whole* person
(a BPSS approach)

Recognizes the individuality of each person

What is the link between

person-centered care **and ethics?**

We create person-centered care from moment-to-moment

The values of the person we are serving must come first (not ours)

Acting ethically in the moment = person-centered care

What kind of person does it take to deliver person-centered care?

An *ethical* and discerning person!

Competent

Caring *(for self and others)*

Professional

Reflective

Accountable

Responsive

A Caring Response: the <u>GOAL</u> of ethical decision making

1

Maintaining professional boundaries

(navigating skillfully between friendly & professional conduct)

2

Technical competence

(keeping skills up, knowing limits)

3

Professional responsibility

(accountability + responsiveness)

To whom do we owe a caring response?

Individuals we serve/ourselves

Family Members

Staff/Coworkers

REVIEW

Morality

Internal

Personal beliefs about right & wrong

Unlikely to change unless beliefs change

Ethics

External

Rules of conduct for acceptable behavior in professions
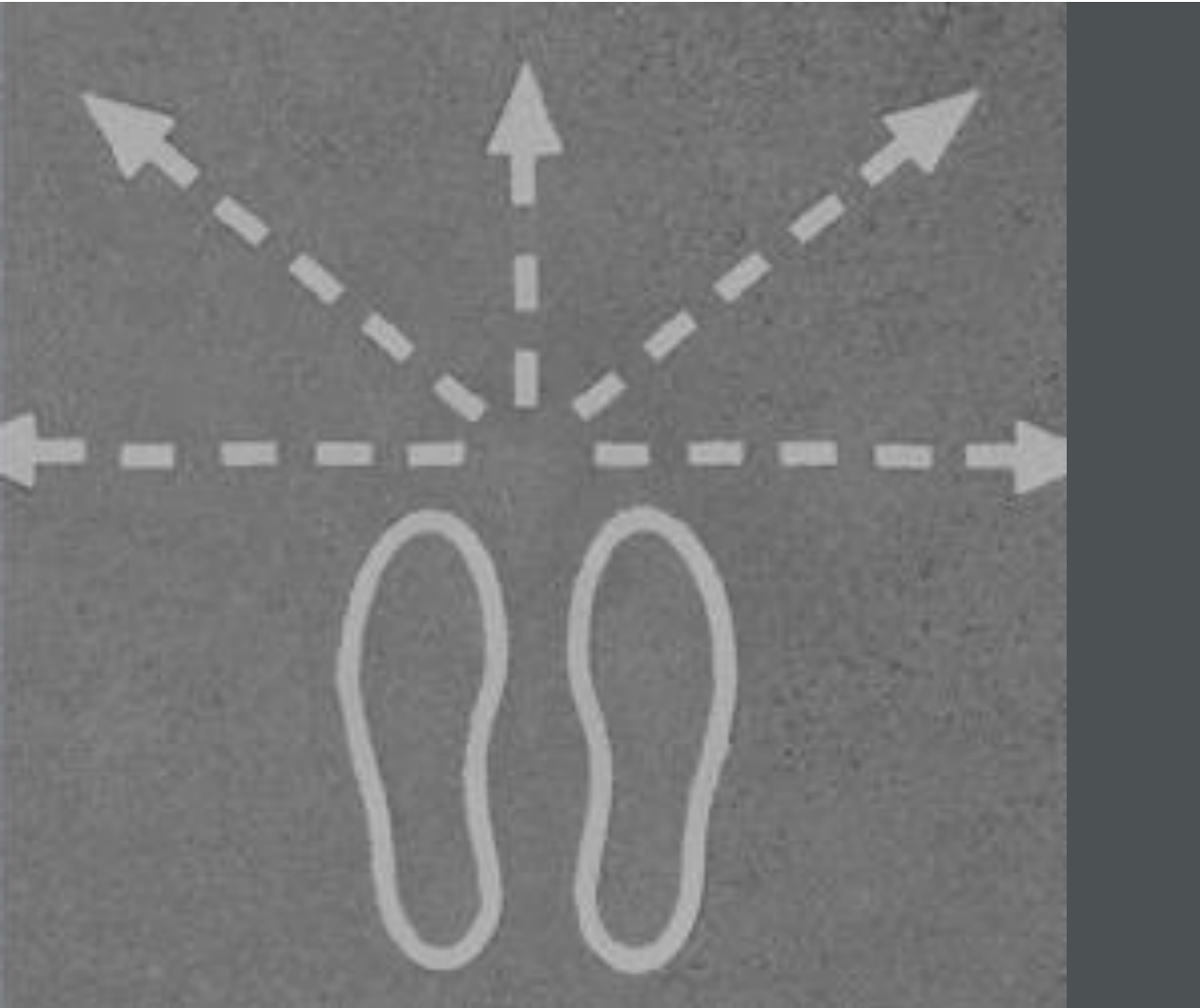
Provides a process to follow in making decisions

