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CIX Summer School Your good academic life (professional life)

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Key take-away messages

It's ok to be different, to be you

We each have different values, strengths, interests, priorities, challenges etc

Know yourself

You can define / shape a good academic life for YOU

Permission to be a learner, to be human

Lead yourself

Health & well being is a critical enabler for your good research

Look after yourself



Why?

Why we need to take more control of our own version of a good life

2019 podcast with
Moshe Vardi



“...we realized recently that computing is not a game
–it is real–
and it brings with it societal benefits, but also significant
societal costs...”

“Suddenly we [CS/SE/HCI people] are running
society
and we are poorly equipped.”

What 'counts' for THE good academic life

H-Index

Publications

Promotion

Awards

Invited talks

Grants

Projects

Advisory Boards

PhD Students

Senior community roles

Photo by [Rebekah Howell](#) on [Unsplash](#)



H-Index

Publications

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Breeding THE ideal
super-chicken academic



The selfish academic
(Moshe Vardi)



Promotion

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Senior community roles

Human **costs**
of the academic game



Academics
Middle leaders
ECRs,
Tenure-tracks
PhD students
Bachelor students

Majority of academics find their job **stressful**
Higher levels of **burnout** than general population

[Guthrie et al, 2017]

Excessive **work demands**, **Performance criteria**

Increasing **managerial culture** [various]

Job precarity, **uncertain career paths** [various]

Balancing work-family life [Scott et al 2008]

80% mod-severe stress because of **lack of balance** [Gmelch 2004]

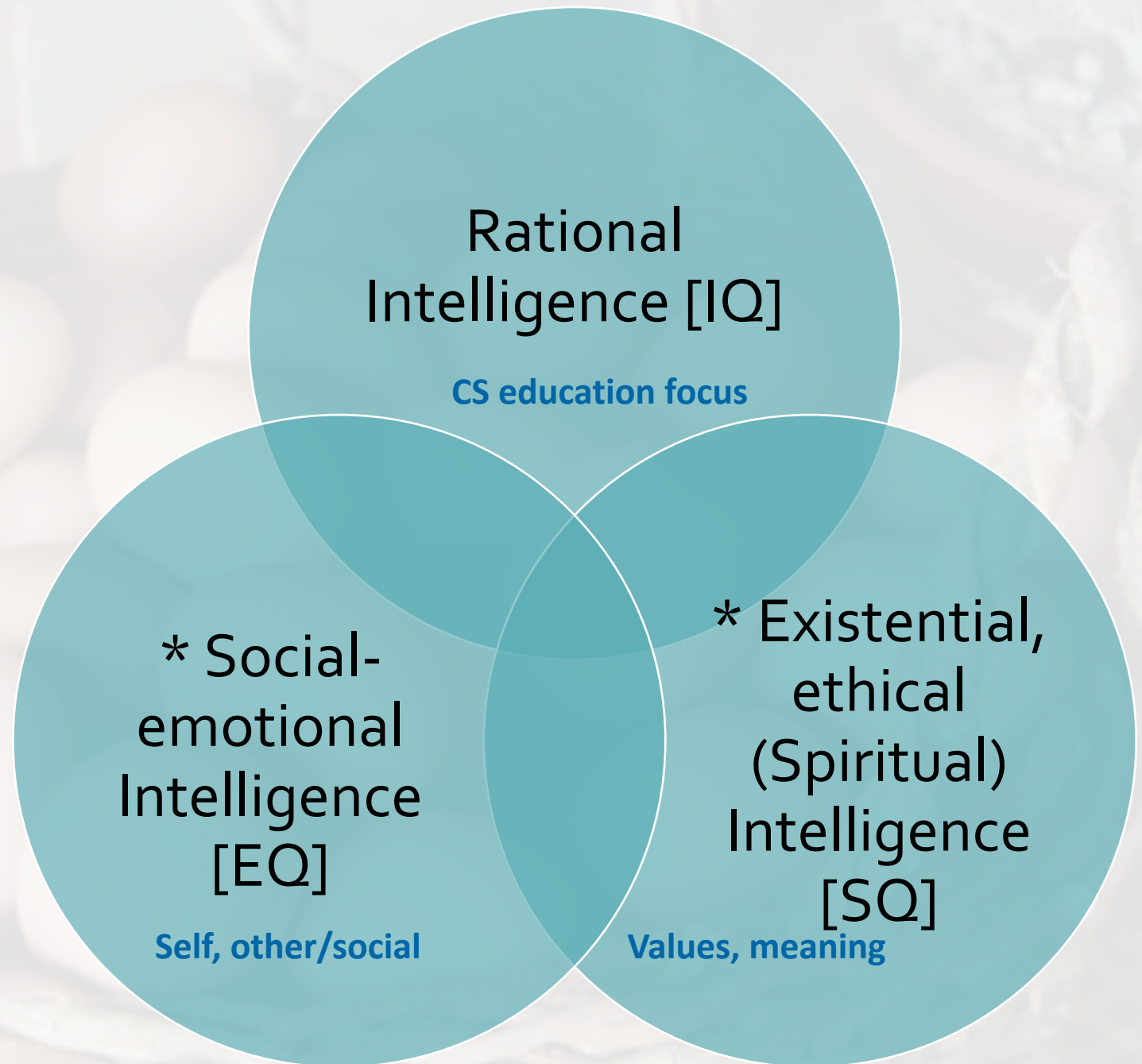
Increased **mental health** issues among student populations [various]

Narrow skillsets

to engage with societal
questions

to work in
multidisciplinary teams

*[see initiatives at Google,
Microsoft, SAP etc]*



Know yourself

What are your unique values, strengths etc...

