Inner Development Goals

Phase 2 Research Report
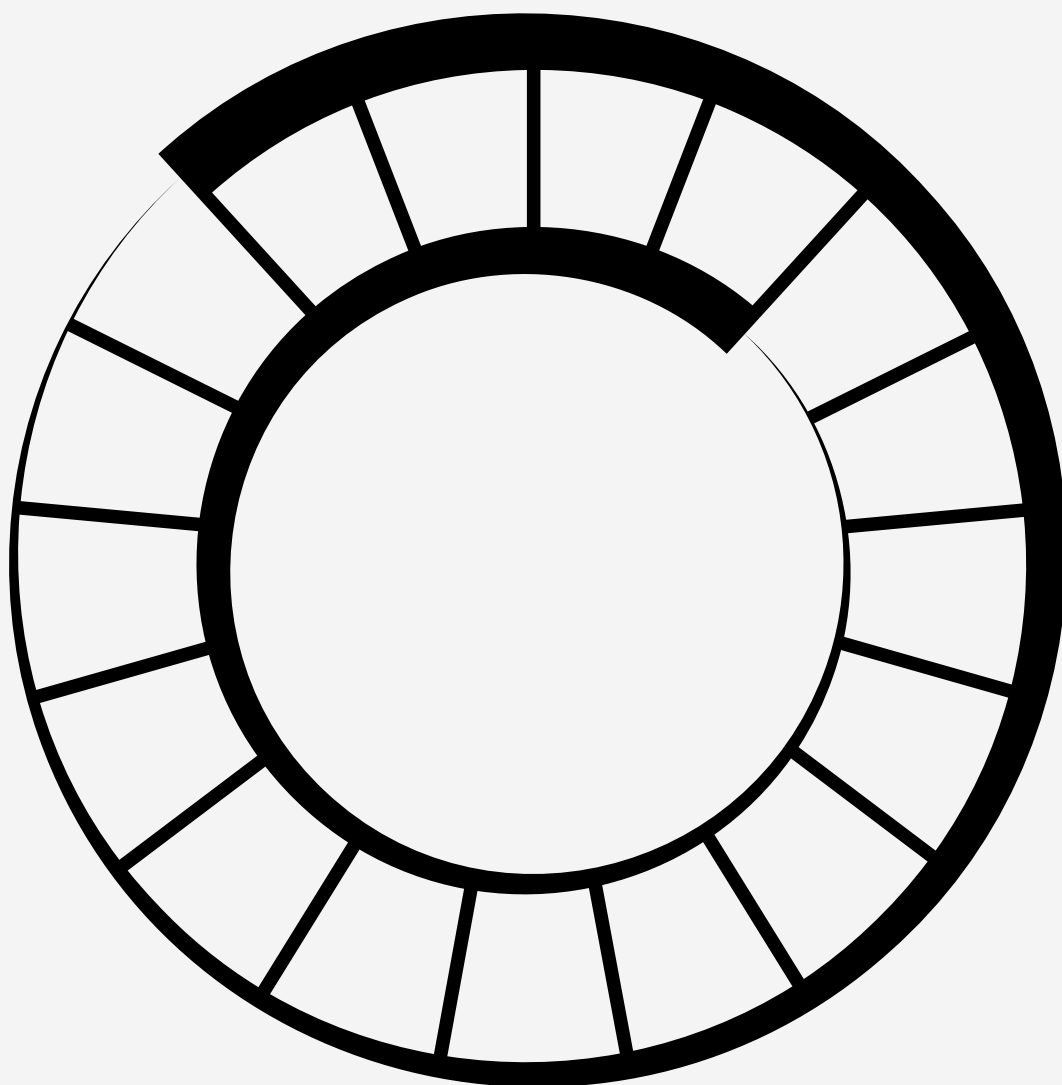
We bring the power of inner development to all global challenges faced by humanity.

Preface

We, Kristian Stålne and Stefanie Greca, have authored this publication together and have been supported by a large number of people in this process. Our thanks go to each and every one of you. Without your contributions, this document would not be what it is. We have therefore marked the contributions of all collaborators as such.

This also applies to the names of those people who inspired us with their questions and comments, even if they themselves did not make a written contribution to this publication.

Kävlinge, Sweden and Welver, Germany

2022-09-12

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What this Publication is About

With this publication, we shed light on the topic of inner development. When we use the term inner development, we mean the expansion of individual and collective capacity to respond to perceived challenges that arise or could arise from insufficiently regenerative practices.In particular, we are interested in the potential solutions inner development can open up with regard to addressing the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other sustainability concepts. The centre of attention here is on individual skills, but they can also be approached from a collective perspective. Exploring the relation between individual and collective development and the surrounding system is beyond the scope of this publication.

The aim of this publication is to provide an overview of those methods that – according to the knowledge of those involved in this publication – contribute to developing the skills and qualities that help us to lead purposeful, sustainable and productive lives, individually and collectively.

This publication is primarily based on a survey that we prepared last year and which at the date of publication has had over 3000 people participating. In addition, we subsequently discussed the results of the survey with researchers around the world for several months before summarising the insights of these conversations and discussions here.

How to Read this Publication

We see this publication less as a scientific report (although elements of that are included here), than an invitation to deal with inner development and sustainability simultaneously, in an integrated way.

With this in mind, we have decided to make this publication freer in its content in its content and structure than a strictly scientific publication would require. For example, we only work with references in certain sections. We have also deliberately not produced a classic executive summary. Instead, we would like to give you a brief overview of the topics covered in each chapter so that you can find your way around the publication more quickly, depending on your individual reading interests.

Reading Interests

Click here to read more

Reading interest: The IDG initiative
In the section "The IDG initiative" you will find more information about the genesis and the (so far) planned progress of the IDG project.

Click here to read more

Reading interest: The IDG Framework
In the section "The IDG framework" we present the 23 skills and five categories that make up the framework. If you are not yet familiar with the framework, we recommend that you read this section before moving on to its application, which is discussed in the chapter "The Toolkit". The section is rounded off by a small self-reflection. It should help you to identify a possible starting point for concrete work with the Toolkit for you personally.

Click here to read more

Reading interest: Contributors and the collection and handling of data
The section "Collection of data and development of the toolkit" is particularly interesting for researchers and for anyone who is interested in the details: Here you will learn more about how we dealt with the collection and processing of data and how we came to the selection of those methods that we present in more detail in the section "the toolkit". You can also read the names of those we worked with to produce this publication.

Click here to read more

**Reading interest: Application – The Methods
and how to work to with the IDG framework**
In "the toolkit" section, we present a total of 19 methods or groups of methods that we believe are relevant for further exploring, learning or deepening the 23 skills that currently make up the IDG framework.For each method, we have provided a quick overview, a more detailed description and references to help you find out more.

Click here to read more

Reading interest: Limits and Outlook
The Discussion section addresses limitations and blind spots of the content and approach presented here. This section was important for us to make clear: we cannot offer more than an introduction to inner development and sustainability in this framework. One should always be aware of this. The section also addresses where future work is needed to build further knowledge on how IDGs and SDGs are or could be intertwined.

Who this Publication is Written For

This publication is aimed in particular at change agents. By change agents we mean people who are interested in inner development and/or sustainability and who are committed to harnessing the potential of these issues for themselves and others. Thus, that can be trainers, people who work in the area of Human Resources, Sustainability, leadership development, policy making or other representatives of any form of organisation. We also want to address individuals who are interested in inner development.However, our main focus is on working with organisations. These can be political, private or non-profit organisations, to name a few, as well as their stakeholders (in the context of this publication we use the term ecosystem in this context). In our view, working with organisations is a very efficient way to reach many people and bring about systemic change.