A caring response

The GOAL

Maintaining professional boundaries

Being competent

Acting responsibly (being accountable & responsive)

Identify *ethical principles* that are professionally important

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Do good (beneficence)
- Do no harm (non-maleficence
- Uphold justice
- Keep promises (fidelity)
- Tell the truth (veracity)
- Support autonomy

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- **Do good (beneficence)**
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Beneficence (doing good)

- Traditionally understood as the first principle of morality
- Bring about good outcomes
- Action done to benefit another
- Notion of benefits over burdens

But how do we know what "doing good" means in any given situation?

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Do good (beneficence)
- **Do no harm (non-maleficence**
- Uphold justice
- Keep promises (fidelity)
- Tell the truth (veracity)
- Support autonomy

Non-maleficence (doing no harm)

- Inflict no harm on self or others
- Prevent harm
- Remove an existing harm

Is it always possible to avoid harm? Could minimizing harm sometimes be the best outcome we can get?

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Do good (beneficence)
- Do no harm (non-maleficence
- **Uphold justice**
- Keep promises (fidelity)
- Tell the truth (veracity)
- Support autonomy

Justice

Equitable and appropriate treatment through:

- Fair allocation of benefits and burdens
- Compensation for wrongdoing
- Procedures that require ordering in a fair manner

How do we create justice in an unjust system?

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Do good (beneficence)
- Do no harm (non-maleficence
- Uphold justice
- **Keep promises (fidelity)**
- Tell the truth (veracity)
- Support autonomy

Fidelity

- Being faithful
- Adhering to professional codes of ethics
- Honoring what is agreed upon, whether verbal or written
- Promise keeping

Is it always possible to make – or keep – promises?

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Do good (beneficence)
- Do no harm (non-maleficence
- Uphold justice
- Keep promises (fidelity)
- **Tell the truth (veracity)**
- Support autonomy

Veracity

- Honesty
- Truth-telling

Could telling the truth actually cause harm? Is honesty always the best policy?

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Do good (beneficence)
- Do no harm (non-maleficence
- Uphold justice
- Keep promises (fidelity)
- Tell the truth (veracity)
- **Support autonomy**

Autonomy

- Thinking, deciding and acting freely and independently
- Self-determination
- Choosing for oneself

How do we support autonomy for those who rely on others for survival?

Note to self!

What ethical principles do you value most? Why are these important to you?