Know thyself

Personal statement building from values, meaning, strengths

'North star'

'Super powers'



Values

What you hold as important

Qualities of action

Congruence with goals, decisions, action



Meaning & Purpose

Bigger purpose

Mark in the world, the difference you want to make

Drivers

Similar to purpose



Important life areas

What areas of life are important to you

Where/how you allocate time, energy



Strengths

What you love doing & are good at

Using strengths

Developing strengths



Making energising choices

Allocating energy effectively

Knowing what you can control or influence or not

North star - Values

Or compass Whatever metaphor works for you

Values

What is important for you

Giving direction

Less likely to change over time cf
priorities

Shaping decisions

Translating values to actions

Making choices congruent with values

Guiding what you want to be doing with life, where/how
you spend your time, goal setting, prioritizing,

Relation to

meaning/purpose...

Dare to Lead Values list - Brené Brown

PDF available from:
<https://daretolead.brenebrown.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Values.pdf>

<i>List of</i> VALUES			
Accountability	Diversity	Intuition	Safety
Achievement	Environment	Job security	Security
Adaptability	Efficiency	Joy	Self-discipline
Adventure	Equality	Justice	Self-expression
Altruism	Ethics	Kindness	Self-respect
Ambition	Excellence	Knowledge	Serenity
Authenticity	Fairness	Leadership	Service
Balance	Faith	Learning	Simplicity
Beauty	Family	Legacy	Spirituality
Being the best	Financial stability	Leisure	Sportsmanship
Belonging	Forgiveness	Love	Stewardship
Career	Freedom	Loyalty	Success
Caring	Friendship	Making a difference	Teamwork
Collaboration	Fun	Nature	Thrift
Commitment	Future generations	Openness	Time
Community	Generosity	Optimism	Tradition
Compassion	Giving back	Order	Travel
Competence	Grace	Parenting	Trust
Confidence	Gratitude	Patience	Truth
Connection	Growth	Patriotism	Understanding
Contentment	Harmony	Peace	Uniqueness
Contribution	Health	Perseverance	Usefulness
Cooperation	Home	Personal fulfillment	Vision
Courage	Honesty	Power	Vulnerability
Creativity	Hope	Pride	Wealth
Curiosity	Humility	Recognition	Well-being
Dignity	Humor	Reliability	Wholeheartedness
	Inclusion	Resourcefulness	Wisdom
	Independence	Respect	<i>Write your own:</i>
	Initiative	Responsibility	
	Integrity	Risk -taking	

EXERCISE: Identifying your core values

This is an ongoing process so consider what you do now as the beginning ...

Take some time to:

1. Read through the values list and put a star against any that connect for you
2. From these starred options, select your top 10 values
3. Look at these 10 values and narrow it down to the 5 that are most important
4. [Challenge step] Look at these 5 values and **choose 2** (3 if you really can't do 2) that are your really core values ie a value that would 'always' win out if there were any tensions or conflict with these other values

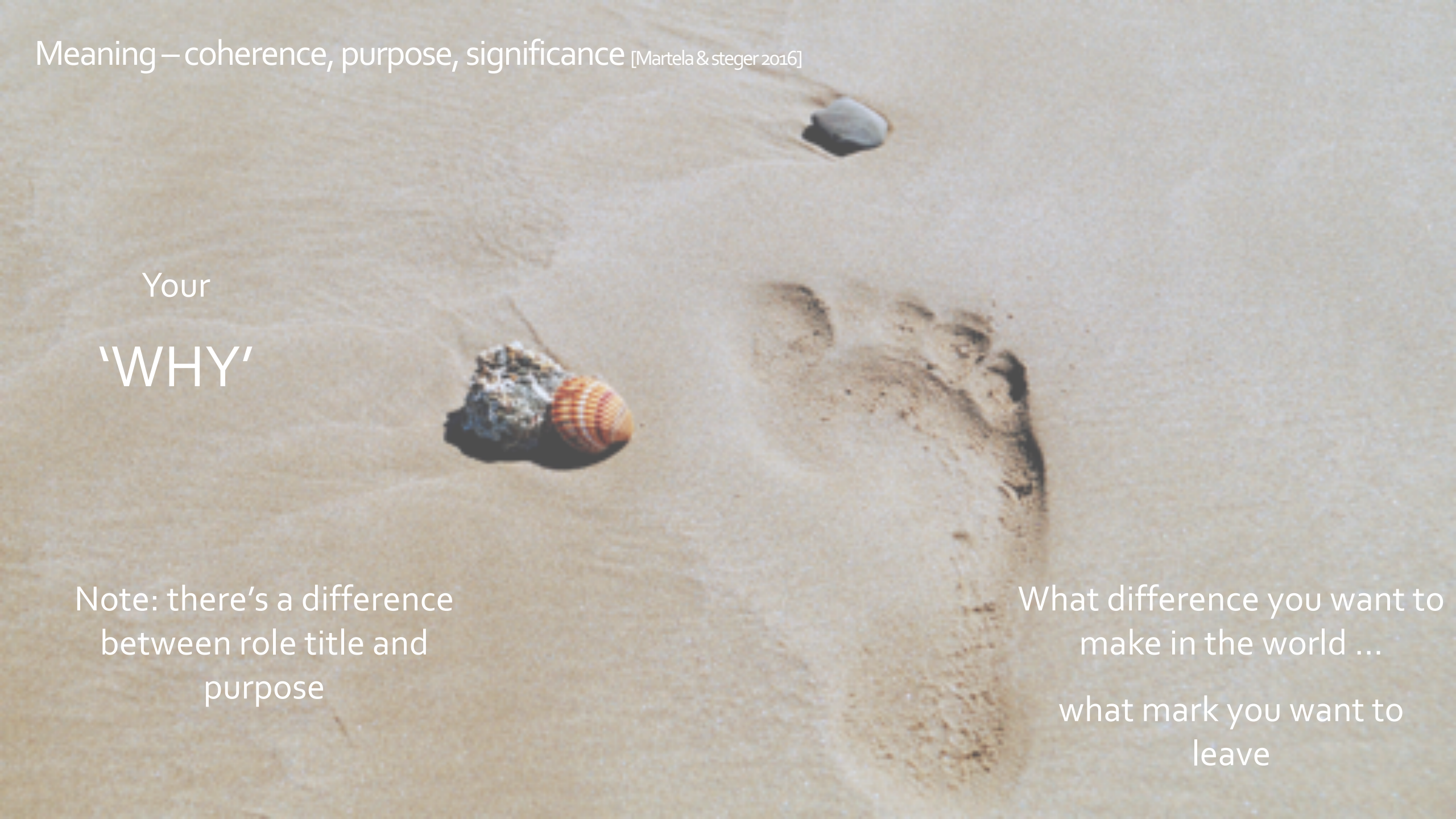
NOTE: Feel free to use whatever words make most sense to you & be clear for yourself about how YOU define what the value means for you