Who Initiated this Publication

The publication is part of the Inner Development Goals (IDG)-Initiative, which was initiated in 2020 by the Ekskäret Foundation, 29k Foundation and The New Division. More than 50 academic institutions, organisations and (so far) one government (of Costa Rica) have officially joined the journey of co-creation and integration of the IDG framework. The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) is a non-profit, open source organisation working to accelerate the work toward achieving United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the power of inner development. The IDG Initiatives researches, collects, and communicates evidence-based personal skills and qualities that help to live purposeful, sustainable, and productive lives.The purpose of IDGs is to bring the power of inner development to all global challenges faced by humanity. More information about the initiative can be found here: **innerdevelopmentgoals.org**

This report was supported by ERASMUS+ through the CADRA project. The project "Cognitive Adult development - from Research to application" involves six organisations working together over a three-year period to bring approaches informed by cognitive adult development to a wider audience. In particular, CADRA aims to understand how people currently develop their cognitive skills in order to derive approaches and formats that enable people in leadership roles to better understand and deal with living, complex systems and decisions. More information on CADRA can be found here: **fraendi.org/cadra**.

It is important for both the IDG initiative and CADRA that the content and data generated is publicly available. Not only this publication, but also the survey itself as well as all data generated so far (which are of course completely anonymised) are therefore available on the IDG Initiative website and can be used for one's own research purposes.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 From Limits to Growth to Inner Development

Fifty years ago, in 1972, Donella Meadows and her colleagues authored the report The Limits to Growth, where they simulated the long-term global trends in population, economics, and the environment using a computer model named World3. The simulations took their departure in a holistic perspective on the earth. This was in a time of the moon landing and the Apollo project, where the Earthrise photography became a symbol for the beginning of the environmental movement and the development of a more global awareness.

The World3 model took into consideration factors such as population, food production, industrial output, pollution and consumption of non-renewable resources, such as fossil fuels. From these factors and simulations, they could make different future forecasts. They concluded that the most probable scenarios, should the exponential growth continue, would include overshoot and resource depletion, at which the human population would collapse.

The conclusions from the report that the Club of Rome commissioned were controversial at that time and dismissed by many. It still is today, and most economic and social systems are still based on the assumption of continuing economic growth and growth in how we extract finite resources. But the primary purpose of the systems dynamics models was, according to Meadows, not to make predictions but rather to help human minds to understand interactions. Thus, the work was a significant landmark in using systems theory and perspectives to understand sustainability challenges.

But why have we, after fifty years, not advanced further in acknowledging the results and recognising that growth has limits on a finite planet? In fact, we have even created a more complex situation to be solved in the meantime.Because compared to the status quo on the basis of which the researchers drew their conclusions 50 years ago, the situation has even worsened on other levels, which should make it even more difficult to bring things back into balance. For example, only one percent of the world's population currently owns about half of all wealth. After the financial crisis in 2008, however, the number of billionaires worldwide almost doubled. At the same time, fewer and fewer people manage to lift themselves out of extreme poverty.

A study by the development organisation Oxfam (cf. "Public good or private wealth") shows that the rate at which extreme poverty isbeing reduced has halved since 2013. African countries are particularly affected by this development: Extreme poverty has even been increasing again in these countries for some time. Why we allow this to happen is something we can only speculate about here. If we focus on The Limits to Growth study, we see three reasons why this early warning didn't have a more impact than it did:

Firstly, system dynamics is a complex subject and tool that one cannot easily learn on one's own. Not only do you need to understand how different factors, such as the access to oil, develop due to the extraction and exploitation of new oil wells. You also need to take into account how this affects other factors, such as economic output and vice versa. This is also a challenge in the university environment where such courses are offered.

Secondly, the Limits to Growth study results challenged the still widely held worldview that growth is essentially based on human ingenuity and technological progress and that we will always find new resources, innovate and develop more efficient ways to use them. Even though there are truths to be found in this, a worldview is often something we identify with, and when results are not in alignment with this, we tend to dismiss them.

Thirdly, the analysis was conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology research group without involving external stakeholders who might be affected by the conclusions. It is often the case that if you haven't been involved in a process, you are less likely to accept its outcome. Nowadays, the systems dynamics tool Causal loop diagram, as the method is called, is applied to involve stakeholders to make sense of complex issues collectively

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly set up the resolution Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development containing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to be achieved by 2030. The 17 goals or SDGs are: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-Being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequality, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life Below Water, Life on Land, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and Partnerships for the Goals.

If we look at the three reasons we identified with Limits to Growth report, we can say that the SDGs address all three of them: Firstly, the SDGs can be seen as an approach to make the complexity of the challenges associated with sustainability easier to understand and engage in by dividing them into the 17 goals and a total of 169 targets that allows for monitoring of the progress of implementing the goals. Significant efforts were made to communicate the goals by means of succinct descriptions and supporting symbols that most recognise today.

Secondly, the Agenda 2030 framework is more inclusive of different perspectives and does not challenge any worldview in the sense that the Limits to Growth report did. For instance, it includes economic growth as one of the goals.And finally, the SDGs were the result of a three-year-long collaborative process involving affected stakeholders from all 193 participating nations, which ensured that the framework would be widely spread and adopted. Instead of trying to simulate and inform about possible future scenarios, the framework is designed and intended to support the action and implementation of the SDGs.

However, we are now halfway to the deadline in 2030 and the implementation progress is too slow. This is the conclusion from the latest Sustainable Development Report published annually by Prof.Jeffrey Sachs and colleagues. According to this report, the progress of reaching the SDGs has stagnated for the past two years.

There seem to be several gaps to bridge to reach the SDGs. One possible perspective and conclusion from this could be that the challenges ahead of us are simply too complex and overwhelming for us as a collective to grasp and appropriately engage in. This could come from an understanding that we are only adapted for solving simple tasks, that we are not capable of understanding exponential growth and that we are simply hard-wired towards engaging only with our close groups, tribes and those we can relate to.

In this publication and initiative, we will introduce another perspective. Here we will explore inner development as a means of addressing sustainability issues and the SDGs. We will argue that it may be possible to develop our ability to understand complex problems, our ways of relating and cooperating with people from all around the world, and to come to decisive action from this even when it challenges our ways of understanding the world and our place in it. If we, on a large scale, in organisations and governments, start to prioritise developing relevant skills, we can substantially increase our chances of being successful in working effectively with complex issues, like the sustainable development goals.

We still believe in continuing growth on a finite planet, but rather in terms of growing our inner skills and capabilities and without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. We consider this inner development to be the growth that matters.

1.2 Introducing the IDG Initiative

The Inner Development Goals (IDG) is a non-profit and open-source initiative that aims to investigate which skills and capacities are relevant to develop to address the SDGs better. We also want to address if and how these skills can be trained and developed to support more integrative measures and approaches. In the two coming chapters, the IDG initiative and the IDG framework with its skills and dimension will be introduced, but before that, we need to discuss more broadly what we mean by inner development and why it matters here.

The SDGs are complex and contain many challenges in themselves. Take the SDGs Climate Change or Reduced Inequality as two examples. A first gap is whether we understand and make sense of these issues as a problem at all. This requires skills such as complex thinking and taking different perspectives, including long-term perspectives.

The development of these skills is sometimes transmitted in schools and higher education but we have historically mainly focused on learning facts and solving well-structured problems. However, suppose we only learn about challenges such as climate change or inequality, there is no guarantee that we actually care about them or have the capacity to relate and collaborate in effective ways to act on them. We may be overwhelmed by their complexity or feel that we don't have the time or capacity to engage in them. It may also be that engaging in climate change is not in line with our current values and worldview. It seems clear that cognitive abilities such as complex thinking are essential to address complex challenges. However, here the scope of necessary inner development goes beyond this.

We aim to involve more of the human being than our intellects and also involve how we relate to our thoughts, feelings, values and bodies in our view of development. Cultivating our inner life in how we develop has been the aim of many wisdom traditions throughout history as well as modern psychological research and practice. But even if we are knowledgeable about climate change or inequality and are at peace with ourselves as individuals, there is no guarantee that our values align with what happens in another part of the world or a distant future.

