

Point of
Value.

POINT OF VALUE – AN INTRODUCTION

By Bobby Forshell & Birgitta Persson

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About Values.

Values are at the heart of who we are, and that goes for both individuals and organisations. Values are not visible, but they are reflected in our attitudes, priorities and behaviours. They influence our daily decisions and actions.

There are different ways of understanding values. We at Point of Value make a distinction between normative and personal values. Normative values are the often unwritten rules and agreements we have in families and in society that allow us to fit in and be accepted, while personal values tell us what is important, what drives us, what we dream of. These personal values evolve and change throughout our life.¹

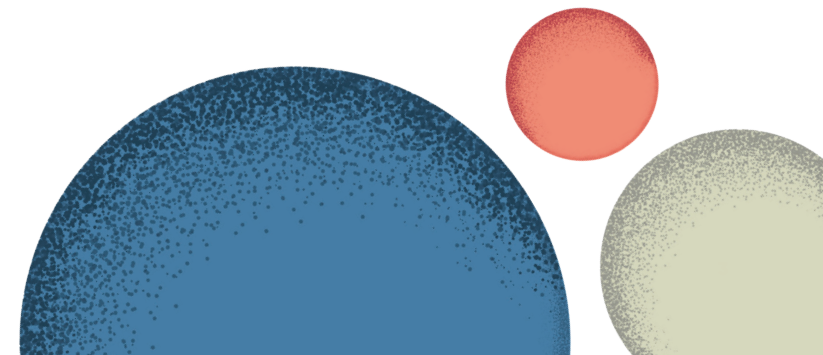
Each individual has approximately 20 – 50 personal core values throughout their life. These core values constitute their personal value system, a kind of dynamic constellation of core values, which often remains stable after the age of 20. At any given moment, there are about 5 – 10 prioritised values that are particularly important for the decisions and choices we make. These personal core values change and evolve as a result of significant life experiences, such as changes in the workplace, illness, death, love and existential issues.

How many different values are there? The answer depends on who you ask and whether you make a distinction between normative and personal values or not. As an example, Abraham Maslow identified about 60 different values in his hierarchy of needs, while social psychologist Milton Rokeach described 36 (18 plus 18) values and defined them as "terminal and instrumental values". Drawing on experiences and knowledge from text analysis, professor Emeritus Brian Hall and linguist Benjamin Tonna made an estimate that there are around 500 words that illustrate personal values. They reduced the 500 to the 125 most distinctive and representative value words.

Point of Value's system of values is based primarily on Tonna's and Hall's work but is also informed by Maslow and Rokeach. In the Point of Value's system, each personal value is represented by three synonyms in the definition, which means that even though there are 128 value words that are ranked, the system covers a total of 384 value words.

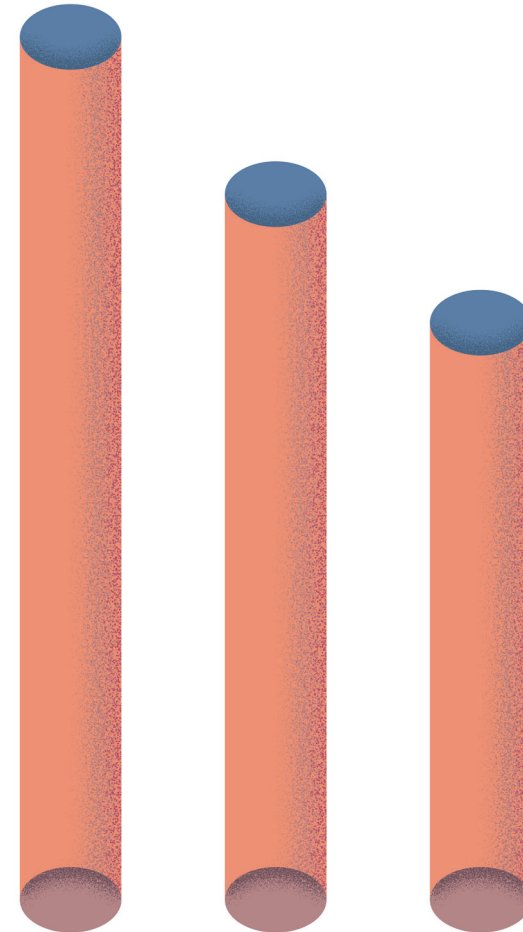
In a validation process with the first 2,500 people who used the Point of Value ranking process, 71% considered that the ranking was very much in line with their perception of what was most important and most meaningful for them at the time and 21% considered it to be at a reasonable degree of congruence.

