

From Information Overload to Informed Action: Using Health Literacy to Ignite Better Health Decisions

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Disclosure Statement

None of the planners for this activity have relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies

Housekeeping Notes

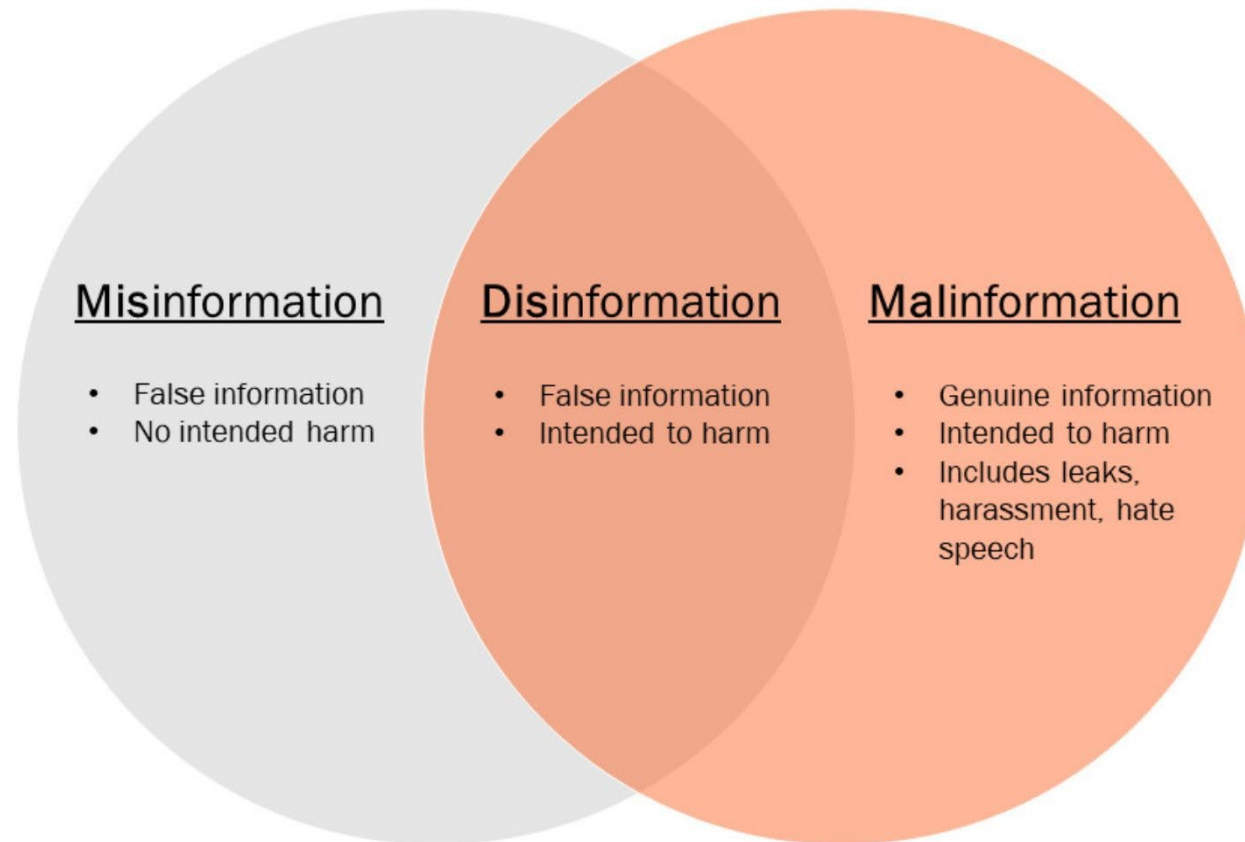
- Use the chat for comments related to the webinar topic.
- A Q&A session will take place at the end of the presentation. Please use the Q&A box to submit your questions anytime.
- The webinar will be recorded and posted in the Health Literacy Solutions Center webinar archives.
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- To receive continuing education credit, you must complete the evaluation to obtain your certificate.



Health Misinformation

What is Health Misinformation?

Health misinformation is **any health-related claim that is false, misleading, or lacks a sound evidence base**—regardless of intent. This includes information that may be accidentally or intentionally spread.



What makes health information credible?

