Observer – The Fool and The Expert

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Introduction

In this article I explore the idea of the **fool** and the **expert** who are sometime seen at the extreme ends of a scale. **Group decision making** requires humans with various skills and expertise when discussing or debating complex topics - especially if large investment decisions and actions are being contemplated on behalf of a group. Even in historical times collections of humans with a number of skill sets or expertise were brought together to consider decisions and the value of their different ideas were appreciated and respected.

At one end of the scale is an expert who is extremely knowledgeable and experienced in on particular **topic** and at the other end of the scale is a human who is completely "foolish" in the same topic but may have other areas of expertise. Most humans have some knowledge between the extremes of most topics – this is obtained by education, interest and experience. **Classification frames** are used for information and topics – Libraries, Syllabus, Laws, Science, etc (examples - Organon https://www.jdavidstark.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/aristotle-organon-v-1.pdf and Leviathan http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3207?msg=welcome_stranger)

"**Wise Council**" is not easily achieved – especially where each human claims their field of expertise is more important than another human's expertise (vainglory, self importance). Other corruption of **good group decision making** occurs when decision makers directly benefit from the decision.

Politics, infighting, corruption – are all connected in group decision making. Humans use a variety of techniques to remove and discount alternative views to their desired outcome. I have explored some basic ideas around corruption in "12 Humanism – Corruption – Hypocrisy" https://humanistman.com/home/frames/humanism-frames/

It is difficult to identify Bad Actors and how they corrupt data, information and processes when groups are Observing, Communicating, Managing Issues and Acting.

Observe and Communicate

The initial human condition is to observe and communicate with other humans - then comes the ideas of managing an issue and acting. I have explored these basic human processes in "01 Humanism – High Level Process Views – Issues" https://humanistman.com/home/frames/humanism-frames/

If we examine the human processes of **1. Observe** and **2. Communicate** we can see that these form the very first processes of group activity and lead to the choices that groups make.

They consist of a number of sub processes which together form the basis of discussion, argument, debate and conversation in general. All of these processes revolve around **Data** and **Information** (we could consider data and information to be at the opposite ends of a sliding scale – at one end, data – more *"factual"* and at the other end, Information – more *"interpretative"*).

1.Observe = 1.1 Collect, 1.2 Frame, 1.3 Structure, 1.4 Analyze, 1.5 Verify, 1.6 Link, 1.7 Hypothesize, 1.8 Test

2.Communicate = 2.1 Conceptualize, 2.2 Translate, 2.3 Design, 2.4 Format, 2.5 Store, 2.6 Transmit, 2.7 Receive, 2.8 Store, 2.9 Interpret, 2.10 Acknowledge

All of these processes interact around Data and Information objects. This interaction of process with Data and information can be generally described as "**Questions**" (e.g. interrogate) – i.e. the data and information is improved by a general interaction of questioning the data and information to **improve** the **observation process** (1. Observe). Thus by means of communication within the group the data and information are improved and the **interpretation** (2.9 Interpret) of the data and information is improved within the group.

The humans who engage in this activity together may adopt various methods to do these processes which result in different amounts of energy and activity around each of the processes depending on any consequential process – **3. Manage Issues** (3.1 Investigate, 3.2 Classify) or **4. Agree** (4.1 Organize, 4.2 Discuss, 4.3 Record, 4.4 Store).

A conversation about whether it is raining or not is different to a conversation about whether to go to war with another group.

Frame
Humans who make observations, participate in discussions, make decisions on behalf of groups can have a number of characteristics. Humans tend to classify other humans as foolish or expert and will tend to exclude humans from discussions based on their perceived classifications.

Context
How should humans examine information and data and what are the human characteristics which influence this?

Perspective
How should group discussions around issues be conducted? Should some humans be excluded and ignored and others listened to more than others and why?

Population

This article looks at individuals involved in group decision making processes. Choice – making choices on behalf of a group - Nations. Advisors, councilors, parliaments, forums, debates, media.

Questions

What human characteristics are useful when examining (Observe, Communicate) issues?

What are the benefits of having a wide range of views when making choices for a group?

Are the human archetypes of Fool and Expert exemplars of the extremes of knowledge and expertise?