How do you know when your principles have been stepped on? What does your emotional early warning system feel like?
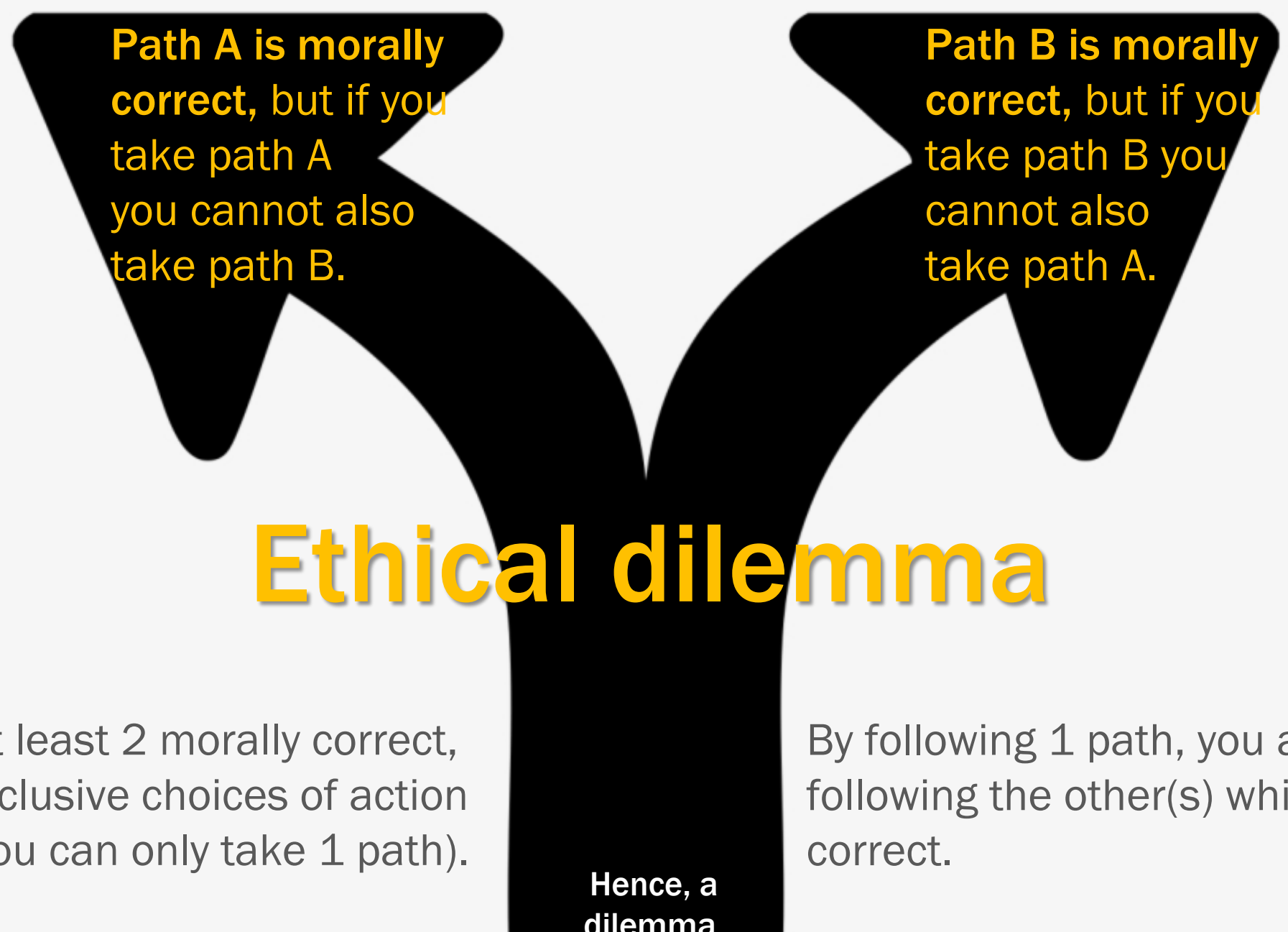
Recognize
types of ethical problems

Moral Distress

You know the right thing to do but you can't do it because you are blocked by something, e.g.:

- Your organization's policies

- Your own fears

The situation is new or very complex and you know something is wrong BUT you don't know what to do.

Locus of Authority - it may not be your place to act.

Path A is morally correct, but if you take path A you cannot also take path B.

Path B is morally correct, but if you take path B you cannot also take path A.

Ethical dilemma

You have at least 2 morally correct, mutually exclusive choices of action (meaning you can only take 1 path).

Hence, a dilemma.

By following 1 path, you are not following the other(s) which are also correct.

REVIEW

Ethical principles

- Do good
- Do no harm (x3)
- Uphold justice
- Keep promises
- Tell the truth
- Support autonomy

Ethical problems

- Moral distress (something is wrong but you are blocked from action)
- Ethical dilemma (you have at least 2 morally correct options but cannot do both, so you will be both wrong & right)

Knowing when you need ethics

- Tune into your "alert system" or emotional discomfort
- Respond by stopping and reflecting on *what is* & *what ought to be*

Apply the *PAUSE model* of ethical decision making

Pause & clear your mind.
Assess the facts.
Understand your options.
Seek the best solution.
Evaluate the outcome & the process.