- Source
- Evidence-based
- Not anecdote-driven
- Transparent about limitations
- Reproducibility
- Consensus
- Motivation
- Alignment with physiology and logic
- Empowers, not manipulates



Information Overload



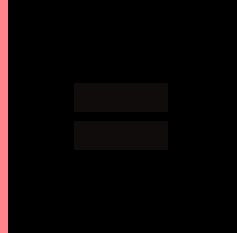
Information overload occurs when the amount of information someone receives **exceeds their ability to process it effectively**, leading to confusion, indecision, or inaction.

In health, this means patients are flooded with advice, data, and opinions—so much that they **can't tell what's relevant, credible, or personally applicable**.

Health
Misinformation



Too Much
Information



Confusion

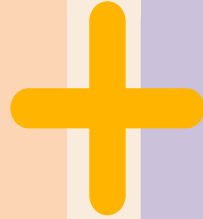


What is Health Literacy?



Personal Health Literacy

Personal health literacy is the degree to which individuals can **Find, Understand, and Use** information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.



Healthcare Literacy

Healthcare literacy is the degree to which individuals can **Find, Understand, and Use** information and services within **the healthcare system** to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.



Organizational Health Literacy

Organizational health literacy is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to **Find, Understand, and Use** information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

Health Literacy Matters

Health literacy is crucial for **everyone.**

- Helps prevent health problems
- Enables better management of health conditions
- Reduces health disparities
- Empowers informed decisions

Limited health literacy affects

- All racial and ethnic groups.
- People of all ages.
- Even highly educated people.





Health Literacy Is a Real Opportunity for Employers

Improving health literacy could **prevent nearly 1 million hospital visits** and **save over \$25 billion a year.**¹

Nearly **9 out of 10** adults struggle to use everyday health information.²

Improving health literacy **could reduce organizational healthcare costs by 3-5% or even up to 10-12% per decade.**³

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, October 17). *Tell others about health literacy.*

² Center for Health Care Strategies, Health Literacy Fact Sheet, March 2024

³ Milken Institute: Health Literacy in the United States, 2022

Health Information Perceptions

72% of people go to the internet **first** when they need health information.¹

41% of young adults **regretted a health decision** made from false or misleading information.³

Nearly **9 out of 10** adults struggle to use everyday health information.²

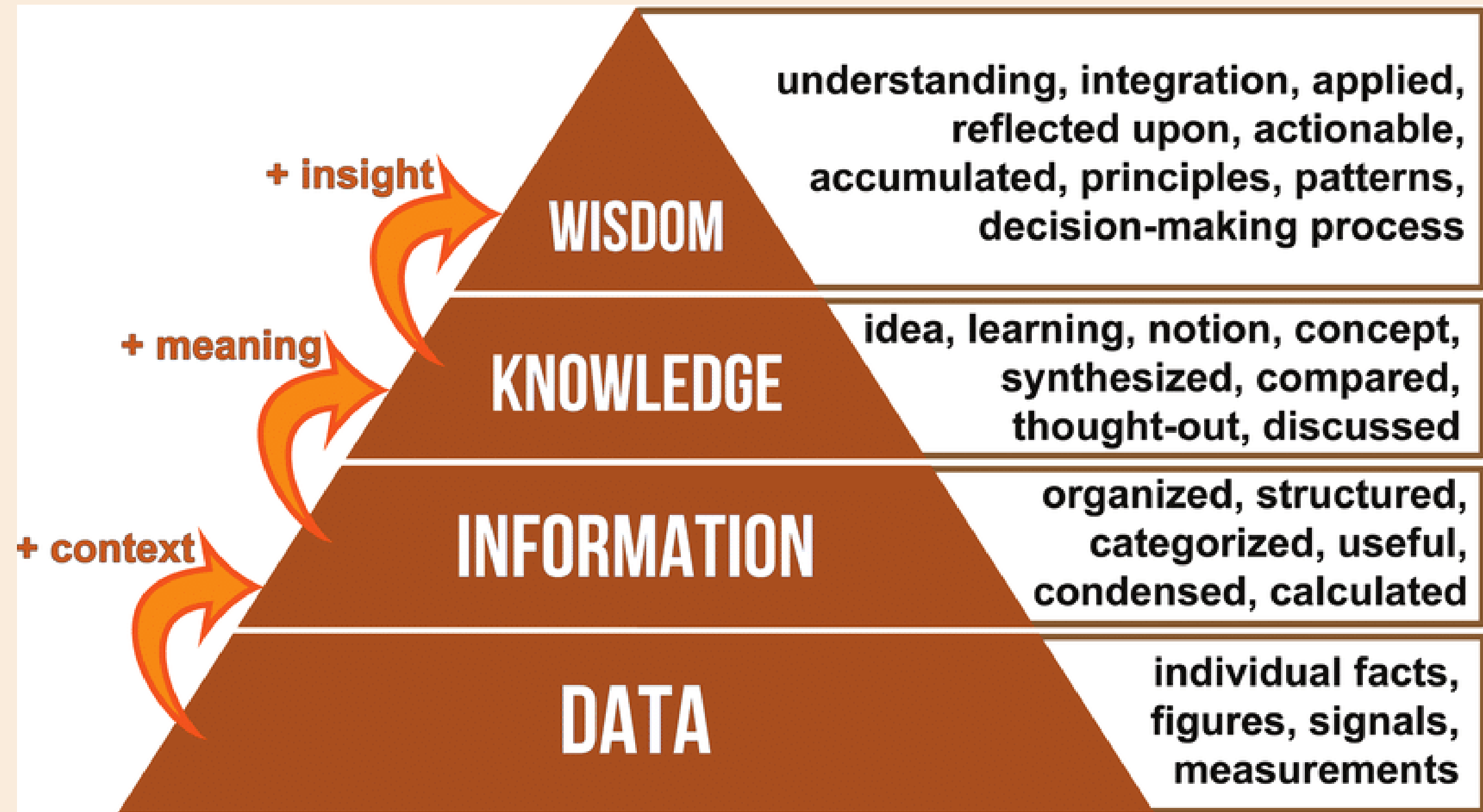
54% of young adults said they had **taken health advice from online creators, friends, and family instead of a doctor.**³