How we relate with and feel connected with others is also highly relevant here. Would we really engage in climate change if we didn't care about those affected, even if they are parts of other cultures? Meadows and colleagues wanted to promote how we understand interactions. We also argue that we need to see ourselves not only as individuals but also in relation to and interaction with each other and to see ourselves as larger collectives. Accordingly, we may understand the skills that we propose not only from an individual perspective, but also as skills we on a collective level need to develop to address the SDGs.

The complexity of the SDGs also asks us to cooperate and co-create. No challenge can be addressed by a sole individual. From this perspective, we understand that our collective abilities to cooperate, for instance, in organisations, can be more or less inclusive, trusting and productive. We consider the way of cooperating as something we can and need to develop.

Finally, to further close the gap between what we understand, relate to and work towards and what we achieve in terms of impact and addressing the SDGs, we need to be courageous and empower each other. We need to develop new solutions that we can test and implement.

Our way of approaching inner development is by means of the IDG framework, which contains the five dimensions: Being, Thinking, Relating, Collaborating and Acting. Each dimension contains 4-5 skills making it a total of 23 skills that we need to develophave the potential to give us better chances to address the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

1.3 An Invitation to Engage

When you look at the list of inner development goals, you may feel inspired or even overwhelmed. We don't expect that everyone will or can develop all these skills. A lifetime of practice wouldn't suffice for that. And some may not be interested in developing at all, which is all fine. No one can and should be forced to develop. We don't know enough about inner development to promote that; even if we did know, it would be questionable from an ethical perspective. We also don't believe that certain interventions or activities that we will discuss are suitable for all individuals and all cultures.

We do, however, believe that our current way of understanding and addressing the sustainability issues is insufficient and that many small steps made overtime by many change agents, which could be leaders, facilitators, researchers, human resources professionals and individuals, may contribute to significant inner development on a collective and aggregated level. In particular, we believe that working with organisations has great leverage to kick-start the systemic change we need at the individual and collective levels. This is the reason why the IDG Initiative focuses on working with organisations - be they companies, NGOs or governments.

But whether you are dealing with the issue of inner development as an individual or as an organisation, always remember this, as Karen O'Brien puts it:
"*You matter more than you think!*"

We also believe that by contributing to the conversation around promoting inner development, people will take development as something natural and welcomed rather than as a surprising exception or something uncomfortable and threatening.

We also hope that by raising awareness around inner development, we can contribute to broader discussions around which kind of support the organisations can and should offer their employees to develop. We believe that the IDGs can be useful in thinking about and planning development support for employees and when assigning key roles, such as senior leadership positions. We hope to touch more on the theme of measurement and recruitment in the future.

To put it shortly, we want to contribute to and support inner development according to the IDG framework. We do this by raising two questions: which skills do we need to develop and how do we develop them? With this, we hope to discuss inner development as something that is intentional and deliberate where I as an individual and we as an organisation take responsibility for our own development and try to guide it and support each other in a sound and healthy direction, although finding out what a sound and healthy direction means is part of the journey.

We see this work and initiative as a way of bringing together two vast discourses and fields of sustainability and inner development. Two groups we particularly want to bring together here are people working in these communities that rarely interact. These could be researchers, activists and change agents engaged in sustainability issues, and trainers, facilitators, consultants, HR professionals and researchers engaged in understanding and promoting inner development.

This ambitious project is bound to have several limitations and blind spots. We will address these in the discussion chapter. The aim here is to start a conversation between these two fields and groups and bring them together in different IDG Gatherings and Summits over the coming years. If you find a gap that you think should be addressed, you may be the one to fill it.

The core of this publication, however, is what we refer to as the IDG Toolkit. This is a first collection of methods, practices and activities that you can engage in to develop the skills we propose. We intend to bring more versions and methods in future, especially in a digital and more dynamic way, as this is the first draft where we are learning good ways to select and present a variety of methods in a comprehensive way. In that sense, we want you to see this publication as an invitation to deliberately engage in your own development and support others.

We have aimed to bring a scientific perspective to the proposed methods, but bear in mind that no method works all the time and for everyone, or is always intrinsically related to sustainability. So more than anything, this is an invitation to experiment and engage in a collective journey of inner development.

We hope that this is just the beginning of our conversation and that our paths will cross many times going forward.

Chapter 2

The IDG Initiative

The IDG Initiative was established two years ago by Ekskäret Foundation, 29k Foundation and The New Division. Meanwhile, the initiative is supported by Inner Development Goals, a non-profit organisation for inner development:

We research, collect and teach science-based skills and qualities that help us lead purposeful, sustainable and productive lives. The following lines are intended to give you a brief overview of what we have done and achieved within the past two years or what will drive us further in the future. In particular, we ask you to familiarise yourself with the IDG framework if you are not yet familiar with it. This is because it is the central element to which all further explanations in this publication refer.

For more information on the IDG initiative, please visit our website: **www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org.**

2.1 Phase One – The IDG Framework

The first phase, which lasted from autumn 2020 to late summer 2021, identified what skills we need to develop to meet the challenges of our time. Through two surveys in which over 1000 people participated, 23 skills were identified. Common interests of all participants were and are the topics of sustainability, inner development and leadership. In the survey, deliberate care was taken to ensure that the respondents came from very different areas of society: representatives from politics, NGOs, businesses, researchers but also individuals.

The 23 skills were then grouped into five categories in a co-creative process led by Thomas Jordan of the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. A variety of notable institutions, organisations and individuals also participated in this process. If you like to know more about phase 1, we invite you again to have a look at our website. There you will find the report and other valuable information.

At the latest since the country of Costa Rica took the decision in December 2021 to integrate the IDG framework into their entire public sector, the IDG initiative has received a lot of attention worldwide. Currently, activities on how to use the IDG framework are taking place in at least 40 different locations worldwide, which we internally call 'hubs'.

2.2 Phase Two – The Toolkit

This publication is about the presentation of the results of this second phase of the IDG initiative. After we have dealt with the 'what' in the first phase, the question of the 'how' now follows. So how can the skills presented in the IDG framework be learned? Everything you need to know about this can be found here in this publication.

In the run-up to this publication, we have already published a research report that focuses less on the application and primarily on the analysis of the data we obtained via the survey. If you would like to learn more about this, you can find this publication **here**

2.3 Phase Three – Widening and Integrating

Phase three of the initiative aims for more global prototyping, input and adjustment of the IDG framework and toolkit. The IDG framework and toolkit will be published online to make it more accessible. Prototyping deals with applying the IDG framework and toolkit in programmes for inner development that are targeted to decision-makers and change agents around the world working with SDGs.

Input and adjustment of the IDG framework and toolkit deals with addressing the initiative's different biases, e.g. being based on a Western or Modern perspective in terms of survey respondents and research perspective.

However, views on what inner development is needed and how to support it likely vary depending on cultural and regional context. Therefore there is a need to a greater extent to include diverse perspectives to complement the existing IDG framework and toolkit.

Phase three will last for two years. In the first year, the IDG initiative plans to:

- Create an online version of the IDG toolkit, making it accessible and gathering input on more methods and tools and how to best process and present them in an open library.

- Create a pilot of the first global IDG's Capacity Development Programme in five countries with a research study exploring how an increased focus on IDGs can support work towards the SDGs, can be found **here**

- Create a prototype for a global research study that will initiate a second iteration of the IDG framework and Tool-kit. The aim here is to widen the scope of the IDG framework to include perspectives from different parts of the world.

In the second year, the IDG initiative will deliver:

- Launch of the updated and co-created version of the IDG Tool-kit.

- Create an extended BIG research study in 100+ countries with our collaborating partners, resulting in an updated IDG Framework and Tool-kit.

