

Living with Your Eyes Open: Preventing Self-Deception and Objectification

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People know the difference between right and wrong. Most of the time, people know the difference between treating someone like a person and treating someone like an object. People are people even when they are behaving badly. Yet sometimes we see people as objects....not human...we objectify them. Self-deception causes us to become blind to or resistant to the realities of others as people. We cease to see them, and how life affects them personally. We objectify them. When people become objects to us, we feel *justified* in mistreating them, with less care, and often in demeaning ways.

Self-deception often results in the expression of unnecessary and damaging anger. This results in deceiving ourselves, blaming others or justifying our bad behavior. Self-deception is the source of the problems we have in relationships with others personally, professionally, and within organizations. Self-deception changes the nature of our communication and caring with others. This includes our relationships with patients, co-workers, and family. Self-deception causes us to see people as objects and therefore allows us to become justified in being less caring toward them....in being less understanding and as a result, stifling care, creativity, and innovation. This has far-reaching implications for patient care, employee relationships, organizations, and other relationships. The frightening thing is that most of the time people don't know that they have objectified someone.

This session will examine self-deception and its negative effects on our relationships with patients, co-workers and family. In addition, it will examine why it occurs, the damaging effects it can have, and how to stop self-deception (more often) so that we may choose to become more effective interpersonally and more available to others.

After attending this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe how self-betrayal and self-deception leads to distorting the truth about how we see oneself and others
- Describe how self-deception adversely affects our relationships with patients, co-workers, and family
- Differentiate between the Responsive Way² and the Resistant Way of Being² and their effects on relationships.
- Understand why all "illegitimate suffering" and victimization occur while in the Resistant Way of Being²
- List at least two ways to see people as people, not as objects.

1. Warner, C. Terry. *Bonds that Make Us Free*, The Arbinger Institute, Farmington, UT 2001.
2. Leadership and Self Deception, The Arbinger Institute, Farmington, UT 2010.