68% of young adults trust their organization to address health needs and concerns.³

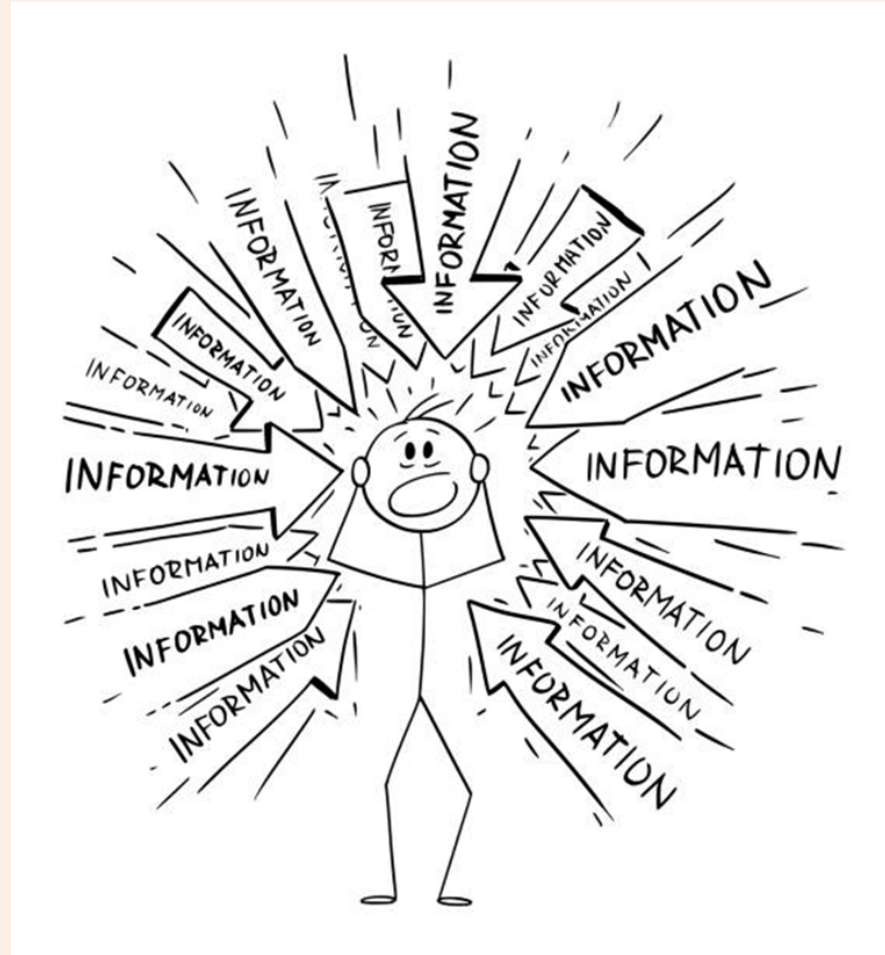
¹ National Cancer Institute. *Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS)*. National Institutes of Health. <https://hints.cancer.gov/>. Accessed August 2025.