- Develop 300+ local IDG Hubs and five national IDG Nodes to also work on national policy improvement.

Chapter 3

The IDG Framework

In the following chapter we will introduce the IDG framework. If you are not yet familiar with it, we recommend that you read this chapter before you start with the toolkit section,as the toolkit is based on the IDG framework.

Furthermore, you will find in this chapter a self-reflection tool that will help you - both from the perspective of an individual and from the perspective of an organisation - to ease the transition into working with the toolkit.
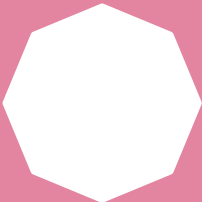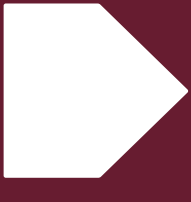
Click here to read more

3.1 Status Quo of the IDG framework

Below is the summary of the IDG framework. It is the core of the work we refer to hereafter. After the overview, you will find descriptions that describe the individual categories and skills. So please take a moment to familiarise yourself with the framework if you are not already.

Please, note: The IDGs and therefore also the framework are a work-in-progress and may continue to change as the project develops and new information and input comes in.

The current IDG framework is set out in the following table:

1 Being	2 Thinking	3 Relating	4 Collaborating	5 Acting
Relationship to Self	Cognitive Skills	Caring for Others & the World	Social Skills	Driving Change
Inner compass	Appreciation	Appreciation	Communication skills	Courage
Integrity and Authenticity	Connectedness	Connectedness	Co-creation skills	Creativity
Openness and Learning Mindset	Humility	Humility	Inclusive mindset and intercultural competence	Optimism
Self-awareness	Empathy and Compassion	Empathy and Compassion	Trust	Perseverance
Presence			Mobilization skills	
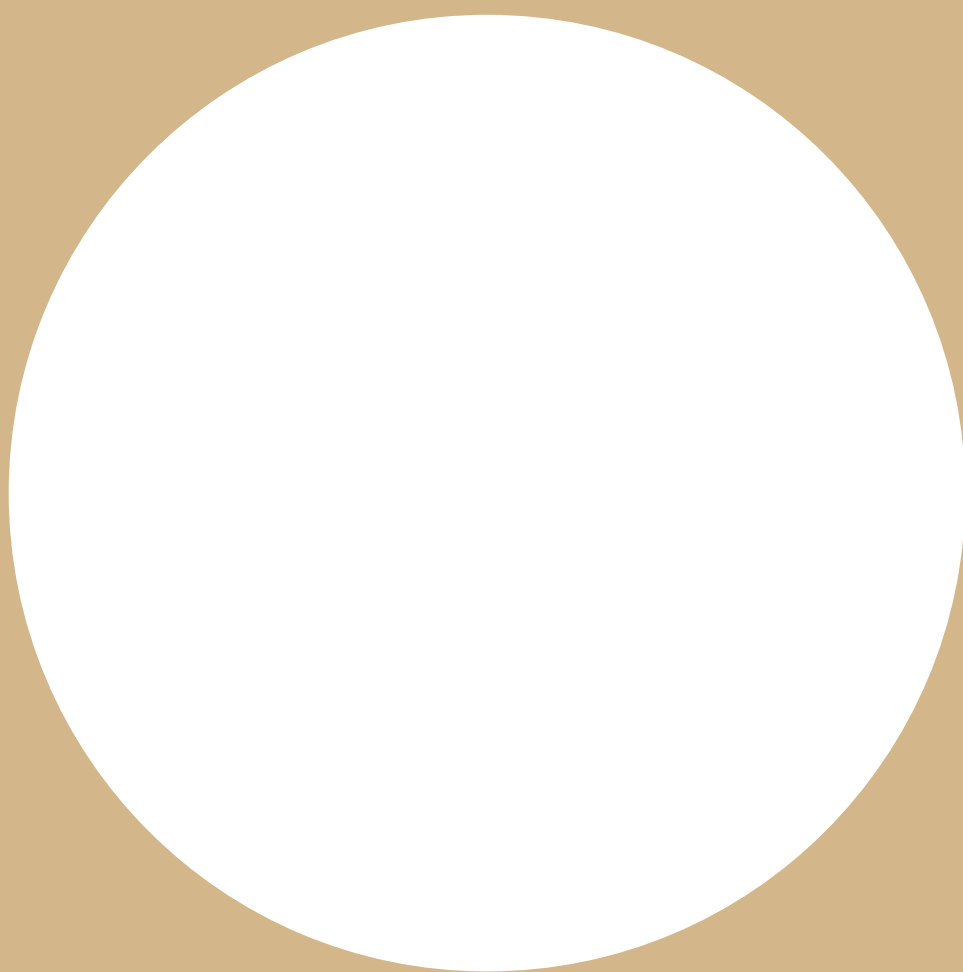
Being —
Relationship to Self

Cultivating our inner life and developing and deepening our relationship to our thoughts, feelings and body help us be present, intentional and non-reactive when we face complexity.

Inner compass
Having a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values and purposes relating to the good of the whole.

Integrity and Authenticity
A commitment and ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity.

Openness and Learning mindset
Having a basic mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable and embrace change and grow.

Self-awareness
Ability to be in reflective contact with own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image and ability to regulate oneself.

Presence
Ability to be in the here and now, without judgement and in a state of open-ended presence.

Thinking —
Cognitive Skills

Developing our cognitive skills by taking different perspectives, evaluating information and making sense of the world as an inter-connected whole is essential for wise decision-making.

Critical thinking
Having a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values and purposes relating to the good of the whole.

Complexity awareness
A commitment and ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity.

Perspective skills
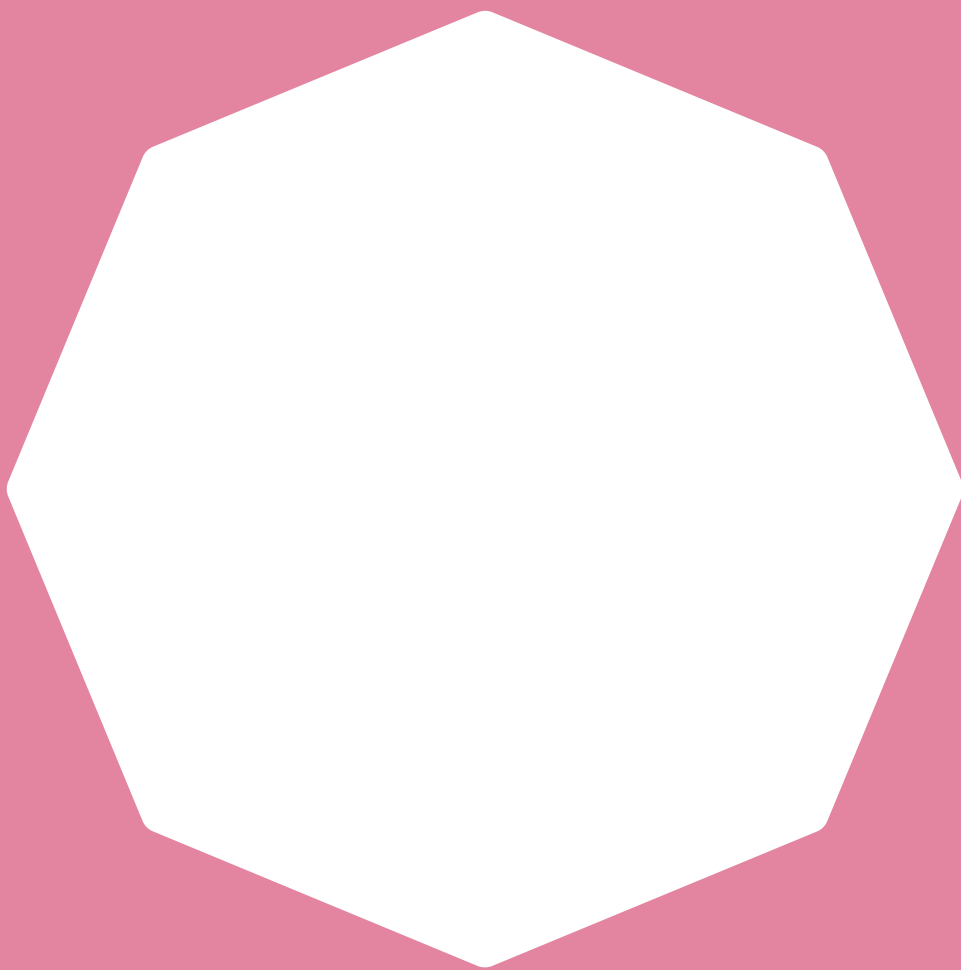Having a basic mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable and embrace change and grow.

