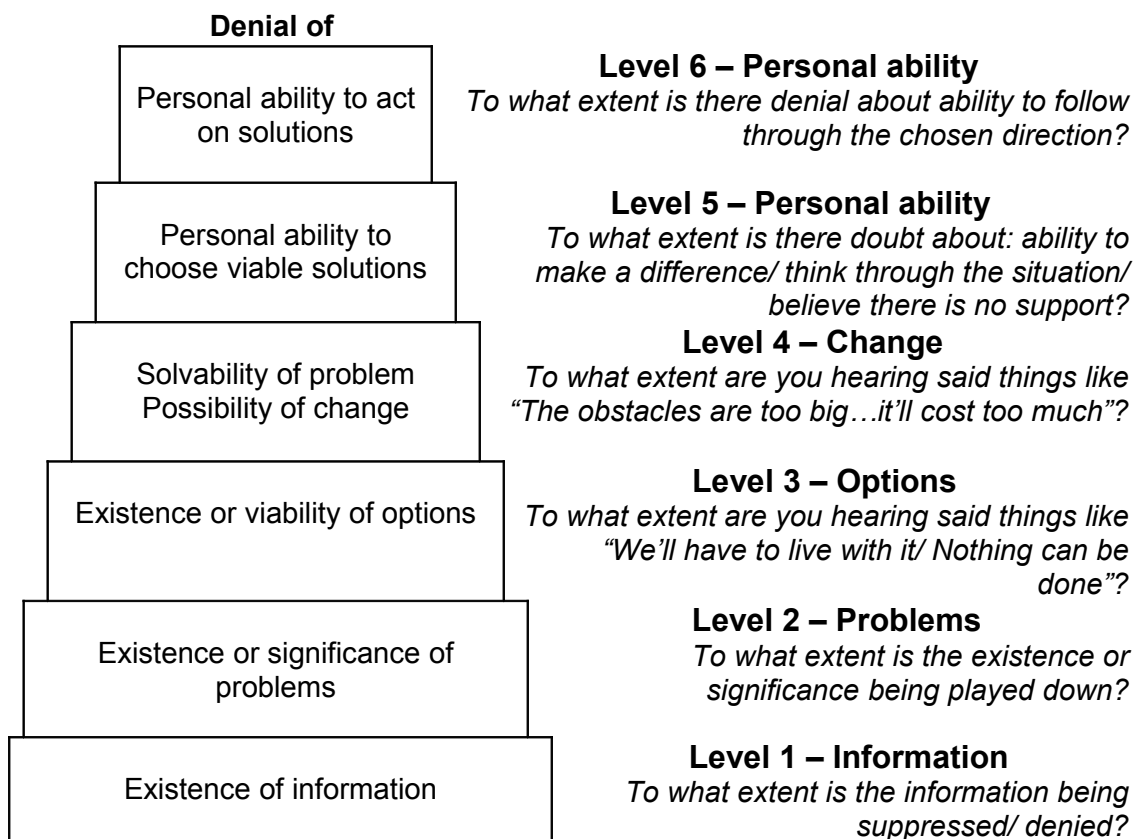


Hierarchy of Denial



From Katrina Shields and transactional analysis theory of Ken Mellor and Eric Schiff

Example:

A mass of compelling evidence that human activity is bringing about a serious change in the global climate. The production of greenhouse gases by the use of fossil fuels and industrial processes is a significant contributor.

Level 1: The governments and industry leaders of the chief polluting countries deny the validity of the research, saying that the Earth has undergone many climate changes and there is no proof that human activity is causing another. They commission studies to counter it and cite these in their public discourse.

Level 2: The governments and industry leaders of the chief polluting countries acknowledge the convincing evidence, but still say that more research is needed. The more doom-laden predictions are highlighted and ridiculed to discredit the whole notion.

Level 3: Summits of world leaders take place to consider a range of options, but the governments of the chief polluting states dispute the need to impose restrictions on their industries. They arrange a carbon-trading scheme with less polluting countries.

Level 4: The chief polluters acknowledge arguments for restrictions on industry and the rapid development of sustainable energy sources, but say it will cost too much/take too long/ wouldn't meet energy requirements. The government of the largest polluting state says it will do nothing to jeopardise its economic well-being.

Level 5: Governments of the major polluting states reject arguments suggesting that investment in alternative technologies may not only help towards a solution, but also create major economic opportunities.

Level 6: Governments cite the lack of universal international agreement to justify their inaction. They point to the government of the largest polluting state, which opted out of a major treaty, and say there can be no solution without them. Meanwhile, the government of the largest polluting state signs agreements with a few others to carry on as normal but develop hitherto unknown technological solutions.