² Center for Health Care Strategies. *Health Literacy Fact Sheet*. March 2024. <https://www.chcs.org/>. Accessed September 29, 2025.

³ Edelman Trust Institute. *2024 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and Health*. <https://www.edelman.com/trust/2024-trust-barometer-health>. Accessed September 29, 2025.



More health information does not guarantee better health literacy or better health outcomes.



Common **Cognitive Biases** affecting Health Literacy

Confirmation Bias

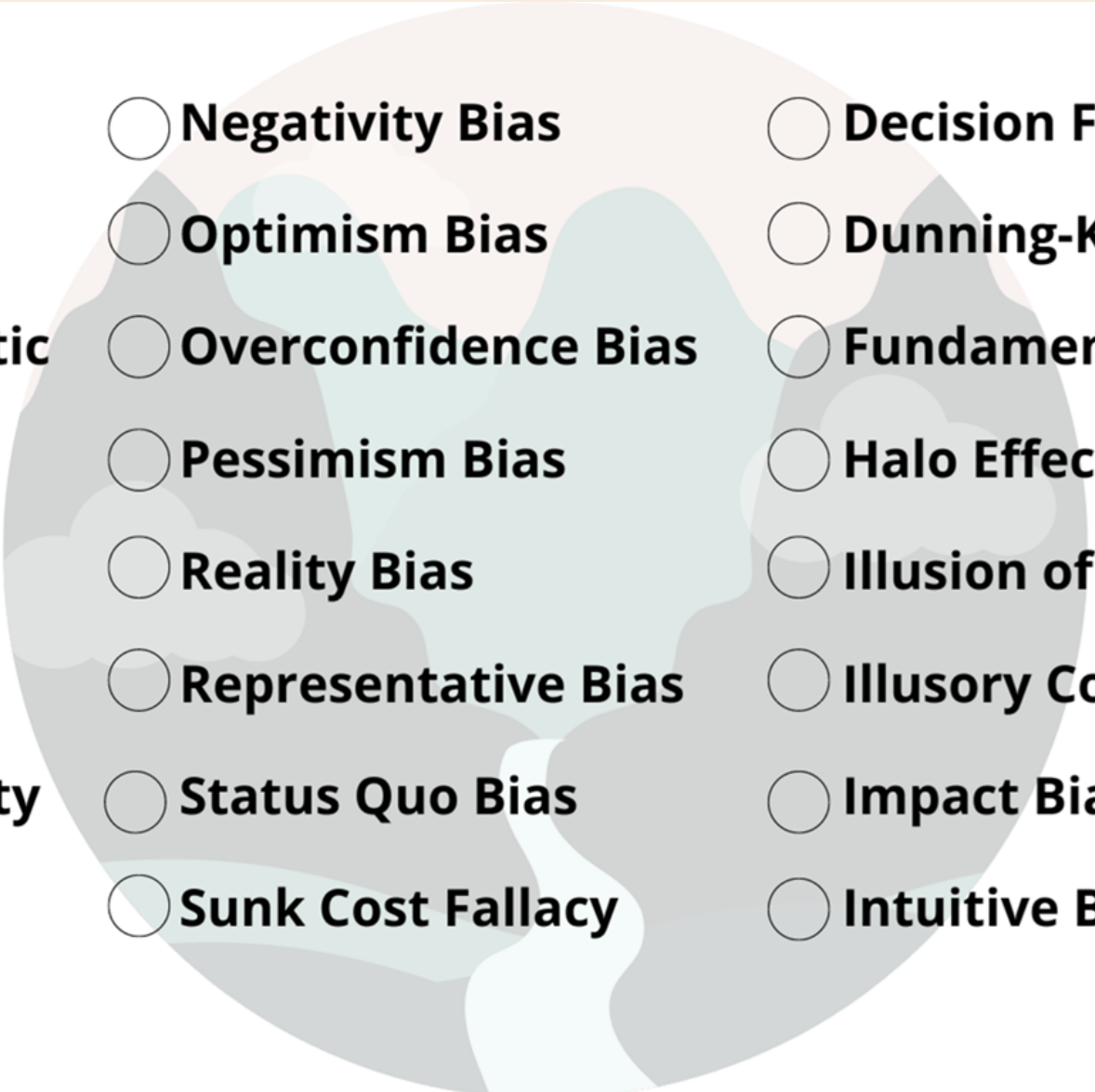
- **Definition:** Tendency to seek, interpret, and remember information that confirms existing beliefs
- **Health Impact:** Employees may dismiss credible health information that contradicts their preconceptions
- **Example:** Joe always eats keto and thinks it's the best way to go for everyone. He gets emails about keto dieting. He dismisses any information about healthy eating outside of the keto approach.

