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Freud's iceberg theory

- A model to understand the works of the mind;
 - and another model, the Johari window

The three levels of mind, according to Freud, are the conscious level, the preconscious level and the unconscious level. The conscious mind consists of all the mental processes of which we are aware of: thoughts, perceptions. The preconscious consists of anything that can potentially be brought to the conscious level. These can be memories and stored knowledge. The unconscious influences our behaviour even though we are unaware of it. The unconscious may contain fears, violent motives, unacceptable sexual desires, irrational wishes, immoral urges, shameful experiences and selfish needs.

In Freud's view these levels can be modeled as an iceberg. The conscious mind is the tip of the iceberg, the part that can be seen above the water level. The preconscious mind is the part of the iceberg that is submerged in the water, but is still visible. The unconscious mind is the unseen part of the iceberg underwater. It is estimated that only about 15% of the iceberg is above water level.

To me the iceberg theory resembles the Johari window in some ways. The Johari window is a technique that helps people better understand their relationship with themselves and others. It was created by psychologists Joseph Luft (1916–2014) and Harrington Ingham (1916–1995) in 1955. It consists of not three but four quadrants, as follows:

	Known to self	Not known to self
Known to others	Arena	Blind Spot
Not Known to Others	Façade	Unknown

I believe the table speaks for itself. I just wanted to highlight the fact that it is really much easier to understand certain theories with the help of a simple model.