¹ Values Shift. A Guide to Personal and Organizational Transformation, Brian Hall



Why do you rank?

Ranking is about placing things in order of priority and that is what you do with Point of Value's interactive tool Value. Online. When you rank, 2–4 different values are set against each other and you decide what is most important right now. These choices between the value words reflect how, on a daily basis, we weigh up different values against each other. For example, when you listen to a lecturer, you might weigh up; should I interrupt with a question, should I make a note of this or that? I have already heard that – should I mention it? We weigh up what is most important and by doing so, we weigh different values against each other.



How does the ranking work?

In 2018, Point of Value launched a new algorithm for ranking. The algorithm was developed at Lund University of Technology in 2017–2018 by Björn Söderström and Cesar Ojeda, forming the basis for their master's thesis. The algorithm has been tested both through simulation and with live test cases. The person who ranks is faced with 2–4 value words, each with a definition, and ranks them; 1 for the highest ranked value, 2 for the second highest and so on. During the ranking, values are set against each other until the person's most prioritised values have been mapped. The reason why only 2–4 value words are set against each other at a time is that our brain has limited ability to hold more than 3-5 parallel processes in the memory at the same time.²

How do the values relate?

Values can be developed in different ways. In general, we can say that we develop fundamental values early in life, for example, that it is important that we are dependent on others. Then we might enter another phase of life where we want to stand on our own two feet and where independence becomes much more important. Later in life interdependent might become the prevailing value. This does not mean that we dismiss dependence and independence as values, rather that they act as building blocks and can, for example, be part of a constellation of the concept of interdependent.

We weigh values differently throughout our life. If you lose your job at the age of 55, you probably ask yourself questions such as who am I now, who needs me, and can I be of use? In this phase of recreating your identity, fundamental values are re-prioritised, but at the same time you have life experience, which means that you are likely to value different things from those you valued early in life when your fundamental values were established.

² The Magical Mystery Four: How is Working Memory Capacity Limited, and Why, N. Cowan, 2010

The Meaning Map.

The structure and theories behind.

The results of the rankings are presented using maps and graphs where the Meaning Map is one of the two main Point of Value maps. The other one is the Congruence Map. The values that the individual prioritises highest, once or more, in the ranking are placed in the top field of the Meaning Map called "Core values". In addition, the top 10 most prioritised values appear in bold so as to make it easier for the individual to find them. Other values fall into the lower part of the Meaning Map. That does not mean that they are unimportant, but that right now they are not prioritised. On page 12-13, you find an example of a Meaning Map.

The structure of the Meaning Map is based on development theories in four main areas: language development, psychological development, spiritual development and theories on adult and leadership development. The research and theories on consciousness and adult development that we have used come from Erik H. Erikson, Jean Piaget, Robert Kegan, Abraham Maslow, Lawrence Kohlberg, Frederic Laloux, Bill Torbert and others. At the end of this document you will find a list of literature and articles if you want to read more on consciousness development or know more about values and value congruence.

The cycles in the Meaning Map represent three overall stages of development:

Cycle 1 - Foundation

This cycle illustrates basic needs for survival and a period of life when we create and re-create our identity. The values or needs such as *safe* and *affection* may be prioritised.