Can group processes and information be corrupted by humans? See - 12 Humanism – Corruption – Hypocrisy https://humanistman.com/home/frames/humanism-frames/ , https://humanistman.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/11-Humanism-Corruption-Hypocrisy.pdf

What are Bad Actors?

Processes

This looks at the processes of observation and communication between humans who are acting as a group. Initially it is observation and communication which can then generally lead to managing issues and acting and making choices about how to take action on behalf of a group. Group decision making – public service – public good – human group Nation States.

Initial Conditions/self reference

Shared Language between humans, communication Parliaments, media, public information sharing and discussion. **6. Supporting Processes** = 6.1 Resources, 6.2 Agreement Resolution, 6.3 Research & Development (especially **communication tools**), 6.4 Cooperation, **7 Current Issues = 7.1 Behavior of Individual Humans, 7.2 Nation State & Large Group Behaviors**

Observe and Communicate

Humans make many observations and communicate frequently with large amounts of information and data. Historically this was done on a small scale in small groups, then books, nations, education, libraries, debates, the internet and media expanded the frequency, complexity, size and number of humans involved.

The **wise council** of universities, scientific enquiry, editorial integrity in what was a highly regulated, controlled, privileged environment gave way to a wider, less controlled environment.

Someone could study, publish, communicate and participate in making decisions on the basis that they were an expert in "feminist history in transgender identity politics within Aboriginal culture". Hence they were an "**expert**' and everyone else was "**foolish**".

So the Greeks, Romans, European Studies which are typically described as the "the classics" was largely ignored in pursuit of topics and agendas which suited the needs and wants of each individual human.

This came about largely because of a huge capacity of groups to pursue what "*interested*" or "*fulfilled*" them rather than what the group (humans) needed to survive and develop – largely due to the worldwide expansion of food, trade and wealth. The topics of study where changed to reflect individual desire and not the group's needs (we need doctors, nurses, builders, farmers, plumbers, thinkers, explorers, philosophers, artists, teachers, etc)

Universities became more focused on making money than producing well qualified humans and some **nation states were unclear** about their role in education and what groups should do in regard to education and development of humans within their group.

This **lack of clarity** was also seen in the media's role to continually educate and inform groups.

Issue and Topic Expertise

No matter what the topic it is useful to have humans from a wide range of areas involved in discussing and exploring issues and ideas. Collections of humans who are able to argue and discuss complex issues has proved a real benefit to humans in solving some human problems. Kings relied on the court jester not only to provide comic relief but to input to discussions ideas and questions which would be less well received if being delivered by an "expert".

Much of comedy is based around difficult topics which is presented in a humorous way so humans are more able to engage with the topic rather than let their feelings control them and thus impede communication.

In discussion around any topic a number of issues will arise which would benefit from expertise from a number of different topic subject areas.

Background on Fool and Magician Archetypes

Imagine the types of humans needed when talking about complex topics. At any stage of the discussion anyone could be the fool or the magician.

The fool makes a joke or is seen to be funny or asks what seems like a silly question. The magician asks a question which may demonstrate that they are a fool or may demonstrate they something that no-one else knows – it is not easy to tell which is which. The only way forward is to keep exploring the issues and asking questions.

Fool, Magician, Wise council, experts all confer with a view to producing something - information – examining data and producing information. They make changes to data and improve information and processes which can be used by others. Hence **informed decision making** versus un-informed decision making.

The Magician : The Sage, wise, old man, ,Shaman, Holy Man, Wise Old Man, Ritual Elder, Knower, Seer, Prophet, Wizard, Alchemist, mystic, priest

The Fool: The Know-it-all Trickster, the Detached Manipulator is the Trickster archetype, wily, artful, beguiling, cagey (also cagy), crafty, cunning, cute, designing, devious, dodgy , foxy, guileful, scheming,

shrewd, slick, sly, subtle, tricky, convincing, shrewd, prankster, making friends, entertain, amusing, clown, comedian, Harlequin, (Punch? and Judy) "*is an archetype that is at peace with the paradoxes of the world. He uses humor to illuminate hypocrisy, and also level the playing field between those of power and those without.*"

Gift of the Gab, eloquence, barrister, impress, manipulate, trick, smarmy, smooth operator, confidence man, inventor of language and communication, (trade), convincing, pulling the wool over one's eyes.