Sense-making
Ability to be in reflective contact with own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image and ability to regulate oneself.

Long-term orientation and Visioning
Ability to be in the here and now, without judgement and in a state of open-ended presence.
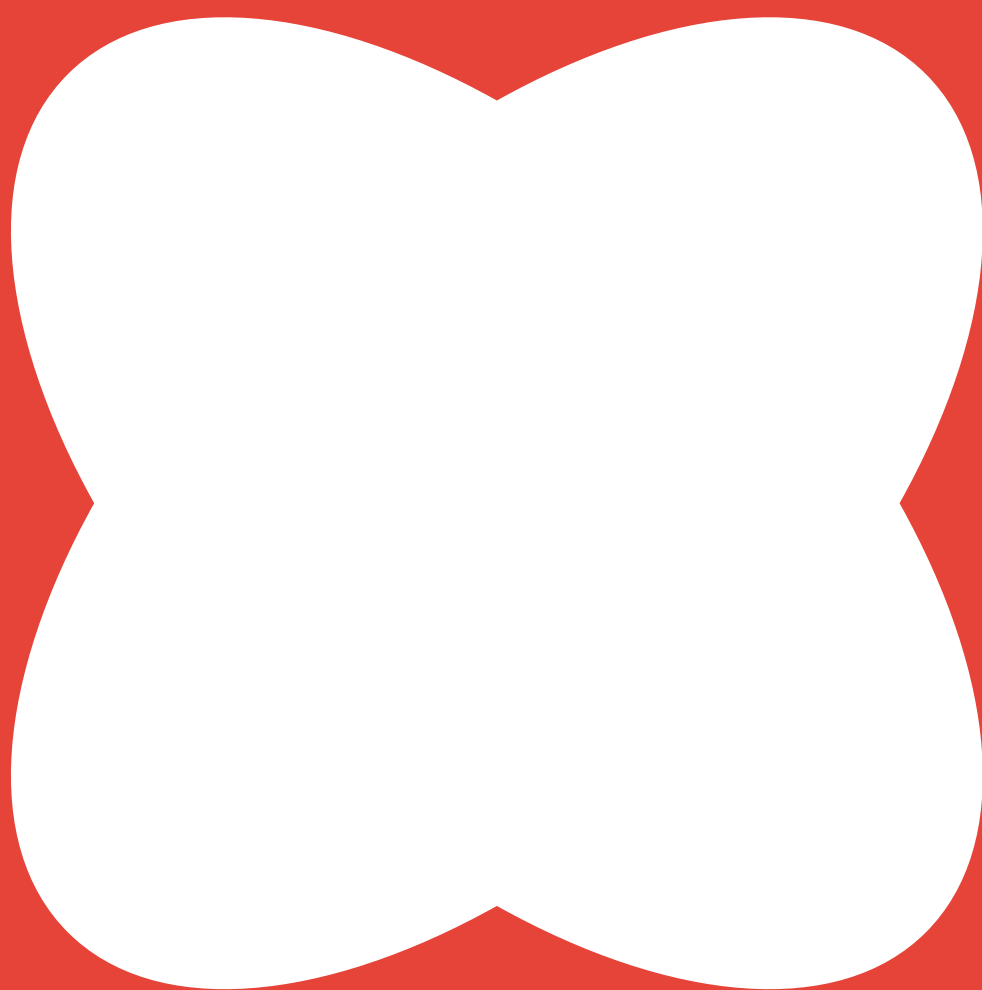
Relating —
Caring for Others and The World

Appreciating, caring for and feeling connected to others, such as neighbors, future generations or the biosphere, helps us create more just and sustainable systems and societies for everyone.

Appreciation
Relating to others and to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.

Connectedness
Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being a part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem

Humility
Being able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for one's own importance.

Empathy and Compassion
Ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy and compassion and address related suffering.

Collaborating —
Social Skills

To make progress on shared concerns, we need to develop our abilities to include, hold space and communicate with stakeholders with different values, skills and competencies.

Communication skills
Ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skillfully, to manage conflicts constructively and to adapt communication to diverse groups.

Co-creation skills
Skills and motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation.

Inclusive mindset and intercultural competence
Willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people and collectives with different views and backgrounds.

Trust
Ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships.

Mobilization skills
Ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships.
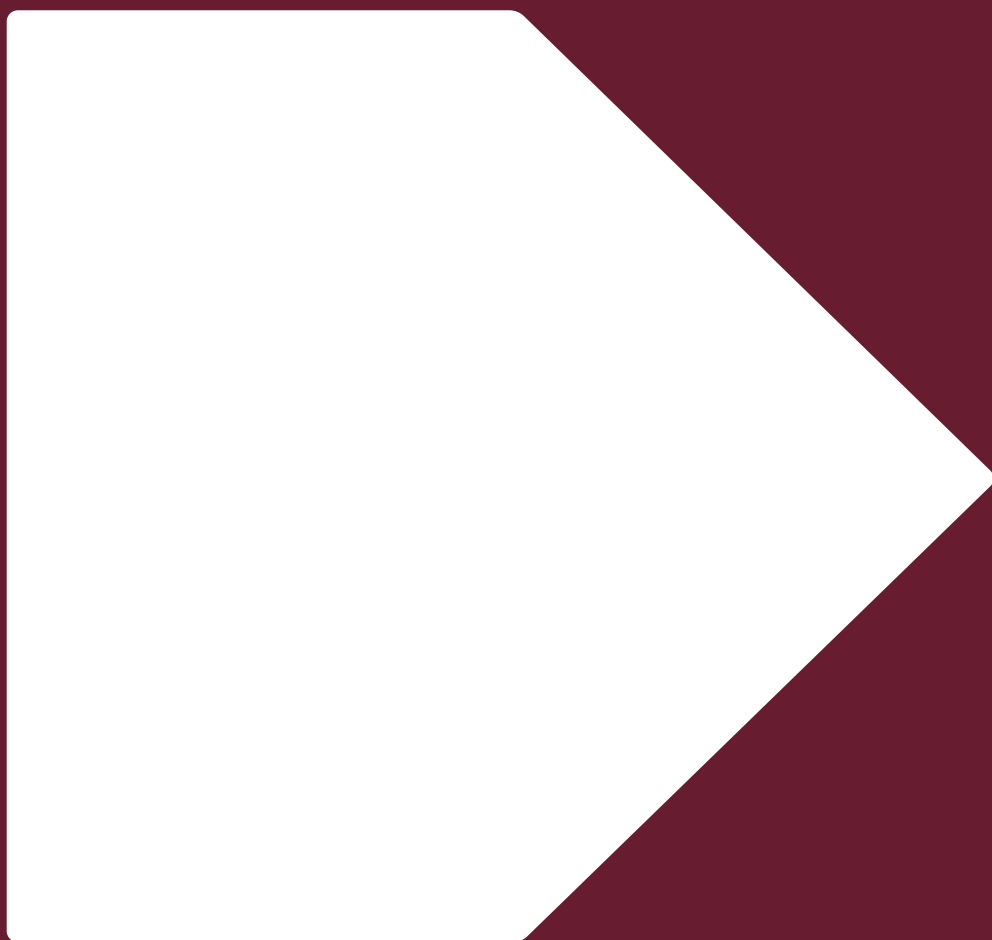
Acting —
Driving Change

Qualities such as courage and optimism help us acquire true agency, break old patterns, generate original ideas and act with persistence in uncertain times.