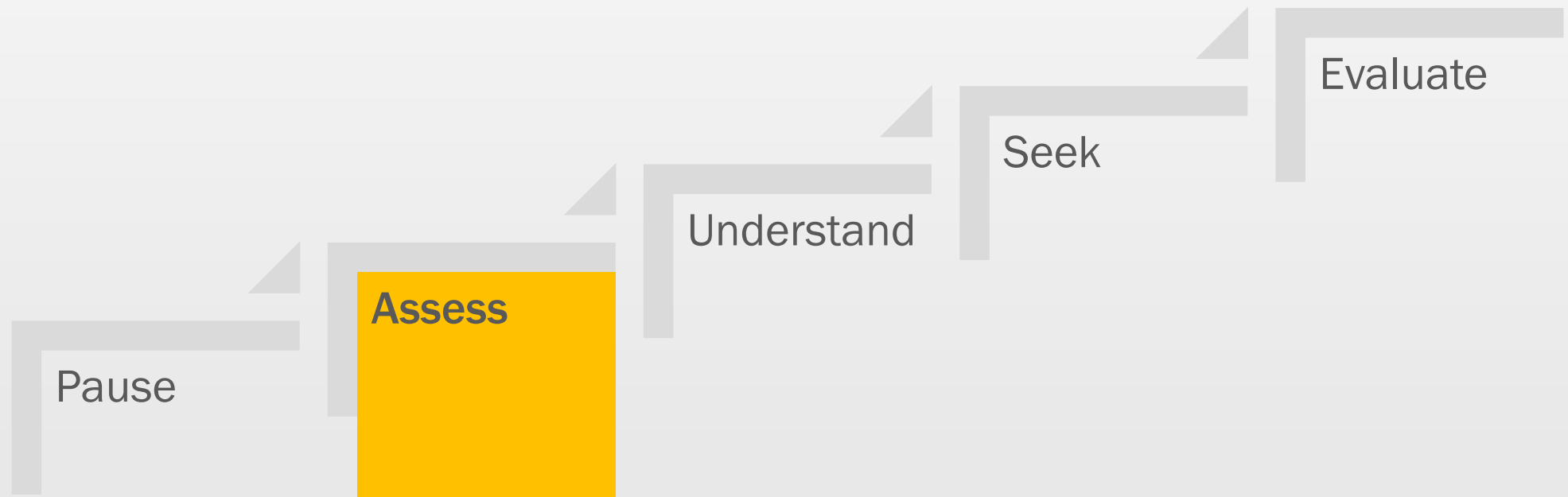The 5 step PAUSE model of ethical decision making
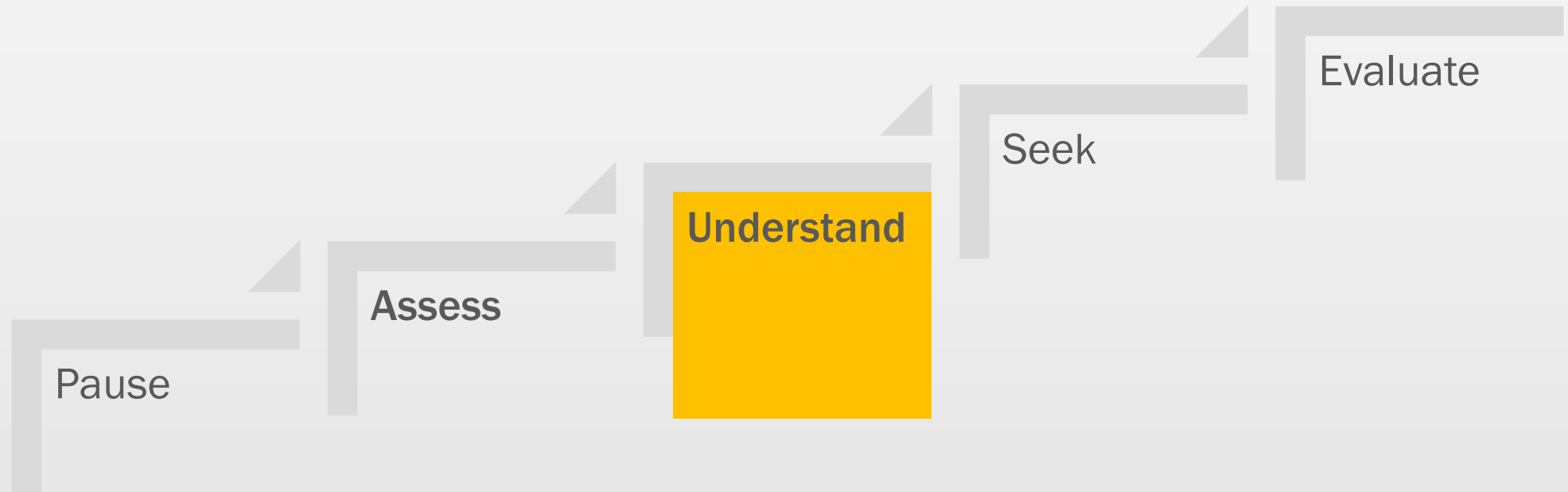