Advisors to Kings were always at risk of losing their head if they offended the decision makers (the king) so they could either say nothing or lose their head if they said the wrong thing. The fool was always expected to say the wrong thing therefore it was accepted. The ability to say the wrong thing became an essential part of court.

"**Nisiba** *is the Sumerian goddess of writing, learning, and the harvest.* **Nisaba***'s worship began in the city of Umma, where she was originally a grain goddess during Early Dynastic Period I, c. 2900–2700 BC" "* *Nisaba's worship seems to have declined during the Babylonian period and the reign of Hammurabi in the 18th century BC, during which time goddesses were de-emphasized in favor of gods. By end of the Third Dynasty of Ur, her worship seems to have been mostly replaced by that of* **Nabu***, the male god of writing*"

"*As the god of wisdom,* **Nabu** *was linked by the Romans with* **Mercury** *and by the Egyptians with* **Thoth***.*"

"**Thoth** *was the god of wisdom, writing, hieroglyphs, science, magic, art, judgment, and the dead. The Egyptians credited him as the author of all works of science, religion, philosophy, and magic. The Greeks further declared him the inventor of astronomy, astrology, the science of numbers, mathematics, geometry, surveying, medicine, botany, theology, civilized government, the alphabet, reading, writing, and oratory. They further claimed he was the true author of every work of every branch of knowledge, human and divine*" (2500 BC?)

Greek God **Hermes** (1000 BC?) – fleet footed divine messenger of the Gods **AND** trickster and was the conductor of souls into the afterlife (**zero**) (Psychopomp) (Don't shoot the messenger?)

Daena https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daena

" *Daena[pronunciation?] is a Zoroastrian concept representing* **insight and revelation***, hence "conscience" or "religion." Alternately, Daena is considered to be a divinity, counted among the yazatas. Daena is a feminine noun which translates to "***that which is seen or observed***". In Zoroastrianism: An Introduction to an Ancient Faith, Peter Clark suggests that the term might also be tied to the Avestan root "deh" or "di-" to gain understanding.[1]*

The Avestan language term – trisyllabic daēnā in Gathic Avestan and bisyllabic dēnā in Younger Avestan – continues into Middle Persian as dēn, which preserves the Avestan meanings. For comparison, it has a **Sanskrit cognate dhénā which means thought, but thought in its higher and spiritual reaches***.[2][3] Remarkably* **Zen** *word in Zen Buddhism is also derived from dhayanā.*

It is thought that the "Daena" of Zoroastrianism, is related to Sanskrit "Dharma", also meaning "the Law".[4]" (1000 BC?)

Roman God **Mercury** (~753 BC) (and also the planet that is closest to the sun/power/danger – fleet footed Mercury because it is the fast moving planet). He is the god of financial gain, commerce, **eloquence**, **messages**, **communication** (including divination), travelers, boundaries, luck, **trickery** and **thieves**; he also serves as the **guide of souls to the underworld.**

The Tarot cards (1400's) have a magician Card. This is usually represented with a figure holding a hand up towards heaven and another to the earth as a connection to all things in heaven and earth, all the suit cards on a table and the infinity sign over the head. This demonstrates control over all things, connection with gods and infinity. Magi, and magician has its roots in Zoroastrianism.

