

Convergent Research Map

The Engine: Process Method — Navigational Mind Framework

*Prepared under NMA-14 Rev.1 Governance · Dr. Olutoyese Oyelese, MD · Navigational Mind Inc.
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Preface

The Process Method is the operational engine of the Navigational Mind Framework — the mechanism a mind uses to move through uncertainty when paralysis sets in. Unlike BOF (a discipline at the moment of decision) and the Sphere (a map of experiential structure), Process is a motion architecture: three components that, cycled repeatedly, allow movement without requiring clarity, confidence, or motivation in advance. Claims are labelled EVIDENCED (directly grounded in retrieved sources) or INFERRED (warranted logical extension).

Construct 1: The Next True Step — Movement Before Clarity

PROCESS'S CLAIM

Forget the mountain. Ask only: what is the smallest thing I can do right now that moves me even slightly forward? Not the best thing — the smallest true thing. Two rules: small enough it doesn't trigger panic; true enough it points in the right direction. Clarity comes from moving, not from waiting.

CONVERGENT WORK

Behavioural Activation (BA)

BA encourages taking manageable steps first and allowing motivation or emotional relief to develop afterward. Rather than waiting to feel motivated before taking action, BA inverts the causal sequence — action precedes feeling. Motivation follows action, not the other way around. BA is equivalent to CBT in efficacy for depression and breaks the withdrawal cycle by re-introducing meaningful activity even when mood has not yet improved.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

ACT promotes the ability to remain open to experiences, stay present at the moment, and engage in actions aligned with personal values, even when faced with emotional or cognitive discomfort. ACT distinguishes between experiential avoidance (refusing to act until the internal state improves) and committed action (moving in the direction of values regardless of internal state). The Next True Step is an ACT committed action stripped to its minimum viable form.

Kaizen — Continuous Improvement

The Japanese philosophy of continuous improvement holds that small, incremental changes are more effective than large ones because they do not trigger resistance. The Kaizen principle that one should identify the smallest possible first step toward a goal to ensure success directly mirrors the Next True Step's formulation. Kaizen was developed for manufacturing (notably the Toyota Production System) and extended to psychology with the same underlying rationale.

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THIS FRAMEWORK ADDS

What Process adds is the qualifier true. Not the smallest comfortable step — the smallest honest step. BA specifies 'meaningful activities'; ACT specifies 'values-aligned actions'; Kaizen specifies 'improvement in the right direction.' Process collapses these qualifications into the single adjective true, which carries direction without requiring the navigator to fully articulate that direction before moving. [INFERRED: This is a significant practical compression — it lowers the epistemic bar for beginning while preserving directionality.]

Construct 2: The Containment Window — Protecting Tomorrow from Today

PROCESS'S CLAIM

A boundary set before starting, not after burning out. Twenty minutes, one paragraph, three job listings — then stop. Not because you cannot do more, but because the Containment Window is not about today; it is about tomorrow. The person who works for twenty minutes and stops will be back tomorrow. The person who works five hours and collapses will not return for two weeks. Momentum means showing up again — not sprinting.

CONVERGENT WORK

The Zeigarnik Effect

Incomplete tasks create cognitive tension — an internal pressure to complete what has been started, making them more readily recalled and more likely to be returned to. The Containment Window deliberately creates an incomplete task: the navigator stops before finishing, leaving an open loop. The brain's own architecture then pulls them back. Research also shows that creating specific plans for unfulfilled goals eliminates intrusive interference while still maintaining the pull toward completion.

Deliberate Practice (Ericsson)

Ericsson defines deliberate practice as a well-defined task with immediate feedback, opportunities for repetition, and the ability to exploit errors to improve. Crucially, deliberate practice operates in bounded sessions — focused, time-limited work at the edge of current ability, not extended marathons. Expert performers consistently work in contained windows, take structured breaks, and return. The Containment Window is the personal analogue of Ericsson's session structure: not 'as long as possible' but 'exactly enough.'

ACT — Psychological Flexibility

ACT's psychological flexibility framing converges here: the goal is to act in ways that serve long-term values, which sometimes means stopping before exhaustion to protect the capacity for continued engagement. Rigidity — burning through until collapse — is the opposite of flexibility.

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THIS FRAMEWORK ADDS

The Containment Window is explicitly framed as a protection of tomorrow rather than a technique for today's productivity. Neither Zeigarnik's cognitive description nor Ericsson's performance-science framework frames the stopping as deliberate care for the next session. Process names the stopping as the active act, not the working. [INFERRED: This reframing — the boundary is the discipline, not the work inside it — is Process's most practical innovation in this construct.]

Construct 3: The Review Moment — Closing the Loop and Updating Direction

PROCESS'S CLAIM

A short, honest pause asking three questions: What did I just do? Did it feel true to my direction? What do I know now that I didn't know ten minutes ago? Not a performance review — a quiet check-in. Every step teaches something. The Review Moment turns that learning into updated direction, making the next step slightly truer than this one.