Meaning – coherence, purpose, significance [Martela & Steger 2016]

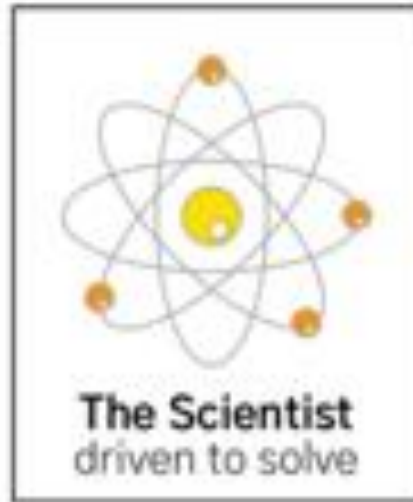
Your
'WHY'


Note: there's a difference
between role title and
purpose

What difference you want to
make in the world ...
what mark you want to
leave



Example: Drivers/'Sparkes': not so much the role as the driver behind what you orient to

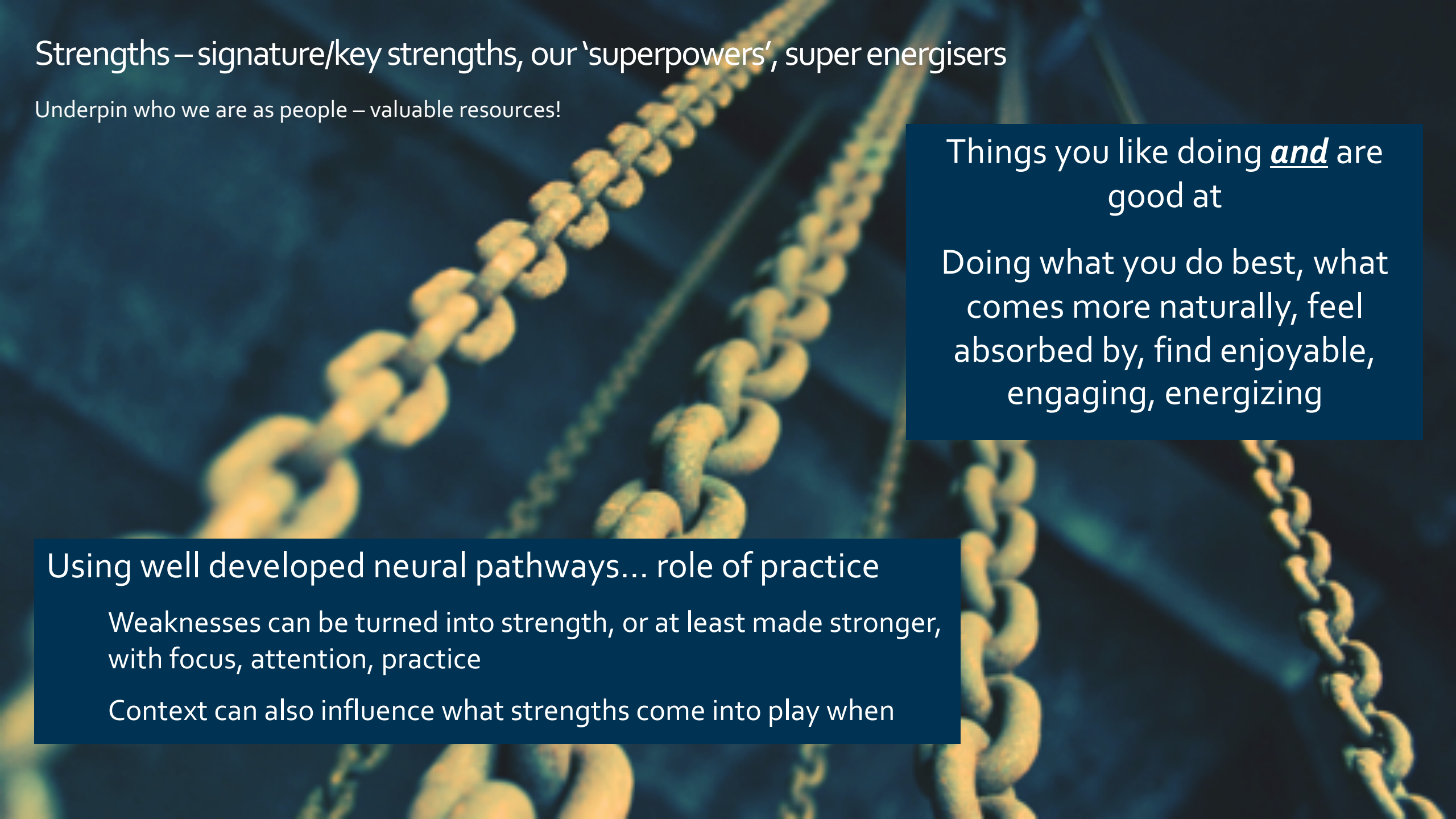




What are all the
areas of your life
that are important to
you?

Eg...
Family
Work & career
Recreation
Health
Creativity
Spiritual
Service
Relationships
Social
Finance
Etc...

How well does your life currently honour your values, all the areas of your life that are important to you, work to your strengths etc?



Strengths – signature/key strengths, our 'superpowers', super energisers

Underpin who we are as people – valuable resources!

Things you like doing and are good at

Doing what you do best, what comes more naturally, feel absorbed by, find enjoyable, engaging, energizing

Using well developed neural pathways... role of practice

Weaknesses can be turned into strength, or at least made stronger, with focus, attention, practice

Context can also influence what strengths come into play when

Example:
Strengthscope

24 strengths

Categories:

Emotional
Relational
Execution
Thinking

9. The 24 Strengths



Emotional



Courage:
You take on challenges and face risks by standing up for what you believe



Emotional control:
You are aware of your emotional 'triggers' and how to control these to ensure you remain calm and productive



Enthusiasm:
You demonstrate passion and energy when communicating goals, beliefs, interests or ideas you feel strongly about



Optimism:
You remain positive and upbeat about the future and your ability to influence it to your advantage



Resilience:
You deal effectively with setbacks and enjoy overcoming difficult challenges



Self-confidence:
You have a strong belief in yourself and your abilities to accomplish tasks and goals

Example:
Strengthscope
(cont)

24 strengths

Categories:

Emotional
Relational
Execution
Thinking



Example: Strengthscope (cont)

24 strengths

Categories:

Emotional
Relational
Execution
Thinking



Example:
Strengthscope

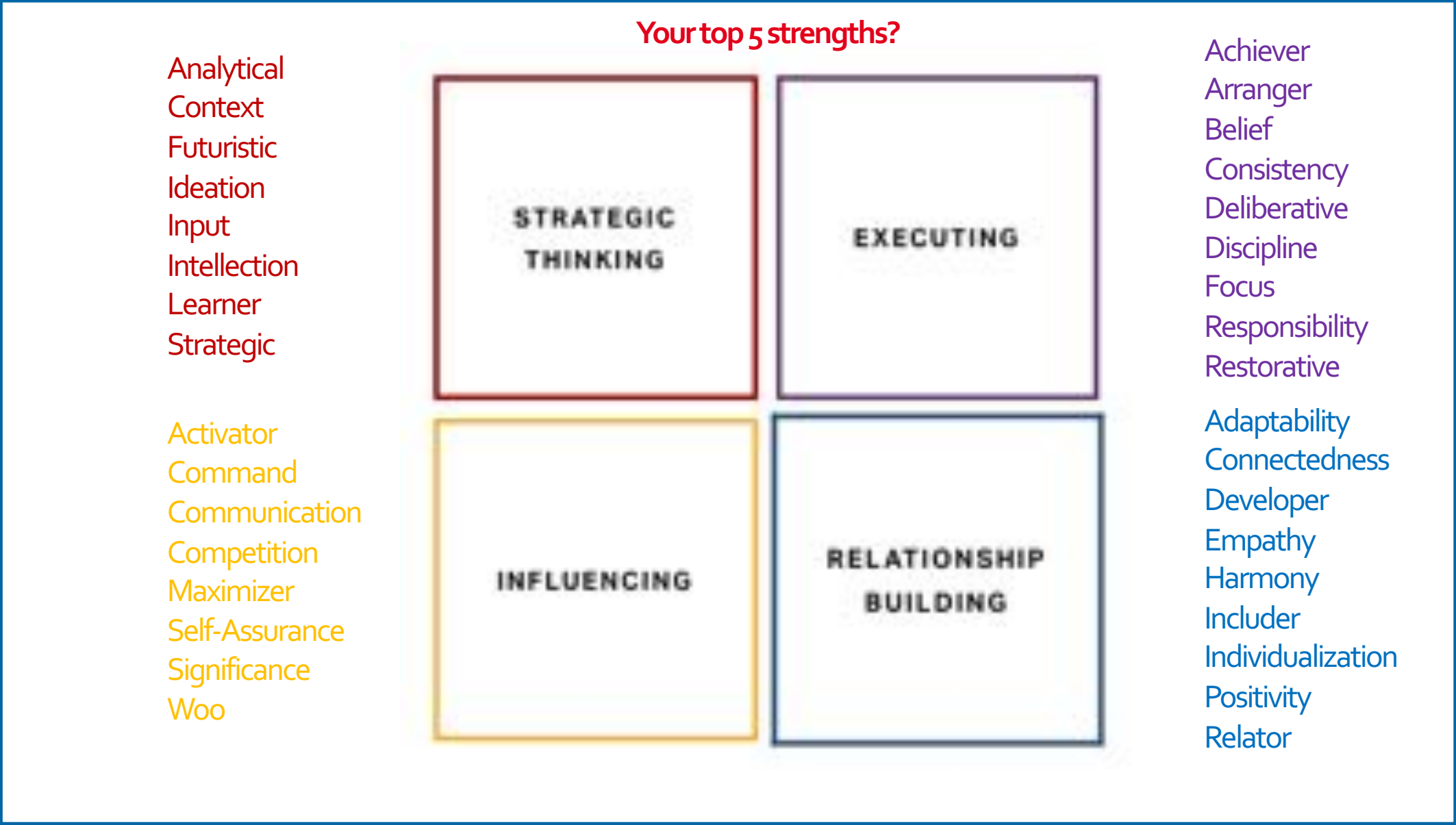
24 strengths

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Example: CliftonStrengths™: (work) domains & themes



Example:

VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues

The Character Strengths of a Flourishing Life

WISDOM	COURAGE	HUMANITY	JUSTICE	TEMPERANCE	TRANSCENDENCE
 Creativity Originality, adaptive, ingenuity	 Bravery Valor, not shrinking from fear, speaking up for what's right	 Love Both loving and being loved, valuing close relations with others	 Teamwork Citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty	 Forgiveness Mercy, accepting others' shortcomings, giving people a second chance	 Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence Awe, wonder, elevation
 Curiosity Interest, novelty-seeking, exploration, openness to experience	 Perseverance Persistence, industry, finishing what one starts	 Kindness Generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruism, "niceness"	 Fairness Just, not letting feelings bias decisions about others	 Humility Modesty, letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves	 Gratitude Thankful for the good, expressing thanks, feeling blessed
 Judgment Critical thinking, thinking things through, open-minded	 Honesty Authenticity, integrity	 Social Intelligence Emotional intelligence, aware of the motives/feelings of self/others, knowing what makes other people tick	 Leadership Organizing group activities, encouraging a group to get things done	 Prudence Careful, cautious, not taking undue risks	 Hope Optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation
 Love of Learning Mastering new skills & topics, systematically adding to knowledge	 zest Vitality, enthusiasm, vigor, energy, feeling alive and activated			 Self-Regulation Self-control, disciplined, managing impulses & emotions	 Humor Playfulness, bringing smiles to others, lighthearted
 Perspective Wisdom, providing wise counsel, taking the big picture view					 Spirituality Religiosity, faith, purpose, meaning



(where the world finds strength)

www.viacharacter.org

Lenses for understanding others ... Diversity - difference

Important for team work, collaborations, etc – to move from rom tension to understanding to creativity

Navigating relationships with ...