The fool tarot card is usually a youth without a care in the world and unaware the cliff and danger in front of him and a zero over his head.
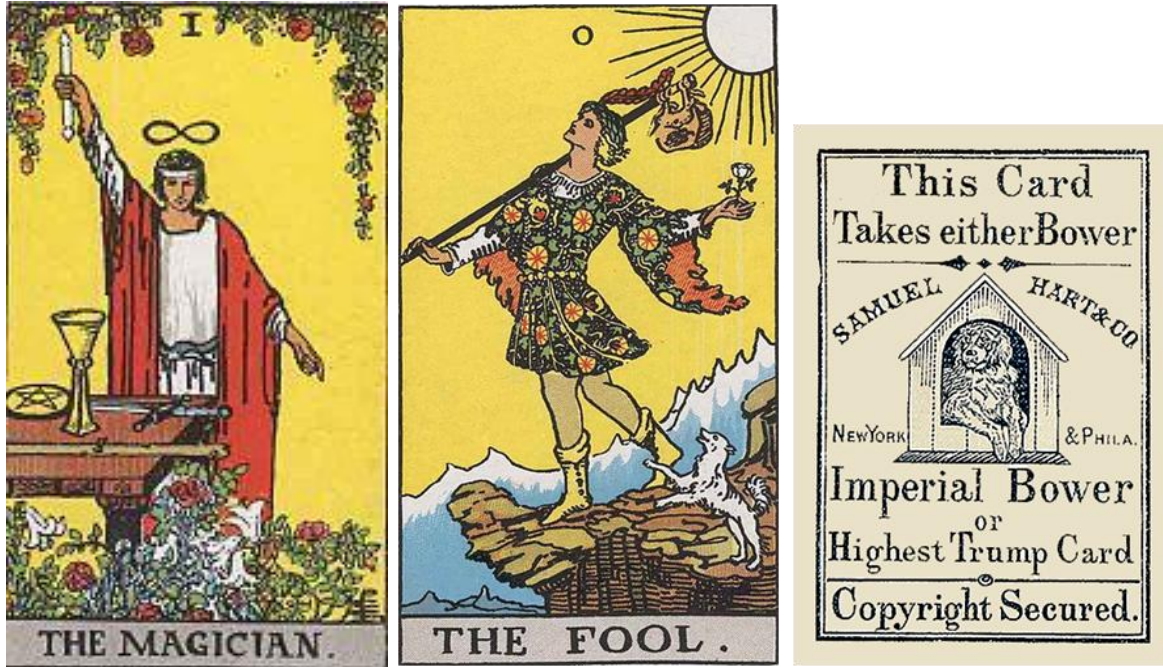
In a normal set of playing cards, the first "joker card" was an imperial bower card or highest trump card. The Joker trumps all suits. "*The Joker originated in the United States during the Civil War and was created as a trump card for the game of Euchre*"(1860) "*It is believed that the term "Joker" comes from Jucker or Juckerspiel, the original German spelling of Euchre*" (1848)

 You have been "trumped" by the joker. "Once again the joker has beaten you."

In some cards games the Joker can be the low card or the high card of any suit.

Links – Conceptual and coincidental

The emergence of the "harlequin" (1584), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlequin ,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commedia_dell%27arte, (1551) theatre and "Commedia" brought the
ideas of trickster, comedy, slapstick (used to change scenes in the theatre) together.

"*Early characteristics of Arlecchino paint the character as a second zanni servant from northern Italy
with the **paradoxical attributes of a dimwitted fool and an intelligent trickster**. Arlecchino is sometimes
referred to as putting on a show of stupidity in a metatheatrical attempt to create chaos within the play*"

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlequin#/media/File:SAND_Maurice_Masques_et_bouffons_01.jpg

Punch (with his slapstick) and Judy puppet shows (1662) also emerged from the comedy art form.

Clown appeared as character from the notion of childlike, simple, peasant and fool
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clown from greek and roman theatre.

The idea that the creation of the joker in a current set of playing cards has anything to do with the fool
or magician tarot cards is not strongly supported for the initial creation. Certainly as time went on the
German "Bower" card game, Euchre https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juckerspiel, had spread far and wide
and these special cards were called jokers – which also bare a strong relationship to "Jack" and the
Germen name for the game "Juckerspiel".

So the ideas of "trickster" and "taking a trick" in card games are linked. Joker became linked to
harlequin, comedy and the historical Tarot playing card notions of fool and magician. Theatre ideas
developed from the gods, images and symbolism which had developed over the years.

The dates of gods and their various meanings is a subject of some debate and needs much further investigation but for illustrative purposes there seems to be a consistent thread.

Crops, Language, Commerce, Trade – seem to go together and then trickster appears as well. Advanced knowledge appears as Magi. Trickster and death merge with Greek, Roman and Egyptian gods.

The planet Mercury is close to the Sun - which is also the God Ra – coincidently.

These links between gods, planets and symbols may have helped shape the Tarot cards and the current understanding of Magician and Fool - especially around the ideas of 0 and infinity being represented and the connection to notions of expert and fool.