Courage
Ability to generate and develop original ideas, innovate and being willing to disrupt conventional patterns.

Creativity
Willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people and collectives with different views and backgrounds.

Optimism
Ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.

Perseverance
Ability to sustain engagement and remain determined and patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit.

"If I were to develop one more skill from the IDG framework, which one would probably make the biggest difference in my life?"

3.2 A Tool for Self-reflection

There are many ways to work with the IDG framework. One simple way would be to ask some of your friends, colleagues or children:

"If I were to develop one more skill from the IDG framework, which one would probably make the biggest difference in my life?"

With the help of Thomas Jordan from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, we would like to present below a somewhat more comprehensive tool for self-reflection.

You can use the tool both as an individual and as an organisation. However, the questions are basically formulated with a work context in mind and are intended to help you discover interesting aspects that you can address as an individual or organisation on your development journey.

You do not have to address all the questions. We see the self-reflection tool more as a kind of register that you can open to rummage through.

Have you asked your friends, colleagues or children about a skill that could make a difference in your life? Then you could, for example, look specifically at this skill in the self-reflection tool and deal with the questions stored there.

Being —
Relationship to Self

Inner Compass

Individual:

- What are your three most important values?
- In what ways do you want to serve the good of the world?

Organisation:

- What are the three most important values of the organization you work for?
- In what way does the organization you work for serve the good of the world?

Integrity and Authenticity

Individual:

- In what situations and why do you stop being yourself?
- In what situations do you feel challenged to be true to your values and who you want to be?

Organisation:

- In what situations and why does your organisation stop to act in line with its values?
- In what situations do you feel challenged to act in line with the values of the organization you work for?

Openness and Learning mindset

Individual:

- How do you stay open when you have a different opinion?
- Are you serious about having an inquirying mindset when you encounter views that are very different from your own?

Organisation:

- How does your organisation deal with difficulties that arise in the implementation of work routines or with regard to the adopted strategy?
- Is your organisation serious about adopting an enquiring stance, even if views emerge that are very different from those that are common in your organisation?

Self-awareness

Individual:

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Are you nurturing your capacity for being aware of the nature of your own thoughts, judgments, reactions and emotions as they happen?

Organisation:

- What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation you work for?
- Has your organisation developed practices to promote the ability to become aware of judgements, reactions and emotional states as they happen?

Presence

Individual:

- What is most alive in you right now?
- Can you remember moments when you were able to make your self available to someone else in a non-judging way, even when feeling provoked?

Organisation:

- From your point of view, what is currently most alive in the organisation you work for?
- Can you recall moments when the organisational context in which you work has allowed you to express yourself freely without fear of consequences?

Thinking —
Cognitive Skills

Critical Thinking

Individual:

- How do you identify the blind spots in your own beliefs?
- Are you nurturing your habit of asking inquiring and critical questions in relation to significant assertions?

Organisation:

- Do you know the blind spots in your organisation?
- Does your organisation maintain a culture where it is possible to ask critical questions in relation to significant assertions?

Complexity Awareness

Individual:

- What helps you think in terms of "both and"?
- Do you look for how issues you are concerned about may be understood in a deeper way: causes, potential consequences, dependencies on other issues?

Organisation:

- Does your organisation invite you to think in terms of "both and"?
  Has your organisation developed practices on how to understand issues in a deeper sense: causes, possible consequences, inter dependencies with other issues?

Perspective Skills

Individual:

- Who has perspectives that challenge you deeply?
- Are you strongly motivated to make use of contrasting perspectives when navigating challenging issues?

Organisation:

- Do you know organisations that take very different perspectives   from the ones you work for?
- Has your organisation developed practices to use contrasting perspectives to deal with challenging issues?

Sense Making

Individual:

- What kind of stories help you feel meaning?
- Do you reflect on how you yourself make up stories about the issues that engage you?

Organisation:

- What kind of stories have meaning in the context of the organisation you work for?
- Has the organisation you work for developed practices for thinking about how stories are made up that engage the organisation?

Long-term Orientation and Visioning

Individual:

- What three things are most important in a 5, 10 and 100 years perspective?
- Do you feel motivated to engage in work that addresses issues that will take a long time to resolve?

Organisation:

- What three things are most important from the perspective of the organisation you work for in 5, 10 or 100 years?
- Has your organisation developed practices to deal with issues that will take a long time to resolve?

Relating —
Caring for Others and the World

Appreciation

Individual:
- Who has contributed to your success?
- Do you consciously turn your attention to that which is worthy of appreciation, such as people's efforts and the beauty of the world?

Organisation:
- What and who has contributed to the success of your organization?
- Has your organisation developed practices to appreciate the things that are worth appreciating, such as people's achievements and the beauty of the world?

Connectedness

Individual:
- Who and what would you like to be more involved with?
- Do you nurture and sustain a keen and deeply felt sense of be longing to and being a part of a much larger whole such as humanity and the global ecosystem?

Organisation:
- Who and what could the organisation you work for be more committed to?
- Has the organisation you work for developed practices to establish and maintain a deeply felt sense of belonging to a much larger whole such as humanity and the global ecosystem?

Humility

Individual:
- What helps you put the "we" over the "I" when the situation calls for it?
- Do you sometimes feel more concerned about looking good than you would like to?

Organisation:
- Has your organisation developed practices for putting the common good above the needs of the organisation as such when the situation demands it?
- Is the organisation you work for sometimes more concerned with looking good to the outside world than you would like?

Empathy and Compassion

Individual:

- Who and what helps you move into action when you perceive the suffering of others?
- Are you working on your ability to feel empathy and compassion even towards people who are very different from yourself and who may act in ways you disapprove of?

Organisation:

- Has your organisation developed practices for noticing and responding to the suffering of others?
- Does the organisation you work for give you the opportunity to develop skills of empathy and compassion towards people who are very different from you and who may even act in ways you disapprove of?

Collaborating —
Social Skills

Communication Skills

Individual:
- What helps you contribute to a real dialogue?
- What communication skills would you like to develop further?

Organisation:
- Has your organisation developed practices to contribute to genuine dialogue between employees and other stakeholders?
- What communication skills do you think should be promoted in your organisation?

Co-creation Skills

Individual:
- How can you hold the tension between shaping and being shaped?
- How can you become even more creative and constructive in collaborative efforts?

Organisation:
- Is your organisation flexible and robust enough to perceive and respond adequately to change?
- What could your organisation improve to make cooperation even more creative and constructive?

Inclusive Mindset and Intercultural Competence

Individual:
- What helps you include those who think differently?
- Do you feel that you are willing to make an effort to understand and include people and mentalities that are very different from what you are used to?

Organisation:
- Has your organisation developed practices to include dissenters?
- Do you have the impression that your organisation makes a serious effort to be inclusive of those who think differently?

Trust

Individual:

- How do you consciously build trust?
- Are you working on your skills in building and maintaining trust in relation to different people?

Organisation:

- Do you feel that your organisation has practices in place to build trust consciously?
- Do you work consciously within your organisation to build and maintain trust in relation to different people?

Mobilization Skills

Individual:

- What is the best motivation for achieving common goals?
- Do you attend sufficiently to the task of inviting and energizing other people to work for shared visions?

Organisation:

- From your organisation's point of view, what is the best motivation to achieve common goals?
- Does your organisation have and use practices to invite and motivate other people to work for common goals?

Acting —
Driving Change

Courage
Individual:
- When did you last do something daring?
- What are some situations where you would like to be able to act in a more courageous way?