Supervisor

Colleagues

Team members

Partner etc

Different values, drivers, priorities, strengths, etc

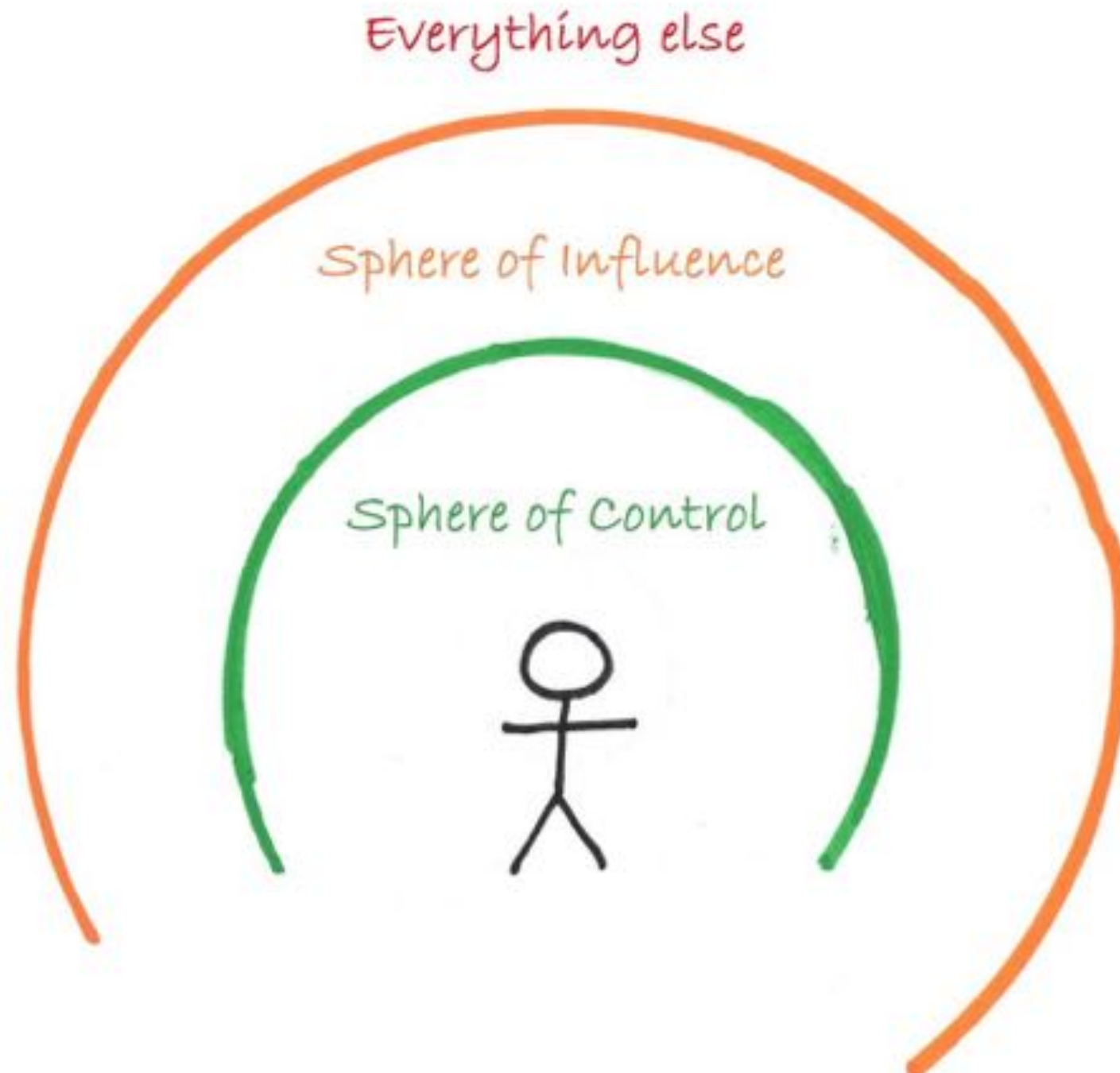
Understanding possible sources of tensions

Negotiating ways of working

Utilisiing what each person brings, when each person is at their best ... team roles

Lead yourself

Choices ... we can control or influence more than we think



No stopping points - can always take on more ...

Carl Gutwin [10:50]: *being told*
"the best part of this job is the flexibility,
you can work any 80 hours of the week that you want"



Saul Greenberg: "Work will never end and **it's up to me to balance my life.** [...]"

The question I would ask myself is: If I said yes to this, which I really want to do, what should I stop doing"



Anna Cox: "The longer people are in this job, the busier they get. You always seem to get more stuff. No-one is ever going to take anything away from you. **So therefore it is down to you to say no to things** and that's really hard."

Making your choices

Choosing

based on

values,
what's important to you,
where you are at in your
career

connecting to
your strengths,
etc



Saying yes/no

wisely
strategically

Calendar/planning
strategies

Knowing how you **can** shape your work

Connecting to your values, driver; using your strengths; making the difference important to you

Benefits: increased autonomy; increased engagement, satisfaction, performance [Job Crafting research, Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001]

Tasks



Shaping the
boundaries & content

to align with your
values, strengths,
interests, passions

Relational



Connecting with
people who...

bring out the best,
make it fun,
complement your
strengths

Cognitive



You may not be able
to change the task

but you can change
the way you think
about it

Meaning, purpose

Environment*



Location of work

Things of beauty

Plants

Sounds