The idea that someone could be a liar, trickster, fool, messenger from god, knowledgeable and magician all at once seems to be well represented in historical archetypes.

Model of Expertise in topics

Humans look at data and processes to understand issues. They analyze data and produce information. They sometimes hypothesize and test their hypothesis. They communicate their data and information and constantly seek to improve the data and information.

Humans who have collected, examined and produced large amounts of data and information can ask other humans to participate in the improvement of the data, information and processes. The less corrupt they are when they do this then the better the data and information get. Ignorance, incapacity, fear of being wrong, disinterest, incompetence are gradually overcome the more work they do and the more they learn from others and about themselves. **As long as they not corrupted** by total self interest and other forms of related corruption then the value of their data and information can be **trusted** by the group.

Experts can build data and information on a wide range of topics e.g. accounting, maths, errors, law, health, predictive modeling tools, building codes, electricity, etc.

If you have not developed sufficient expertise then you could still be considered not an expert and **ANY QUESTION** you ask of an **EXPERT** could be seen as foolish.

A distribution graph of human expertise on any topic is represented as follows where most humans are neither extremely foolish or extremely expert.

Fool   Expert
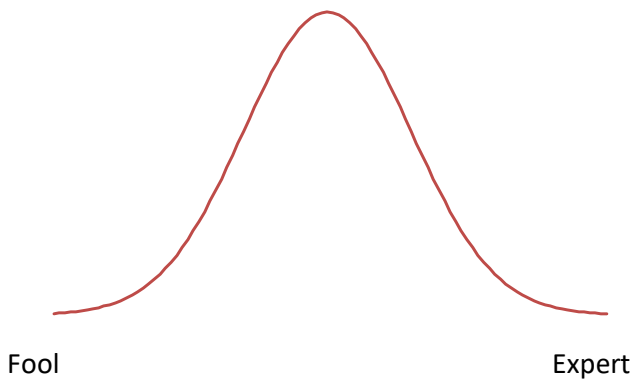
Stating the Obvious

What is obvious to me may not be obvious to you. I therefore have no alternative to say what I think needs to be said in any discussion to participate in the process. Some fairy tales illustrate the human states and how they interact.

Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales, by Hans Christian Andersen - The Emperors' New clothes – has the following humans:

- **The Emperor** – vain glorious pretence, self interest and specialness through being "clothed", too fearful/proud to admit being ignorant/incompetent – **Fool**
- **Faithful "honest" Officials, courtiers, the crowd, etc** - too fearful/proud to admit being ignorant/incompetent – Fools/**Incompetent**
- **Swindlers** – self interested, liars, sycophants, glorify, aggrandize, **Bad Actors**
- **The Child –** states the obvious – **not fearful** of – ignorance, incapacity, incompetence

In this story we see how groupthink and incompetence work and how the failure to admit being human **allows Bad Actors to flourish**.

Debate

Having a variety of humans in debates is a good idea because even the foolish question can provoke thoughtful discussion and highlight issues in the data and information.

The Human processes for examining issues can be difficult in groups because each individual may be going through all of the human states and others in the group are observing. They fear being *found out or punished* by the group. **This helps Bad Actors hide.**

A way to avoid this is to use structure and processes to allow the debate to focus **not the humans** but on the:

- **DATA** – **Process** used to get it, quality, coverage, gaps, etc

- **INFORMATION** - **Analysis, Interpretation, Hypotheses** - History, quality, contentious, understood, not yet understood, usefulness
- **QUESTIONS** - known and arising

This debating process is not the same as the **Manage Issues** or **Act** processes and therefore does not need to examine Plans or specific actions. This shows up how the current parliamentary processes can get confused when debating the data, information and questions is overtaken by the idea that there is agreement to specific Action.

So the very first question is to ask after debating Data and Information is **"DO WE NEED TO ACT?".** (see type 1 and Type 2 errors in human choice https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Type_I_and_type_II_errors)

The next question is **what actions can we take** and what **data** and **information** do we need to support our choices.

This all then feeds into the Manage Issues and Act processes.

The History of Being Wrong

- You can't be wrong if you never say or do anything.
- All humans are wrong sometimes.