CONVERGENT WORK

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

Kolb formalised — building on Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget — a four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. The Review Moment is precisely the reflective observation stage applied at a personal, abbreviated scale. Process's three questions map directly onto Kolb's reflection phase.

Dewey — Learning by Doing

Dewey's foundational claim — that genuine education grows out of experience and critical reflection on it, not passive reception of information — is the philosophical ancestor of both Kolb and Process. Dewey believed learners construct knowledge by taking part in meaningful activities and then reflecting on them. The Review Moment is Dewey's reflective turn after every act, applied not in formal educational settings but after the smallest daily step.

Build-Measure-Learn (Lean Startup / Ries)

The BML loop is a disciplined process designed to transform vision into tested reality through fast, cheap iterations — building, measuring performance, and learning from the results. The document's 'each step makes the next one a little truer' is the psychological expression of what Ries frames as organisational learning under uncertainty.

Deliberate Practice — Immediate Feedback (Ericsson)

Deliberate practice involves immediate feedback, time for problem-solving and evaluation, and opportunities for repeated performance to refine behaviour. The Review Moment is the personal equivalent of Ericsson's 'immediate feedback after a defined task.'

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THIS FRAMEWORK ADDS

Process's Review Moment explicitly refuses to be a performance review or self-improvement evaluation. This distinguishes it from Kolb's abstract conceptualisation stage (which tends toward theory-building), from Ericsson's feedback (externally anchored to a standard), and from Lean Startup's measurement (externally anchored to market data). Process's review is internally anchored to direction. [INFERRED: This makes it more psychologically accessible and less threatening — which is why it can follow the smallest possible step, not just significant ones.]

Construct 4: The Loop as Architecture — Step, Contain, Review; Repeat

PROCESS'S CLAIM

The three components form a loop, not a line. Each cycle doesn't need to be big or impressive — it just needs to happen. Because each one makes the next one a little truer. The mountain doesn't get smaller; the steps get truer. And truer steps, taken consistently, cover more ground than any amount of waiting.

CONVERGENT WORK

Kolb — Cyclical Structure

Kolb's explicit formulation that learning is a cycle — not a linear sequence — is the direct structural analogue. A learner can enter the cycle at any point, but effective learning requires moving through all four stages, and the second experience becomes the concrete experience for the beginning of the next cycle.

Build-Measure-Learn (Lean Startup)

The BML loop describes the same architecture at the organisational scale: not to produce a perfect product on the first try but to systematically reduce uncertainty with each iteration. Shortening the feedback loop increases the rate of learning and reduces the cost of mistakes.

Behavioural Activation — Scheduling and Consistency

BA's emphasis on scheduling — building a pattern of repeated engagement — is the clinical expression of the same loop logic. The power of behavioural activation lies in consistency over perfection. Small, regular actions create real momentum.

Kaizen — Compounding Small Improvements

Kaizen is a dynamic process: ongoing, incremental, compounding daily improvements. Small, consistent improvements compound over time. The power of the method is not in any single step but in the loop running continuously.

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THIS FRAMEWORK ADDS

What distinguishes Process's loop from all of these is the explicit connection to uncertainty navigation and paralysis prevention — not optimisation or improvement. Process's loop does something prior to all the convergent frameworks: it keeps the navigator moving at all when the mind would otherwise freeze. [INFERRED: Process is a motion architecture for navigating uncertainty — a distinct niche that none of the convergent traditions occupies.]

Summary: Where Process Stands in This Terrain

Process Construct	Strongest Convergent Tradition	What Process Adds
Next True Step	Behavioural Activation, ACT, Kaizen	The qualifier true — direction preserved without requiring full articulation first
Containment Window	Zeigarnik Effect, Ericsson (deliberate practice)	Frames stopping as the active discipline; explicitly protects tomorrow, not just today
Review Moment	Kolb, Dewey, Ericsson, Lean Startup (BML)	Internally anchored to direction, not external standards; accessible after any step however small
The Loop as Architecture	Kolb, Lean Startup, Kaizen, Behavioural Activation	Motion architecture for paralysis — prior to productivity or optimisation

Closing Note

The research reveals that the three components of Process each have strong independent convergences in established traditions. What is distinctive is their integration under a single purpose that none of those traditions explicitly addresses: the prevention of paralysis and the restoration of motion in a mind that has frozen under the weight of uncertainty.

Behavioural Activation targets depression. ACT targets psychological inflexibility. Kaizen targets organisational improvement. Kolb targets learning. Lean Startup targets product uncertainty. Ericsson targets expertise. The Zeigarnik Effect is a cognitive phenomenon, not a method. Process targets something none of these name directly: the moment when the whole house locks up and the navigator cannot begin at all.

Its three components — smallest true step, bounded window, honest review — are designed as minimum viable interventions that work with a frozen mind rather than against it. The loop is not designed to be impressive; it is designed to run again tomorrow.