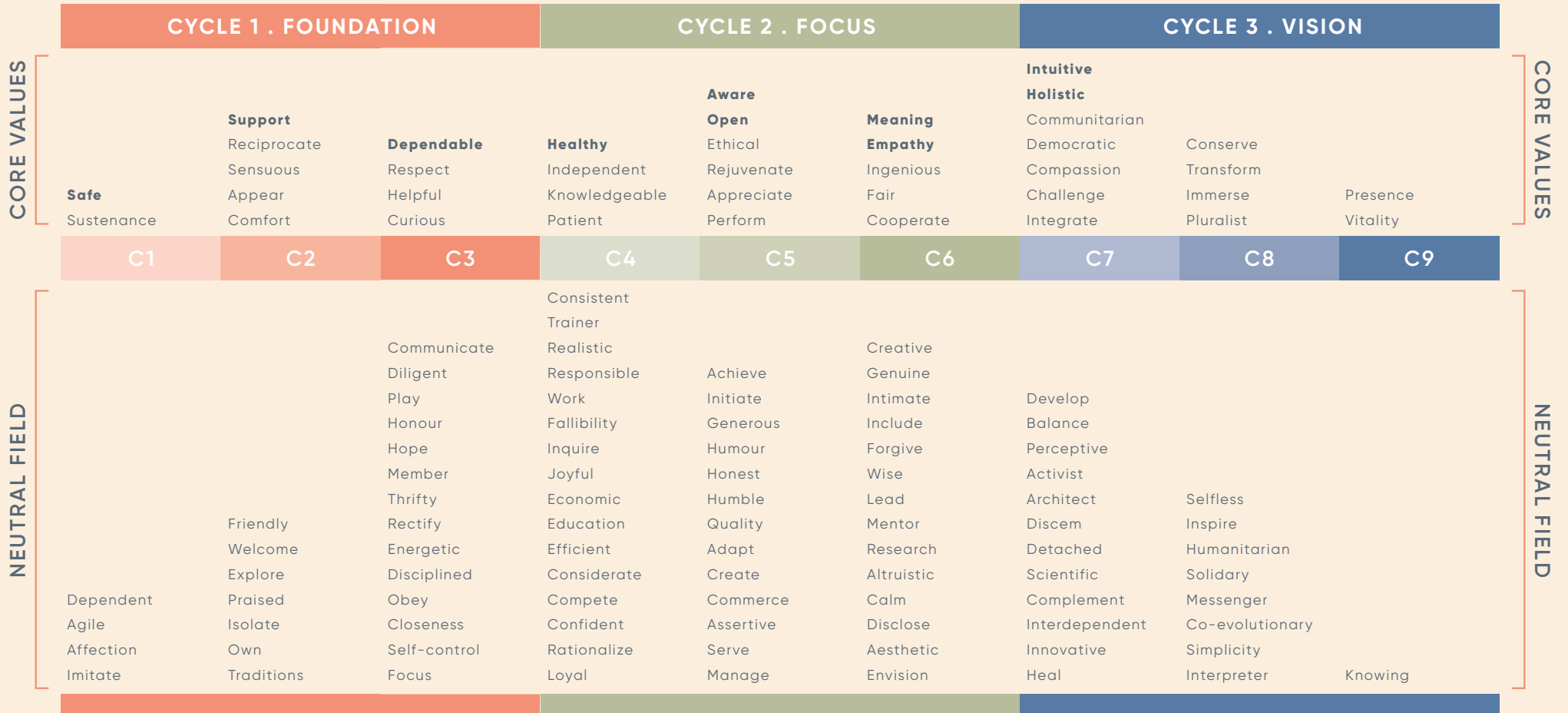
Cycle 2 - Focus

This cycle illustrates a time in our life when we practice and develop our identity. Values in this cycle are the criteria for everyday decisions such as *fair, calm, perform, honest, knowledgeable* etc. These values are approaches, ways of being that can also be strategies to attain the values that motivate and inspire us.

Cycle 3 - Vision

This cycle deals with the values of our visions and illustrates what we are striving for, what motivates and inspires us to continue to evolve. These are often more complex values such as *integrate* and *transform*.

The Meaning Map.

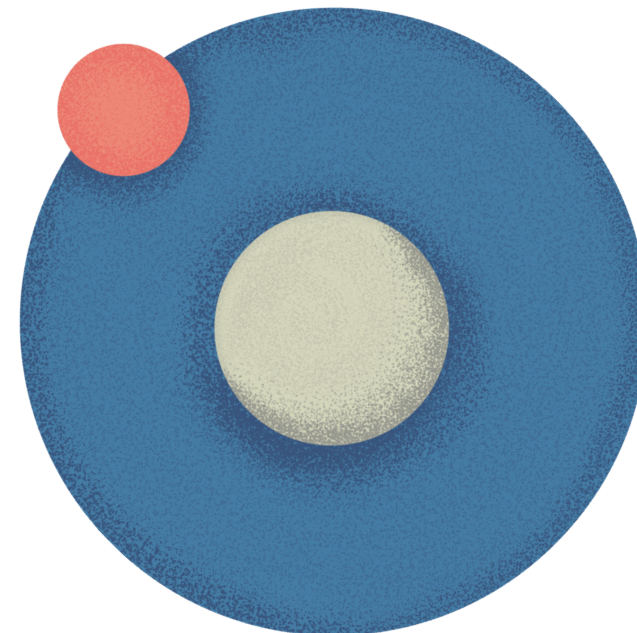


Each cycle consists of 3 columns. Each column illustrates a generalised worldview (World View, Weltanschauung) i.e. the way in which a person perceives the world. A world view is also an overall perception of the world from a specific standpoint³. The uniqueness of the Meaning Map is that it provides perspectives on the world in terms of personal values, as each column is a world view represented by several value words. Each value word is a linguistic prototype⁴ that represents an aspect of the column's world view. This means that the value words in the Meaning Map will always appear in the same column.