In the absence of better data and information and observation and communication processes humans proposed hypotheses to account what they observed. Many hypotheses have been argued and many have been discarded; Genetics, Flat Earth, Sun revolves around the Earth (thousand year discussion Babylonian times to Copernicus)

There is a nice technique used by mathematicians where they manage issues by sharing a public list. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_unsolved_problems_in_mathematics

Anyone can see the list and attempt to find solutions. The list is of Math's Problems – they are defined and stated with sufficient information so that everyone agrees and understand what they are. Some Math's problems have not yet been thought of yet and some problems have not been solved yet. Solutions can be stated and then the rest of the community checks and verifies whether that solution is correct or not.

Some hypotheses are good as a general rule but will not work in all circumstances – e.g. Newton's Laws. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superseded_theories_in_science (partial and useful - Aristotelian physics – superseded by Newtonian physics – rule of thumb)

Humans need to explain their hypotheses so they can be shared and verified. Stephen Hawking - https://www.thoughtco.com/leonard-susskind-2698931, https://www.theceomagazine.com/business/innovation-technology/6-stephen-hawkings-theories-either-disproved-potentially-accepted/

Current Issues

- Planet wide discussion, information sharing, planet wide contributions to difficult problems
- Meeting of minds – worldwide – constant discussion and uncoordinated action
- Fact data, fake, information, fake people, corruption, self interest, etc
- Bad Actors
- Poor debating processes (Bad Actors)
- Poor issue observation and identification process (Bad Actors)

Bad Actors and their techniques

There are Bad Actors who will interfere with Observations and Communication of groups. They will try to corrupt groups who are managing issues and choosing to act. They can attempt to corrupt the Data and Information being used by the group and they can also corrupt the processes used by the group. Bad actors can sometimes act from with the group itself or from another group which is trying to corrupt the group. The feature of Bad Actors is that they act in their own self interest and not in the interest of the group.

Not being a Bad Actor

"The Superior Man is all-embracing and not partial. The inferior man is partial and not all-embracing.""The virtuous is frank and open; the non-virtuous is secretive and worrying.""Sincerity is the end and beginning of things; without sincerity there would be nothing" Author(Confucius) :Year(-500) :Source(The Analects) https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Confucius

Ignorance, Incapacity, Incompetence, Fear and Cowardice, Disinterest, Bad Actor

The main categories of human states which humans can progress through in their lives and also occupy from time to time when issues arise.

While all humans occupy these states and recognize those states in others they are all generally well accepted by the groups as the natural features of life. Humans are not treated badly within a group just because they are ignorant, incompetent, incapacitated, cowardly or show little interest in issues. These human states are all well accepted by the group. Humans will try to recognize behaviors emerging from these human states and adapt accordingly.

What human state is most dangerous to the group's survival, health and well being? These humans are classed as "**Bad Actors**". Liar, malevolent, deceitful – **acting mainly out of self interest** and showing little care for the group as a whole.

Ignorant humans will sometimes know they are ignorant and **still learning** – others will not know they are ignorant and not accept or recognize any ignorance in themselves. (Ignorance is Bliss).

"There's no such thing as a bad question"

This is a general statement which intends to convey the idea of open enquiry from any human state **other than** Bad Actor. A Bad Actor can use questions against others as a technique for their own self interest or as a general technique to avoid exposing the group's desire to have the Bad Actor answer a few Why questions themselves. Bad Actors can uses questions to **attack** others who question them or threaten their own self interest.

The Power of Why as a Question

The main questions for humans when investigating data and information are, in order:

Exists, What, Who, How, When, Where and **Why**.

I explore this here: https://humanistman.com/home/frames/meta-frames/ 8. Language and Symbols – "Humanism –Meta Frames –Language" https://humanistman.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/06-Humanism-Meta-Frames-Language.pdf

Detailed information can be provided to each question. One way Bad Actors avoid providing correct information is to ignore the Why question and spend all of their time and energy on information about all the other questions.

One of the **best ways to identify human bad actors** is to recognize their avoidance of the Why question. The particular advantage of this avoidance technique is that it also applies to all other human states. An incompetent, incapacitated human does not know why, an ignorant human normally does not want to been seen as ignorant, a coward is too afraid to say why, a disinterested human does not care to say why.