'Crafting' examples

Using difference as a positive resource, working to our strengths ... recognising we have more control than what we think

Mike Twidale – task & relational



Cliffe Lampe - cognitive



Connecting together Mobilising the power of the collective

Collegiality Research culture

Small actions,
Big impact

Fitting together



Networking Peer support

Authenticity
Being real
Honesty

Give & take

Being real ... honest, open, sharing the diversity of academia experiences

Jennifer Mankoff



Changing Academic Life conversations

Search on 'imposter' or 'rejection'



Leyla Palen on creating a new research area, the long path to tenure and starting a department

Imposter syndrome ... generation PhD, dealing with imposter syndrome, and moving to a new university to support her spouse. It ...



Judy Olson on her career and blooming where you are planted

Imposter syndrome ... you are planted, on paying it forward, on dealing with imposter syndrome, on the value of good ... can do and the choices along the way 25:10 Imposter syndrome, getting nervous before every talk ...



Austen Rainer on changing cultures, leading people and values

Imposter syndrome ... behaving. And so that's, that's, first of all, that's got me much more conscious of imposter syndrome ... that come with leadership. And always learning since situations are different. 30:00 Imposter ... head of department role, was female students talking about imposter syndrome and, and the difficulty ... on that side. Okay. Which brings me up against whole thing about, I don't know, imposter syndrome ... masculine perspective, which I guess the masculine perspective is no, I'm not an imposter. I can, you ...



Jen Markoff on managing an academic career with a disability & finding good ways forward

... dealing with imposter syndrome and also with the knowledge that you are not performing in the way you ...