Organisation:
- When was the last time your organisation did something daring?
- What are situations in which you wish your organisation would act more boldly?

Creativity
Individual:
- How can you foster more creativity?
- What can be your specific contribution, considering your own personality, to more creativity in your field of work?

Organisation:
- How could your organisation promote more creativity?
- How could your organisation promote more creativity in the context of your stakeholders in relation to common objectives?

Optimism
Individual:
- What good do you think will happen this century?
- Do you have the ability to draw your own and others' attention to hopeful signs and initiatives, something you want to continue to promote?

Organisation:
- Are there ideas within your organisations about what good will happen in this century?
- Does your organisation have practices to draw the attention of others to hopeful signs and initiatives?

Perseverance
Individual:
- What real challenge has helped you to grow?
- What ideas do you have about how we can strengthen our individual and collective ability to sustain engagement and effort over time?

- Organisation: What challenge has helped your organisation to grow?
- Are there ideas in your organisation on how we can strengthen our individual and collective capacity to sustain our commitment and efforts over a longer period of time?

Chapter 4

Collection of data and development of the Toolkit

Here we share details about the research process leading to the compilation of the toolkit. The process was divided into two steps, first we gathered data and insights from practitioners around different methods they apply to develop themselves or support others' inner development.

Then we made a selection of these methods and complemented them with proposals from contributing researchers.

4.1 The survey

As you will soon discover, the toolkit contains several methods that we think offer good examples of how to support inner development. But how did we find these methods, how did we overview the vast field comprising personal development and leadership development and how did we select methods for the toolkit?

First of all, there are a few things we didn't do. We didn't perform systematic literature research on all methods covered in scientific literature. And it would have been beyond the scope of this phase of the IDG initiative to test the methods that were collected. What we did was to construct an online survey that we sent out to our network of people: change agents, consultants, professionals engaged in organisational development, activists, students, employees and any individual interested in sustainability issues or inner development. That means that the dissemination was not guided by scientific-based criteria.

The IDG initiative was founded in Sweden, so that is where our network's centre of gravity is. Therefore, it's not surprising that we can see a cultural bias in the responses, with 30 % coming from Sweden and 87 % coming from the Western world (EU, North America, Australia and New Zealand). This is a bias we are aware of. That is why we have tried – through some interviews – to capture other perspectives that reflect the views of people with a non-Western socialisation. We also intend to further address in the third phase of the IDG initiative, which is to focus more on skills and methods from non-Western countries.

In total, over 3000 individuals have participated in the survey so far and it is still online (insert link). Until February 22, that is when we started to work on this publication, over 1000 responses on what people do to develop themselves or support the development of others and their perspectives on sustainability were collected and thus became part of the analysis here. The survey was (and still is) anonymous to take, and the collected data is openly shared with researchers or anyone interested in performing their own analyses. The survey and data are available at the **IDG website**

To include more than the researchers' and experts' perspectives, we directed the questions toward three larger groups representing three different perspectives on the survey: individuals, organisational representatives and trainers. Individuals are the respondents interested in and want to share their experiences on their own inner development. Their perspective is important since we want to treat them as subjects rather than objects that trainers, experts and organisations want to develop. If we want to promote deliberative and intentional inner development, the individuals we aim to support the development of need to be involved and engaged in this.

Organisational representatives included the perspective of the organisation that is

of particular interest to the IDG-initiative. Here the respondents answer on behalf of his/her organisation and what the organisation does to support the employees' inner development. The respondent can be a manager, HR specialist, employee or anyone feeling they can answer from the organisation's perspective.

Trainers represent all who see themselves engaging in training or facilitation and have expertise on a particular method or intervention they wish to contribute. This could also entail experts and researchers from relevant fields. The selection of methods of the toolkit is primarily based on the roughly 400 responses from this group.

We also interviewed organisational representatives about the challenges they experience in their roles and how they support their employees' inner development. In addition to the survey, which yielded over 100 different methods for inner development, we asked for input from the scientific advisory board associated with the IDG initiative and have had – as mentioned before – a variety of other conversations with third parties to capture other perspectives and knowledge. This will be introduced in the following.

4.2 Views on Sustainability

Inner development is not the only broad field. The same applies to the topic of sustainability. What do we actually mean when we use the term? We would therefore like to share a few insights that we were able to derive from the data we obtained from the survey. Because some interesting results of the survey relate to questions we asked about people's ideas about sustainability. We wanted to know: Do the Sustainable Development Goals provide a good description of the challenges we face and to what extent are we sustainable?

The result of the first question is the following:

Do you think the Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs, offer a good distillation of the challenges around sustainability? (2662 respondents)

Yes	57%
I'm not sufficiently familiar with the SDGs to have an opinion on the matter	29%
No	11%
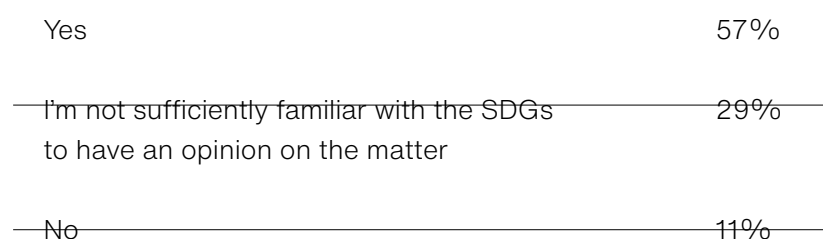
First, it should be noted that the SDG framework has relatively good support among the respondents interested in inner development. The respondents who answered 'No' were asked to elaborate on what they think is missing or inadequate with the SDGs. Common responses addressed opinions that the SDGs do not sufficiently consider the interconnectedness between the 17 sustainability goals nor do they relate to the inclusion of growth, which some argue is at the core of the problems of sustainability.

Another frequent response on limitations related to not considering the inner dimension enough. This could entail both inner psychological aspects as well as collective and cultural. This is not unexpected since the framing of the survey was around inner development. Widening the scope of sustainability to include a psychological perspective also seems to be in line with the ambitions of the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, IPCC, who in their report Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change mentions: "…*meditation, yoga or other social practices that encourage lower carbon lifestyles*". When we asked about outlooks on sustainability questions, we used a straightforward question rather than applying existing but more elaborate instruments.

How sustainably do you think we are currently living as a global community? (2651 responses)

Our current way of life is overall sustainable	<1%
We are currently not sustainable, but it is within our reach with available means	29%
A sustainable way of life is still possible, although it is not clear how we can reach it	59%
We are permanently beyond a sustainable path	11%

Again it should be noted that the respondents are biased in their interest in sustainability and inner development. One detail in this result is that those who reported being more knowledgeable about the SDGs had a more positive outlook. The younger respondents also responded to be more optimistic. It is still noteworthy that less than one percent considers our current way of life to be overall sustainable.

A majority of the respondents think that we don't have within our reach to sustain our current ways of life. This can be interpreted as a call for transformative perspectives and approaches to our development where 'transformative' means something that we can't foresee from our current way of being and understanding ourselves and the world. Whether transformative would mean more holistic and integrative approaches such as larger technological breakthroughs, new forms of governing or changes in skills, values or perspective, it would likely affect our ways of seeing the world and our place in it.

4.3 The Individual Perspective

The central part of the survey addressed inner development. Before we dive into the toolkit, we will focus on the responses from the individual's perspective. We asked the respondents to describe what they do to develop themselves and received almost 600 descriptions. Here is an overview and insights on useful approaches and opportunities to inner development from the individual's perspective. If you want to dig deeper into the analysis, you can read more in the scientific report on the analysis of the survey responses. You can find this report **here**

The first example is to pick up a practice of some sort. This could be meditation, yoga or mindfulness-related practice. Both are included in the toolkit if you want to dig deeper. It also involves physical training such as work-out or running, or more creatively inclined activities such as engaging in arts, establishing a new habit or learning a new skill such as playing an instrument. Besides the positive health effects that often follow, having a practice of some sort is a good way of intentionally giving yourself recurrent time and space for your own inner development.