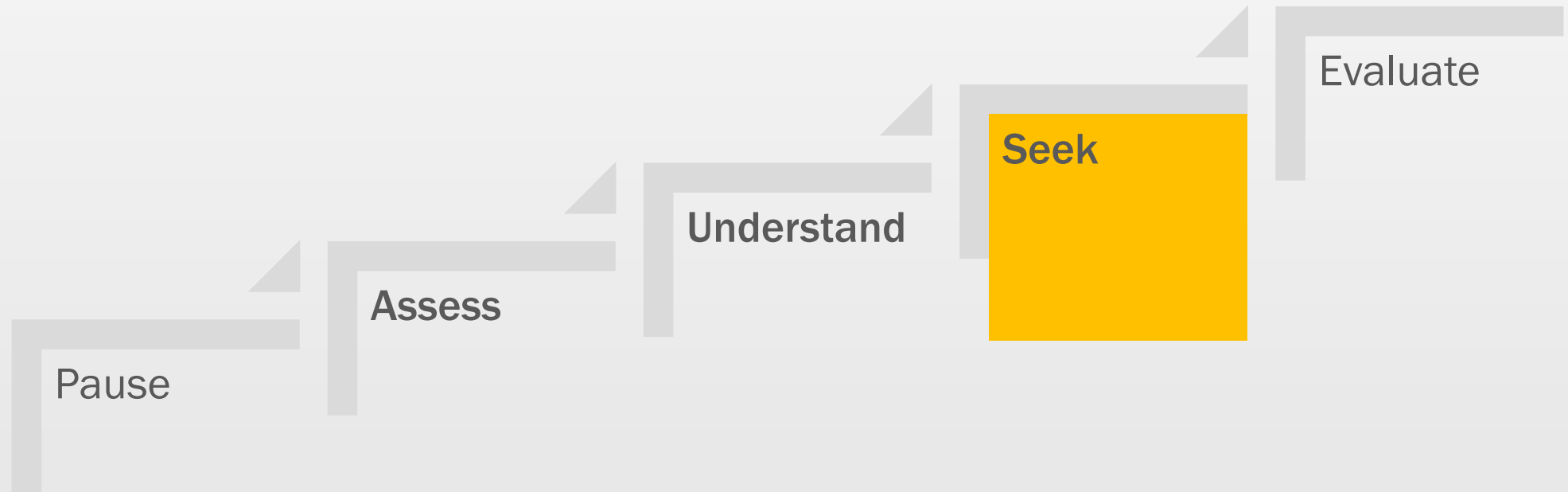
Step 1: Pause & clear your mind
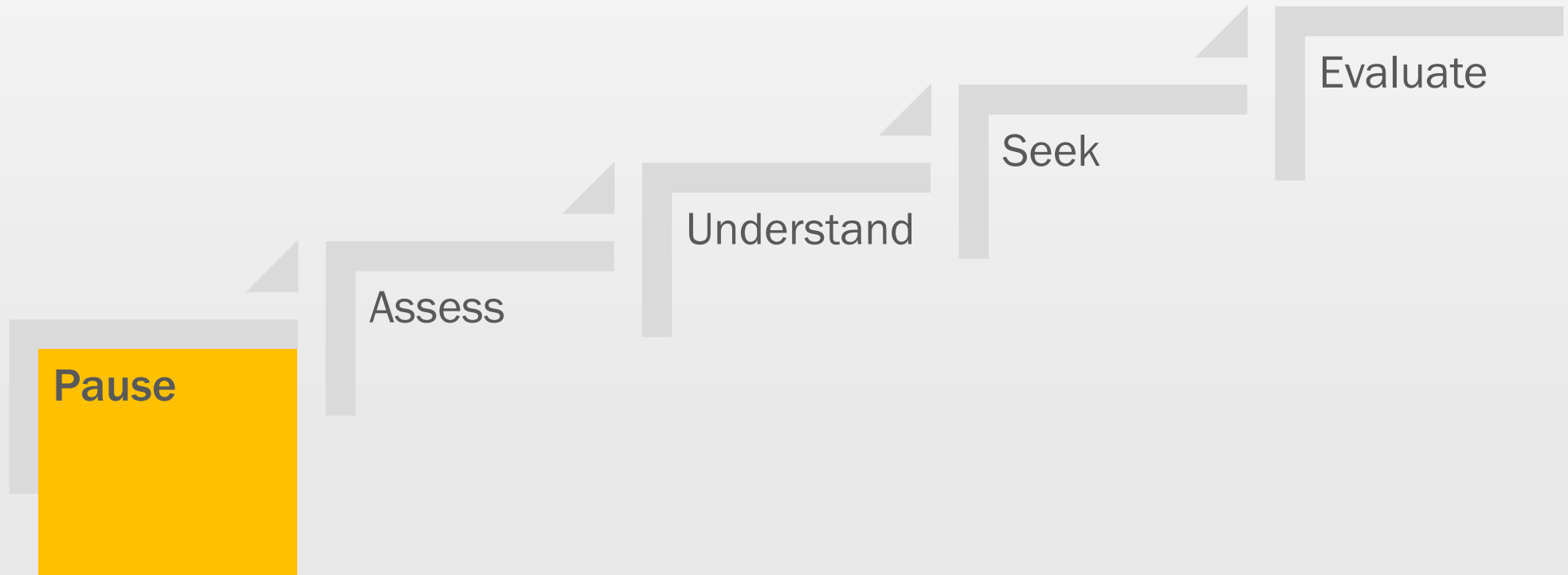
Pause