RWS Finding the management sweet spot

... the imposter syndrome would have, would be a definite definition for what was going on then. And I ...



RWS Asking good questions, empowering good people

It's actually a confidence issue, that they just feel like a bit of imposter trying to write it up and ...

Imposter

Rejection



Carl Gutwin on academic life, making choices, getting perspective

Dealing with criticism/rejection ... another deadline and every paper will find a home (in dealing with rejection and good old reviewer ...



Kirsten Ellis on shifting goalsposts, motivation, flying & being a working mum with a disabled child

From being things not the rejection on paper but that the information is not distributed like they ... for a while and get a whole lot of rejection (re-motivating, Kirsten confided about what she ... rejected (but she got down to certain number of papers (rather than a problem with the paper) 27:40 Kirst ... Dealing with criticism/rejection ...



Evan Peck on making choices, accepting trade-offs, and liberal arts as a great middle way

pretty demoralizing when rejection starts piling up, but also (re)claiming thinking no did really have ... your identity is the work you are doing, and that's why those rejection feel so much more personal ... so much more personal because they're about the choice (handling rejection by keeping on working, that ... Dealing with criticism/rejection ... but this (this) trap that your identity is the work you are doing and that's why those rejection feel ...



Tim Radden on doing good work, metrics, failure, funding, and family

Failing then (switching between 10:23 Managing rejection, taking a whole to not personalize this ... personal career choices, what drives his research and dealing with (re)written and (re)jections, no bigger ... Dealing with criticism/rejection ...



Scott Robertson on missing tenure, persevering, and connecting to mission & community

"Perseverance is extremely important" also dealing with rejection in doing S&OR Celebrating tenure and then ... what you have done" (on (re)written/rejection, is sustainable, not just sustainable but absolutely you can ... Dealing with criticism/rejection ...



Margaret Burnett on pioneering, mentoring, changing the world & GenderMag

Dealing with criticism/rejection ...



Carman Neustaedter on research identity, work/life balance, and taking perspective

Dealing with criticism/rejection ...



Chris Häusserberger on postdocs, parental leave & multiple dreams

Dealing with paper rejection in the first year ... concerns about 'what if this project doesn't yield the ... tough up (not just) 27:02:02 Academic quite hard in having to live with rejection and needing to find a ...



Kyle Ball on supporting early career researchers, virtual mentorship and wellbeing

to be careful, don't want to focus on what doesn't work, but recognizing we're all had rejection and ... (upfront and without overreacting. And dealing with critique, rejection, awards, promotion. Near ... good to share more to the rejection and talent side and how we have dealt with those. A hard thing ... to share. Another post on rejection showed some brave people who posted about their feelings. Read ...



Micoe Vardi on publication pressures, student stress, mid-career mentoring & societal obligations

Carol Greider: Carol Greider - Same day, a Nobel prize and a grant rejection ... Barbra Streisand ...

Look after yourself

Necessary pre-condition for good science

86400 ...



Wellbeing

as critical enabler for
good research

bringing our best
selves

*"Far from diverting attention from academic and research priorities,
well-being is a critical enabling condition for academic success.*

The science is clear:

balanced, happy people are

*more productive,
more creative,
more collaborative,*

better at long-term goal pursuit,

*more likely to find employment
and more physically and psychologically resilient."*

Bringing our **best selves**

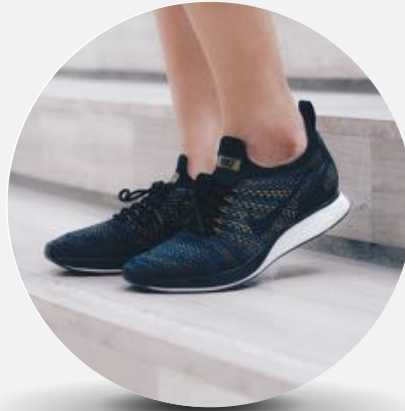
Creating conditions for optimal functioning ... huge research evidence base re wellbeing!



Eat



Sleep



Move



Play



Relate

Be!
Breathe!

The power of the purposeful pause

S.T.O.P. Stop, Take a breath, Observe, Proceed

Focus, presence

Between context shifts ... 20 secs

Between listening and answering... 2 secs

breathe

Deep breath, lengthened exhale
– stimulates parasympathetic
nervous system

Shift from reacting to responding
(Move from amygdala to PFC)

Evidence-based strategy : RE-framing - **Self compassion**

Changing the inner voice – how would you treat a friend?

"Instead of mercilessly judging and criticizing yourself for various inadequacies or shortcomings, self-compassion means you are kind and understanding when confronted with personal failings – after all, who ever said you were supposed to be perfect?" [[Kristin Neff](#)]

Neff's three elements of self-compassion:

1. Self kindness vs self judgement

- Accept reality of being imperfect with sympathy, kindness

2. Common humanity vs isolation

- Recognise shared human experience, these things don't happen to you alone

3. Mindfulness vs over-identification

- Non-judgmental awareness of thoughts/emotions – not ignoring, suppressing, or exaggerating

Evidence based strategy: **Taking control**

From perfect to good and getting better

Healthy striving

*"Swap toxic perfectionism for **excellencism**" – associated with higher creativity & increased openness to experience & better performance on divergent thinking and associative tasks, compared with perfectionism [[Wilding 2021](#)]*

Be careful who we **compare** ourselves against - realistic yardsticks [[Churchill 2018](#)]

Recognise where the culture/system **pressures** come from

make a deliberate choice whether to buy into them or not,

or how to craft your work to play the game

while also aiming for healthy striving

Find your **trusted** mentors, supporters, honest feedback people

and listen to them, believe them!