It is easy to believe that the Meaning Map describes a sequential journey in attention and consciousness development from left to right through life. That is true to some extent but unlike other development theories, Point of Value's view is that we as people comprise all 9 columns all the time but that at different phases and in different situations, we have a combination of two or more columns (world views) which dominate our priorities and behaviours. What, then, do the different columns illustrate? What is the world view and approach to others they represent? In brief, columns 1 and 2 represent our most basic needs as humans.

Column 3 is about our usefulness, how our actions can be of use to ourselves and others. The values in column 4 stand for quality while column 5 stands for service, empathy and understanding other people and their situation. In column 6, cooperation and joint risk-taking are in focus while in column 7 the collaboration has become more integrated and the values are more about, for example, being holistic and balanced. Column 8 deals with our inherent driving forces and column 9 illustrates transformation.

Common to most development theories is that they describe general stages of development through life. On page 16-17, you find an overview of some development theories and how they relate to Point of Value.



³ In *The Universe Next Door*, James Sire says, "a worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being." (p. 17). In *Naming the Elephant*, he tightens his worldview definition to the following: "A worldview is a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic makeup of our world." (p. 19).

⁴ A linguistic prototype is a word from a specific category that best represent that category. As an example, the word chair is a linguistic prototype of the concept and category of furniture. In this context, each column therefore is a category (a world view) and every value word is a prototype that represent an aspect of that world view.

A comparison of consciousness development theories. Point of Value, 2019.

Point of Value.	Foundation Cycle of Self-Worth			Focus Cycle of Self Expression			Vision Cycle of Selfless Expression							
Steps	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9					
Point of Value Relationship orientation	Foundation. If these values are not in place, relationships are under pressure.		Usefulness. Practical and valuable transactions.		Merit. Excellence in every transaction.		Servant. Attentive to the concerns of others.		Co-creation. Partnering and risking a better future.		Integration. Pioneering new collaboration.		Direction-finding. Trust, sustainability, and transformation.	
Kohlberg Moral development	Level 1 (Pre-Conventional)				Level 2 (Conventional)				Level 3 (Post-Conventional)					
	1. Obedience and punishment orientation		2. Self-interest orientation		3. Interpersonal accord and conformity		4. Authority and social-order maintaining orientation		5. Social contract orientation		6. Universal ethical principles			
Loevinger Adult development	E2 Impulsive	E3 Self-protective	E4 Conformist	E5 Self-aware	E6 Conscientious	E7 Individualist	E8 Autonomous	E9 Integrated						
Kegan Adult development	First order the Impulsive mind		Second order the Imperial mind		Third order the Socialized mind		Fourth order the Self-authored mind		Fifth order the Self-transforming mind					
Rooke & Torbert Leadership development	Opportunist Wins any way possible.	Diplomat Avoids conflict.	Expert Rules by logic and expertise.	Achiever Meets strategic goals.	Individualist Operates in unconventional ways.	Strategist Generates organisational and personal change.	Alchemist Generates social transformation.							