Anchoring Bias

- **Definition:** Over-relying on the first or latest information encountered
- **Health Impact:** Initial health information becomes disproportionately influential in decision-making
- **Example:** New weight loss drug helps users shed 15% of body weight. Now employees think that if their employer's insurance doesn't cover it, they're out of options to lose weight.



Cognitive Biases

- 
- ☐ Anchoring Bias
 - ☐ Attribution Bias
 - ☐ Availability Heuristic
 - ☐ Bandwagon Effect
 - ☐ Base Rate Fallacy
 - ☐ Binary Bias
 - ☐ Bounded Rationality
 - ☐ Commission Bias
 - ☐ Confirmation Bias
 - ☐ Negativity Bias
 - ☐ Optimism Bias
 - ☐ Overconfidence Bias
 - ☐ Pessimism Bias
 - ☐ Reality Bias
 - ☐ Representative Bias
 - ☐ Status Quo Bias
 - ☐ Sunk Cost Fallacy
 - ☐ Decision Fatigue
 - ☐ Dunning-Kruger Effect
 - ☐ Fundamental Attribution Error
 - ☐ Halo Effect
 - ☐ Illusion of Control
 - ☐ Illusory Correlation
 - ☐ Impact Bias
 - ☐ Intuitive Bias



Fuel the spark:
don't put it out!



One-on-One With a Client: Use OARS

- Open-ended questions
- Affirmations
- Reflective listening
- Summaries



- What led you to this choice?
- What are you hoping this will do for you?
- What have you already tried so far?
- How do you decide what health information to trust?
- What matters most to you in making this decision?
- How does it align with your condition and goals?
- What evidence supports it?
- Is it a priority right now, or a distraction from something foundational?

Rate each element with a number from 1 to 3.

1 = low 2 = medium 3 = high

☐

Commitment

How committed are you to the effort? For example, are you willing to go through the full course of recommended treatment?

☐

Risk

How much risk are you willing to take with this intervention?

☐

Effectiveness

How effective must this intervention be? Keep in mind that the more targeted, effective interventions may come with more risk and cost.

☐

Effort

How much effort are you willing to put into this intervention? For example, are you willing to commute a long distance to get to a practitioner's office?

☐

Cost

How much are you willing to pay for this intervention?

STRATEGIC HOPE: A 3-STEP MODEL FOR BRIEF CONVERSATIONS



**ACKNOWLEDGE THE BELIEF AS
MOMENTUM.**

“It’s a good sign you’re hopeful
and curious. Good for you!”



**REPOSITION YOURSELF AS A
THINKING PARTNER**

“Let’s walk through this together.”



**INTRODUCE A METHOD TO
EVALUATE THE BELIEF**

“We want to invest hope where it
can pay off.”

Health Literacy Strategies for Health Misinformation



Provide Trusted Health Resources

- CDC, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic
- Professional associations (ACS, ADA, AHA)
- Bring in health educators and health coaches
- Provide **and promote** a health education source purveyor



Help Identify Red Flags and Improve the BS Radar

- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Does it promise fast results or cures?
- Does it rely on testimonials instead of data?



Promote Thinking, Not Just Programs

- **Talk about it!**
- Offer pros and cons or alternative options and perspectives
- Encourage discussions and second opinions
- Create a culture where it's okay to ask questions

Always Go Back to the Core 4



BRAIN METHOD

BENEFITS

RISKS

ALTERNATIVES

INTUITION

NEED TIME



PROVE It!

Pause

Create
space
before
reacting



Reflect

Ask
questions



Observe

Check the
source,
context, and
look for
potential
bias



Verify

Seek credible
evidence
from multiple
sources and
perspectives



Evaluate

Decide if it's
not just "true"
but right for
you



Before you do it, PROVE it!



Pause

Take a minute and think about it before you jump

Reflect

Ask questions like, "Is this true?"