Humans, who do answer the question why, must accept that they are at least partially incompetent, ignorant, incapacitated, disinterested or cowardly. Humans can face their own human state and accept this in other humans for all human states **except** "Bad actor".

If a Human can authentically answer the question why **without** saying "I was acting in my own self interest" then they are probably not a Bad Actor. If they answer the question why with a lie e.g. "I was acting in the interest of the group" then they have to explain how their action benefitted the group and the group has to accept that – otherwise they can be considered a Bad Actor.

Techniques to avoid the Why Question

Bad Actors have developed techniques to avoid detection. Many of these techniques also interest scientists investigating mental health issues.

1. Avoid – do everything to not answer the question
2. Lie
3. Blame – answer the question and then blame other humans
4. Attack – attack the human asking the why question

Public Servants Avoiding Why

When humans who are employed, paid and trusted by the human group to take actions - the constant question from the rest of the group which needs to be answered is Why. The information provided by the public servants has to be sufficient to satisfy the group.

So when I ask public servants these questions:

- What were you thinking?
- Why did you think this action was justified?
- Why did you act this way?

And they use all the avoidance techniques then this indicates the likelihood of Bad Actors being involved in the public service.

Questions Each Human Should Ask of Themselves

These questions should be used by every human when examining information and data and participating in observation communication, managing issues, and taking action.
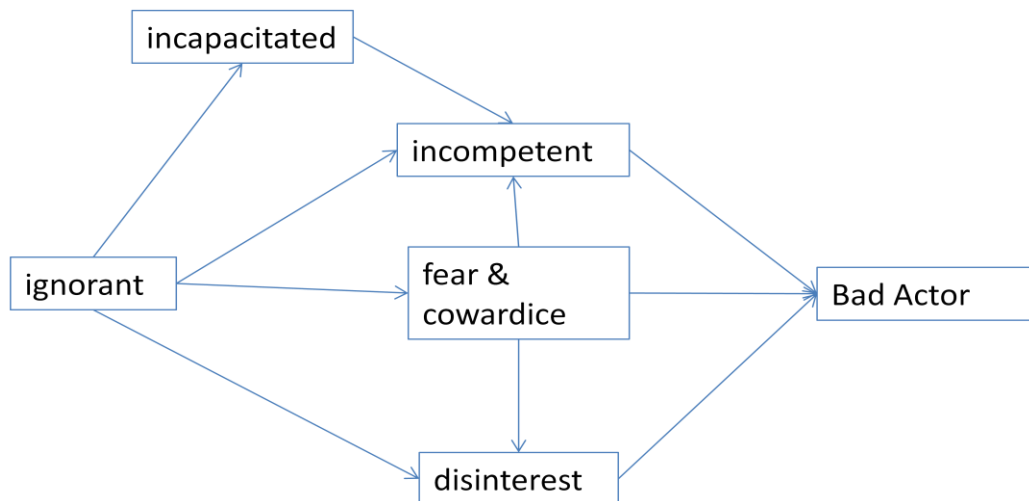
You will see that these questions also apply in general to every human.

Am I IGNORANT, Do I have the CAPACITY, am I COMPETENT, am I COWARDLY, am I INTERESTED, am I a BAD ACTOR:

when observing or contributing to this data, information and process?

Human States

Humans will always be ignorant, incompetent, incapacitated, fearful and disinterested. Learning to cope with that is important because it stops us from becoming bad actors.

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41. DAENA https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daena
42. Zoroastrianism https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroastrianism
43. Avesta http://www.avesta.org/ "25. Hail to thee, O Haoma, who hast power as thou wilt, and by thine inborn strength! Hail to thee, thou art **well-versed in many sayings**, and true and holy words. Hail to thee for thou **dost ask no wily questions**, **but questionest direct**."
44. DIWATA https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anito
45. Simon Magus https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_Magus
46. Magi https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magi
47. Juckerspiel https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juckerspiel
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50. Zoroaster https://www.ancient.eu/zoroaster/
51. Analysis models https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/business-analysis-models
52. Problem Solving https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_00.htm
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57. Project Gutenberg's Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales, by Hans Christian Andersen https://www.gutenberg.org/files/32572/32572-h/32572-h.htm
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