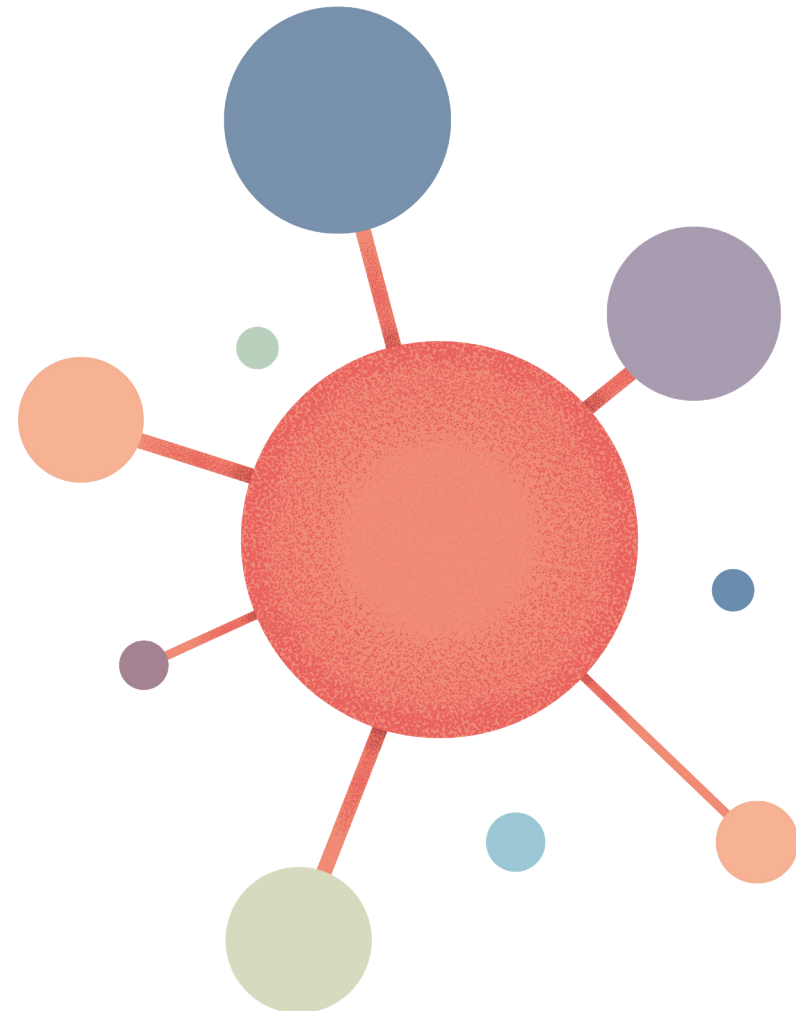
The mapping – conversations about what the values represent.

The online ranking is not a test or an analysis, but a starting point for conversations for the purpose of creating insight, trust and confidence. You rank what is important and this generates an overview map of which values are most important and imperative, which are the driving forces and commitments that govern our priorities and actions.

When the ranking is done, the participants work together with a trained Point of Value facilitator to map out the values. Using the Meaning Map generated by the ranking, the facilitator and the participants engage in a conversation about what lies behind the values. The mapping places great emphasis on the values that the individual wants to see more of and how the individual and the group can act to put more of these values into practice.

An authentic dialogue is based on the premise that every person needs to be heard and understood for who s/he is. It is the basis for sincere communication between people regardless of cultural background.

When a person understands their history and formulates what is important to them, it becomes easier to make choices that enable them to put their values into practice and this in turn increases their motivation.



Congruence.

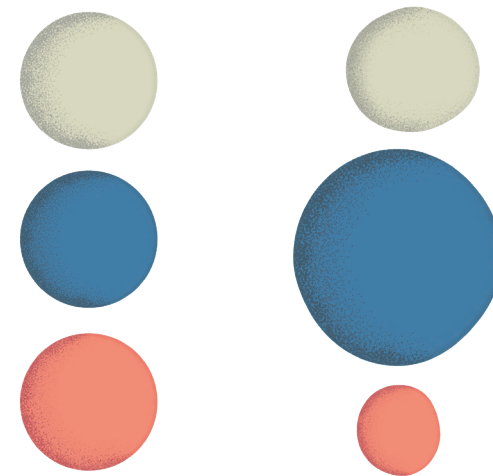
Coherence between values.

Several surveys show that people who have insight and knowledge of their own personal values are more committed and motivated – both in their private lives and at work. In addition, if they can find coherence between their own values and the work place values the impact is even bigger. Stress and anxiety connected to work decrease. Leaders who have insight into both their personal values and the values of their organisation are perceived as more credible and find it easier to make decisions. The research is clear on this point⁵. But how do you actually achieve it?

In order to achieve congruence between the individual and the organisation, an intermediate, vital step is needed. Extensive studies show that this step is about trust and communication⁶. In organisations, this is done in a team where individuals feel safe. This is where one can practise (or cannot not practise) one's values. Because of this it is the team that is the bridge between the individual and the organisation and the key to achieving value congruence. The team culture is made up of the common behaviours and priorities that the team stands for and which the group practise.

Studies by Barry Z. Posner⁷ and others show that increased insight and understanding of your own values is the single biggest contributing factor to increased work commitment and motivation, and to a reduction in work related stress. This is the reason why we at Point of Value focus our work initially on increasing the individual's understanding of their own values. Then in the next step support the team to formulate and adopt common values and deliberately create an organisational culture that harmonises with the objectives and aims of the organisation. In this way you can increase coherence and create a positive working culture where the individual thrives, the team performs, and the organisation is successful.