Observe

Check the source of the information and where it came from

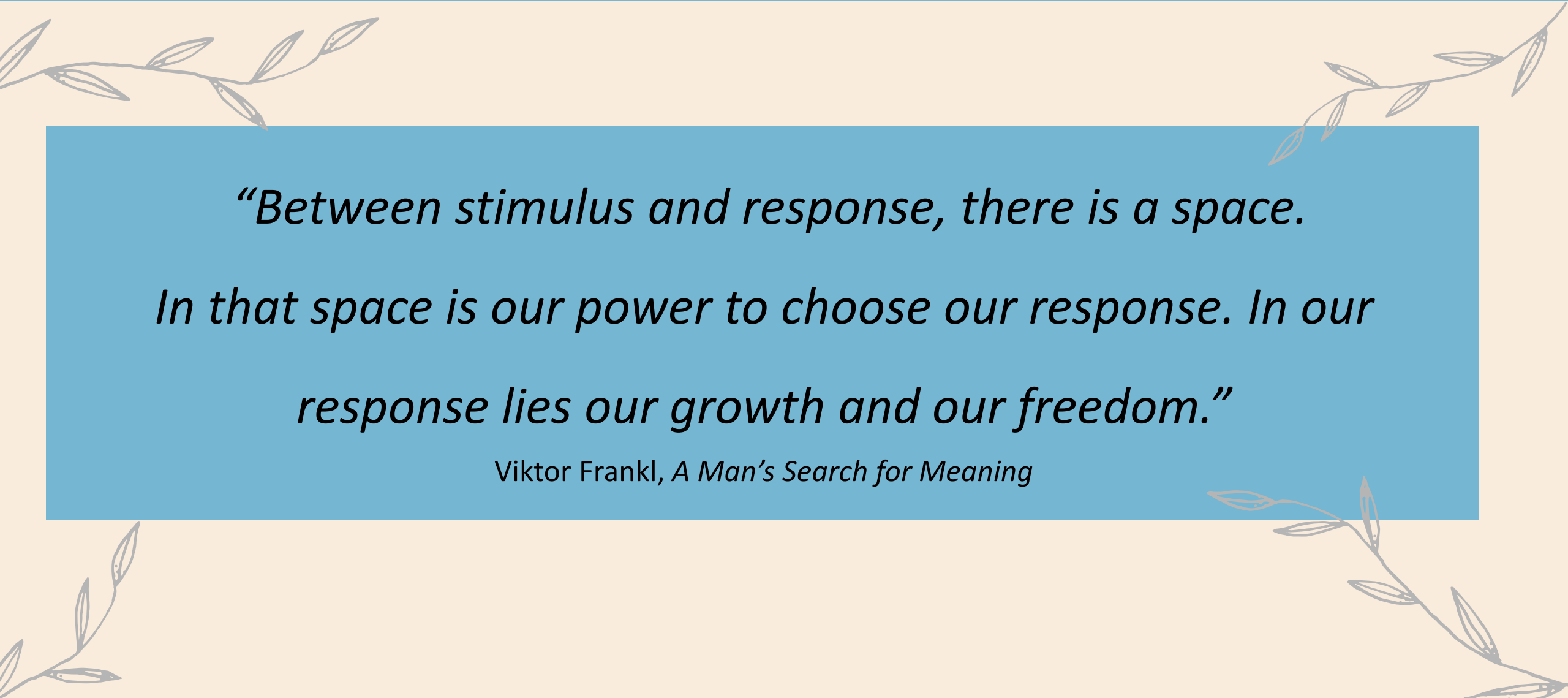