Evidence based strategy: Aiming for good/great, **getting better** ... not being perfect

Finding the balance [[Wilding 2021](#)]

- 1.** Identify hidden payoff in perfectionism (**prize**)
 1. e.g. the praise from over achieving, avoiding failure
- 2.** Be honest about the costs (**price**/punishment)
 1. e.g., mental & physical H&WB, relationships etc)
- 3.** Let go of all or nothing mindset, adopt a **growth mindset**
- 4.** Break down big goals into smaller more **realistic** steps
- 5. Celebrate** successes, list achievements, accept compliments

Be comfortable being a **learner** on the way to being a **professional 'not-knower'!**

Evidence-based strategy: **Growth Mindset**Being kind to ourselves, allowing ourselves to be human



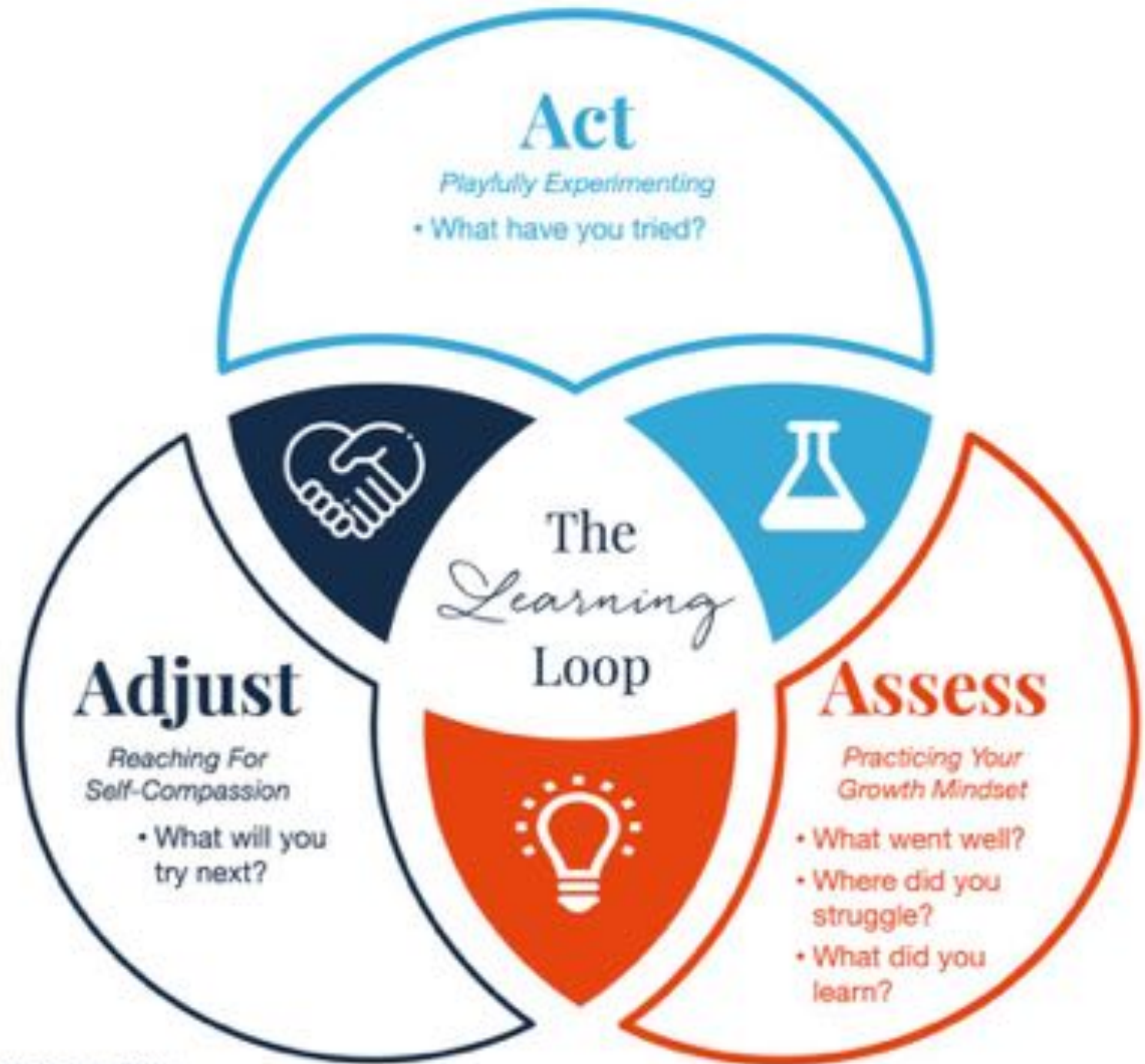
(Dweck, 2008)

3 Steps to a Growth Mindset



Putting it together...

Learning Loop



How did we go with take-aways?

Key take-away messages

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We each have different values, strengths, interests, priorities, challenges etc

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Health & well being is a critical enabler for your good research



Thank You



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