Assess

Understand

Seek

Evaluate

Step 2: Assess the facts

Pause

Assess

Understand

Seek

Evaluate

Step 3: Understand your options

Evaluate

Seek

Understand

Assess

Pause

Step 4: Seek the best solution

Evaluate

Seek

Understand

Assess

Pause

Step 5: Evaluate the outcome & the process

Pause

Assess

Understand

Seek

Evaluate
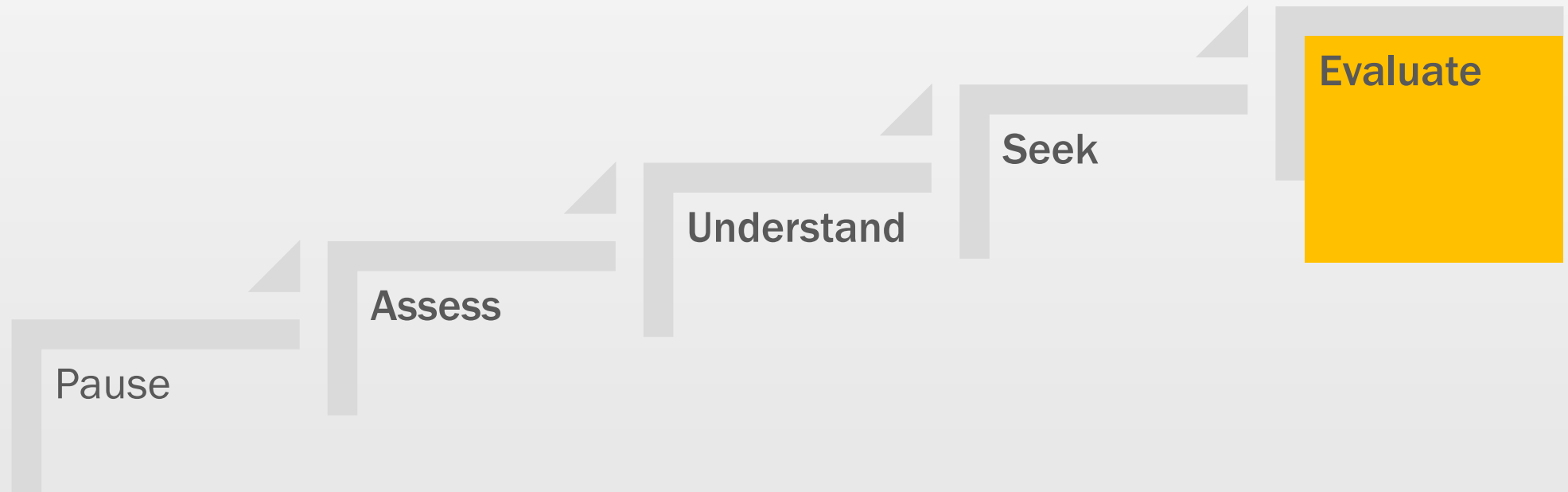
Just One Thing

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