An important tool for working with values and teams is the Congruence map. It is based on the same ranking as the Meaning Map but groups the values in a different way.



⁵ Values Congruence and the Differences Between the Interplay of Personal and Organizational Value Systems, The Leadership Challenge, Posner & Schmidt, 2008

⁶ The Value of Value Congruence, Edwards & Cabe, 2009

⁷ Values Congruence and the Differences Between the Interplay of Personal and Organizational Value Systems, The Leadership Challenge, Posner & Schmidt, 2008 and Posner B. Z. (2010). Another Look at the Impact of Personal and Organizational Values Congruency.

The Congruence Map – its structure and how to use it.

All core values from the Meaning Map are marked in bold on the Congruence Map. The columns in the Congruence Map have the same meaning as in the Meaning Map, but columns 1 and 2 are merged as well as columns 8 and 9. The Congruence Map thus contains 7 columns. Here, the order of values is divided into 4 groups that represent the basic conditions for creating trust and communication between people.

Relate

Relational values are values we want to practise to create meaningful relationships. They describe the relational style and relationship environment that are important for practising our personal values.

Being

Being values (ethical-social values) are values which represent how we think we should prioritise and how to behave in interpersonal relationships, partnerships and teams to make things work well.

Doing

Doing values (economic-pragmatic values) focus on performance, efficiency, and the structure we think is needed for groups and partnerships to really accomplish something that is both practical and valuable.

Role

Role values illustrate the initiatives, roles, functions or vocation, that we like to have or take on in groups and collaborations.

The Congruence Map has two general areas of application; the personal and the person-organisation value congruence. On a personal level, it is about understanding and expressing the experiences that emerge from the work on the Meaning map and strengthen our senses of identity and self-worth. Fundamental to our self-worth is our internal dialogue. The values that are used to reconcile internal and external experience and awareness are key in this dialogue, especially when it affects our conscious rather than unconscious behaviour i.e. the congruence between our intentions and our actions and the differences and similarities between ourselves and others.

When a workgroup or organisation sets out to develop its common values and culture with the help of the Congruence Map, the anthropologist Ralph Linton's definition of culture may serve as a good starting point: "Culture is the total sum of behavioural patterns, priorities and values shared and communicated by the members of a particular group"⁸. The common, normative values of the group will then guide the priorities and behaviours that are crucial to the success of the group's mission.

⁸ The quote comes from Leon Mann's Social Psychology, p. 288, 1969 where Mann quotes Linton 1936. In Acculturation in 7 American Indian Tribes (1963) Linton defines culture in the following way: "the sum total of the knowledge, attitudes and habitual behaviour patterns shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society... Cultures are adaptive mechanisms and as such represent a response to the needs of our species." p. 466 and "Culture change is, at bottom, a matter of change in the knowledge, attitudes and habits of the individuals who compose a society" p. 468.

The Congruence Map.

		CYCLE 1 . FOUNDATION		CYCLE 2 . FOCUS			CYCLE 3 . VISION	
RELATIONAL	Safe Affection Sustenance Dependent Praised Comfort	Helpful Respect Closeness Member	Fallibility	Humour	Envision Intimate	Interdependent Complement		
	C1/C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8/C9	
BEING	Friendly Dexterous	Thrifty Athletic Dependable Disciplined Diligent	Curious Efficient Responsible Patient Considerate Consistent Joyful Loyal Confident Economise Educated Healthy Independent	Honest Authentic Generous Knowledgeable Open Assertive Aware Ethical Humble Realistic	Aesthetic Calm Altruistic Wise Ingenious	Perceptive Holistic Democratic Innovative Challenge Detached Intuitive	Presence Vitality Knowing	
	C1/C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8/C9	
DOING	Support Welcome Reciprocate Sensate Explore Appear Traditions Dissociate Imitate Own	Inquire Hope Communicate Obey Play Rectify Self-control Honour Compete	Reason Achieve Focus	Rejuvenate Quality Adapt Appreciate Initiate	Fair Cooperate Collaborate Creative Empathise Include Meaning Forgive Disclose	Develop Scientific Balance Discern Integratet	Immerse Simplicity Selfless Inspire Transform	
	C1/C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8/C9	
ROLE			Work	Serve Manage Perform Commerce Create	Mentor Lead Research	Communitarian Compassion Activist Architect Heal	Humanitarian Guardian Interpreter Pluralist Conserve Messenger Co-evolutionary	

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