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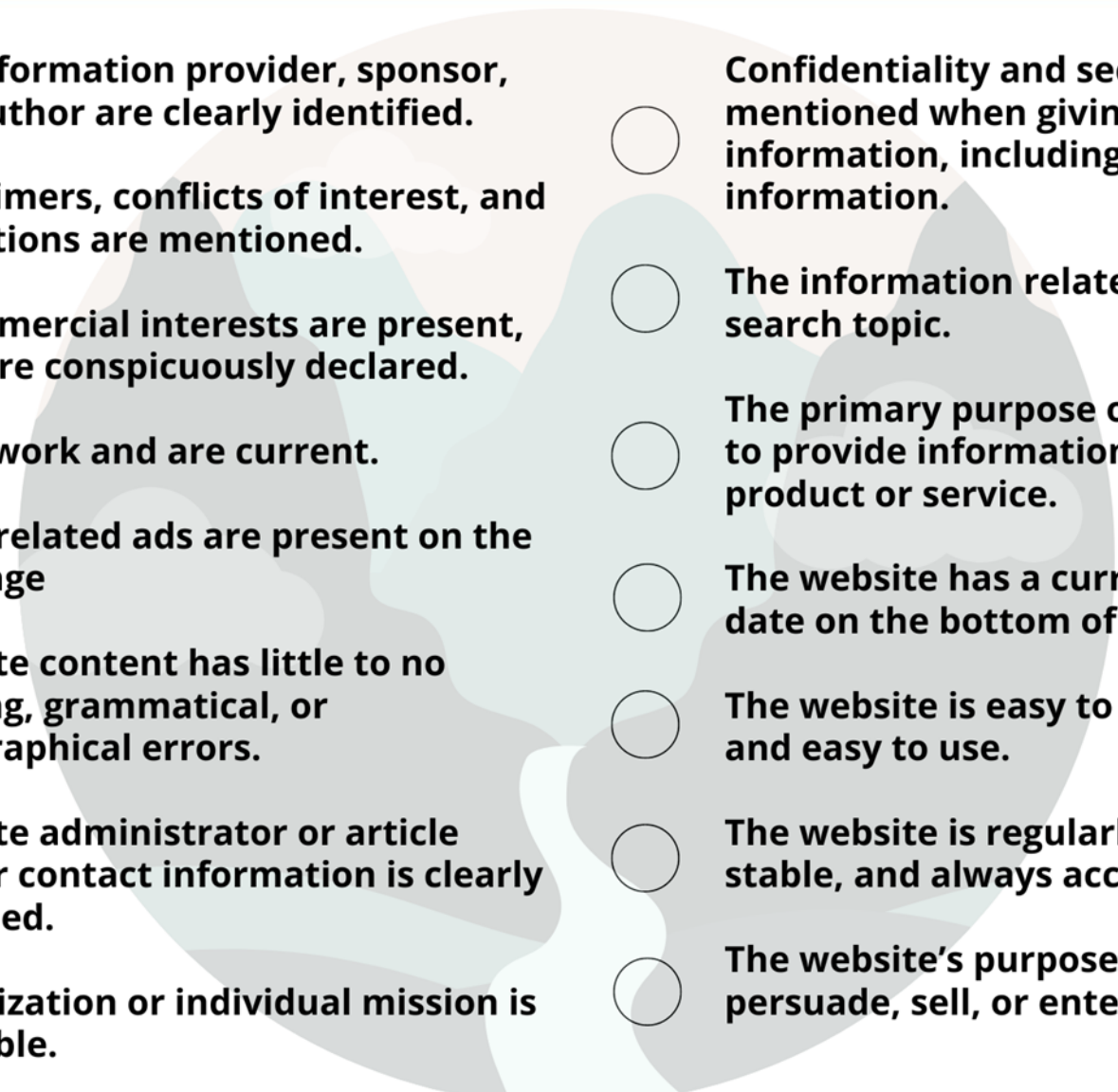
The Power of a Pause

The slide features a light blue header and a light orange background. A large blue rectangle in the center contains the main text. Decorative line-art leafy branches are positioned in the corners of the orange background.

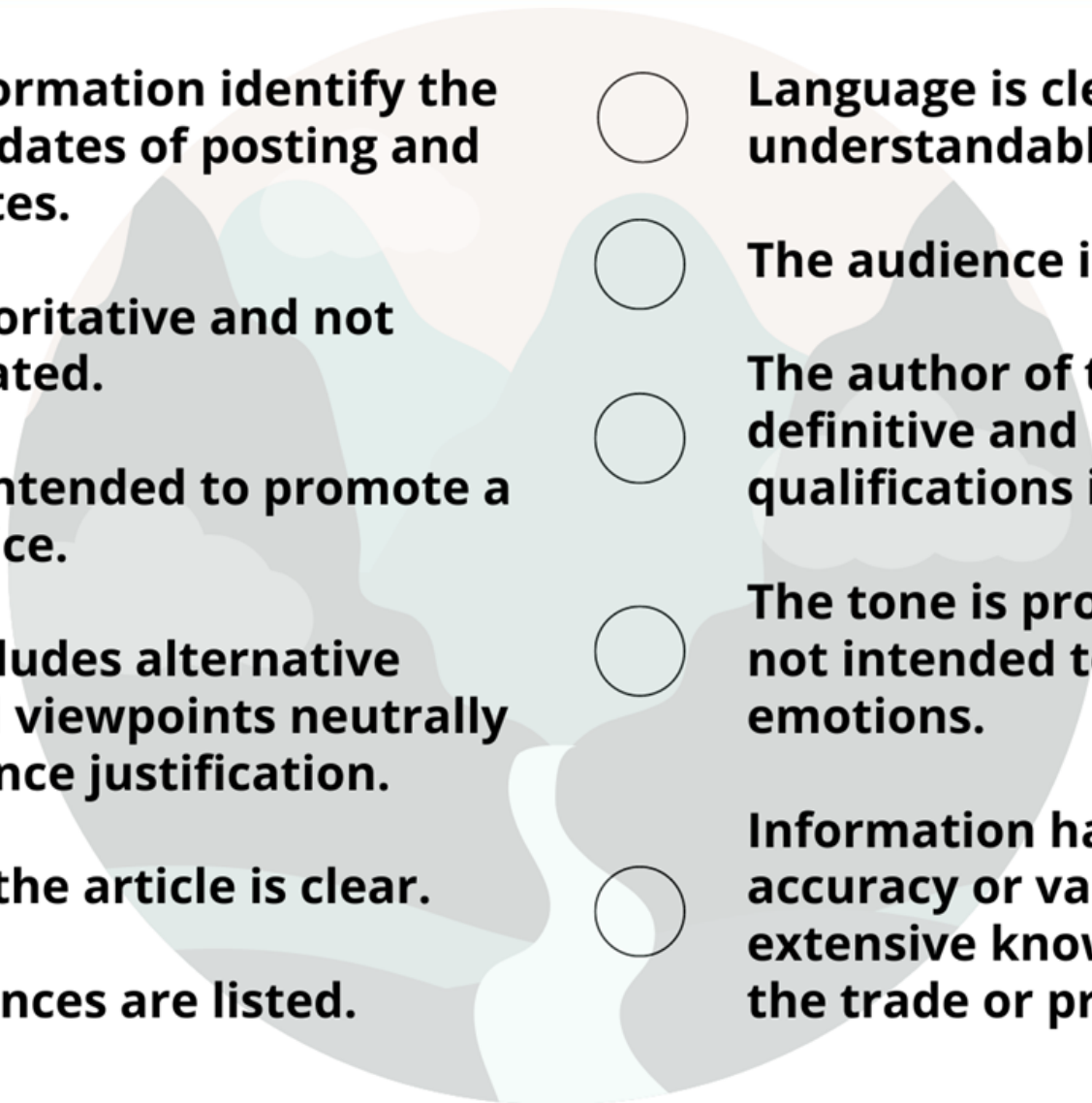
*“Between stimulus and response, there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response. In our
response lies our growth and our freedom.”*

Viktor Frankl, *A Man's Search for Meaning*

Checklist for Website Quality

- 
- ☐ The information provider, sponsor, and author are clearly identified.
 - ☐ Disclaimers, conflicts of interest, and limitations are mentioned.
 - ☐ If commercial interests are present, they are conspicuously declared.
 - ☐ Links work and are current.
 - ☐ No unrelated ads are present on the webpage
 - ☐ Website content has little to no spelling, grammatical, or typographical errors.
 - ☐ Website administrator or article author contact information is clearly provided.
 - ☐ Organization or individual mission is available.
 - ☐ Confidentiality and security are mentioned when giving personal information, including purchase information.
 - ☐ The information relates directly to the search topic.
 - ☐ The primary purpose of the website is to provide information, not sell a product or service.
 - ☐ The website has a current copyright date on the bottom of the webpage.
 - ☐ The website is easy to read, navigate, and easy to use.
 - ☐ The website is regularly updated, stable, and always accessible.
 - ☐ The website's purpose is clear (educate, persuade, sell, or entertain).

Checklist for Information Quality

- 
- ☐ Articles and information identify the publish date or dates of posting and the latest updates.
 - ☐ Content is authoritative and not merely opinionated.
 - ☐ Content is not intended to promote a product or service.
 - ☐ Information includes alternative approaches and viewpoints neutrally and with reference justification.
 - ☐ The purpose of the article is clear.
 - ☐ Research references are listed.
 - ☐ Language is clearly written and understandable.
 - ☐ The audience is clearly identified.
 - ☐ The author of the information has definitive and easily verifiable qualifications in the subject matter.
 - ☐ The tone is professional and neutral and not intended to evoke exaggerated emotions.
 - ☐ Information has been reviewed for accuracy or validated by an expert with extensive knowledge and experience in the trade or profession.

Reflection and Application



What is one thing I learned today that surprised me and one thing I can apply right away?

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LinkedIn | Substack: Health Shift with Dr. Alice Burron |
StrategicActionHealth.org

Thank You for Attending



Empowering Professionals: Knowledge • Skills • Mastery