Self-reflection is another activity for inner development that deserves its own category. This means giving yourself time and space to stop, pay attention, reflect and question what you think and do instead of only responding habitually to what's around you. This can be done regularly but also after unexpected events. Self-reflection can focus on your own behaviours but also be deeper around how you understand our world or what you should strive for in life.

"if you listen and reflect - reflection is soooooo important and that's also something I try to do regularly. Just stop and think - why did she trigger me, why did that hurt, why did I react like that etc."

Several other responses describe studying in organised courses or just reading books or listening to online lectures on various topics, for instance, sustainability. Acquiring knowledge is a prerequisite to perspective taking and critical and complex thinking. There is a lot you can do with only an internet connection and an appropriate device.

"EDUCATION. I have spent the last 10 years, in my free time, trying to educate myself. Educate in the broadest sense. Reading, Listening, Watching, Talking with people. Sometimes we don't care about something only because we are ignorant about it."

We can also see relationships as a central source of development. Either with a more experienced person that supports as a coach or mentor or just by engaging with one's family, colleagues, network and peers. This can act as a reminder that we are always in some sort of social context when we grow and develop.

*"Having dialogues with people with different views and backgrounds than I.
It helps understand the complexity of the world and the different realities
people live in."*

Another way of developing is by striving to align one's lifestyle with values. This includes frugality, reducing one's carbon footprint, recycling at home, reducing food waste, being conscious around and reducing travel and shopping, and more extreme measures such as dumpster diving. It also involves striving to live ethically according to one's ideals.

"...I try to develop mindsight through insight by being very open and observant of myself and my interactions. I try to be a whole person."

Societal engagement can also be an activity for inner development. This could entail engaging in sustainability projects, supporting and taking care of others or nature, or engaging politically. Although inner development may not be the prime cause of engagement, it may follow as a positive side effect. This, together with the examples around lifestyle, may also remind us that you don't need to have developed enough before engaging in saving the world. You can just do it right away with whatever you have at your hands.

From this, we can conclude that although you may not have access to any expertise around inner development, such as coaching or expensive programs for inner development, there are plenty of opportunities for inner development in all aspects of our lives.

Here we also want to point out that we include this perspective since we don't want our own inner development to be solely something we leave to experts. We want to see individuals as subjects with the prime responsibility for their own development. But this is also something that needs to be optional. No one can be forced to develop.

And we don't want this focus on individual inner development to take away focus from what we need to do on a collective and systems level. Before we turn over to the organisational perspective, we want to remind you of the aim of the IDG initiative: which skills and qualities we need to develop to better address the SDGs.

4.4 Survey Results in short – the Organisational Perspective

The organisational context is central to the IDG-initiative, so here we asked how the organisation can support the inner development of their employees. From the 141 survey responses, we can learn about opportunities aimed at both the individual, the group, and the organisational level.

The most common way of supporting individual employees' development is likely through leadership training programs and courses. They can range from developing specific technical skills to identifying strengths to personal development in a broader sense. Coaching is also brought up as a common measure. To approach inner development more systematically, it's appropriate to have a developmental plan that the employee updates regularly. Feedback was brought up from the individual perspective, which is just as central here. This could range from systematic performance appraisals to more casual conversations.

"We support all our employees and freelancers in finding out what their core talents are. Next we aim to customise the role they play in our organisation to their strengths and talents as much as possible."

You may think of the IDGs as skills for the individual to develop, but they may also be seen on a collective level. All measures towards the individual employee mentioned above may also be applied at the group level, where colleagues may support each other on tasks and inner development through buddy systems. Feedback can be directed to the individual or the group as a whole, for instance, by after action reviews. It should be pointed out that opening up for support and feedback between colleagues requires a safe and constructive atmosphere. This may be supported by activities aimed at promoting a culture with values such as curiosity, openness to learning and respect towards others.

"As a proponent of self-compassion and mindfulness, we attempt to create a culture within our organisation that embodies what we teach to the world."

Approaches that can be directed towards the organisation as a whole involve focusing on having just and healthy working conditions. It may also address the purpose, structure and values of the organisation. Some responses mention moving towards more flexible and non-hierarchical organisational structures to allow for autonomy at work, which may give opportunities for inner development.

"We encourage our (and all) workers, especially in the non-profit sector to unionise and demand better work conditions. E.g better pay, reasonable working hours, good working conditions, good healthcare, etc."

Finally, although the direction and way of working typically address the aim and tasks of the organisation, they can also function as developmental activities. For instance, if the organisation chooses to engage in projects addressing broader sustainability concerns rather than only making a profit that is not only relevant to the SDGs but they may also contribute to inner development. How we perform our work is also important. Good meeting facilitation, rituals such as check-ins and ways of collaborating and addressing complex problems may support our inner development, primarily in the Collaborate dimension. Here you will find several examples in the toolkit.

If inner development is to be approached intentionally and deliberately, the individual or the group should take the main part of the responsibility and initiative. Here we focus on the organisational support and context, but from the previously described individual perspective, we also learn that there are many opportunities for inner development in all parts of life. One should bear in mind that individuals differ in their need for support and interest in inner development. Typically, we need less external support the further we get in our development. Some are not at all interested in inner development, which is also fine as it is.

4.5 Survey Results in short – the Trainer Perspective

A question we sometimes get is which theory or framework we base our developmental perspective on besides the IDG-framework. What do we mean when we say inner development? Suppose we have a certain view of what development is, besides that it should lead to developing the IDG skills and addressing the SDGs. Aren't we optimising for something very narrow when we know that development is typically organic, open-ended and unpredictable? Wouldn't it be hubris to claim that we understand inner development and promote such development for others?

One way of answering this question comes from the analysis of the survey responses from the trainer perspective which is the basis of the toolkit. This involved almost 400 descriptions of different methods they apply to promote the participants' inner development. We asked about what they are based on, the evidence that it works and the intended outcome.

The first question resulted in at least ten different clusters or development 'directions'. A developmental direction is based on certain assumptions around what it means to develop, how it can be supported and how we function. These will be briefly outlined in the following, after which we will address how we have taken these into consideration in our toolkit and on answering the questions above.

Mindfulness-based interventions and related methods and practices
This developmental cluster includes methods or practices such as 'mindfulness-based' or 'mindfulness-informed' interventions and training (like Acceptance

and Commitment Therapy (ACT)) that help to develop mindfulness and compassion as a foundation for cultivating other inner qualities that relate to the five clusters of the IDGs. Mindfulness and mindfulness-based practices are well-established in psychological research and are widely practised in different fields. They involve regulating the attention, developing greater receptivity and awareness, and creating some distance to one's thoughts, emotions and impulses. In this way, one will be able to respond to the world more consciously or intentionally, and beyond the individual level, rather than reacting blindly or being stuck in habitual patterns.

Adult development-based approaches
Several responses mention methods and assessment tools based on the research area of adult developmental psychology and include methods such as the Immunity to Change process, Lectica's Virtuous cycle of learning, Polarity management and dialectical thinking. The field has influenced these questions due to its strong focus on inner development and one of the field's significant areas of interest and application is how we address complex sustainability issues.

Leadership development and practice
Leadership development is what we generally associate with inner development in organisational settings. Approaches that address sustainability include different strands of self-leadership and approaches based on academic studies of leadership, such as transformative leadership, servant leadership, artful leadership, systemic leadership, sustainable leadership, regenerative leadership etc.

Group, team or family-based methods
Most of the methods mentioned in the survey are performed in group settings but aim primarily at developing the individual. This cluster's methods aim to develop the group rather than the individual. This is performed using approaches towards collective intelligence, methods for building trust and safe spaces, negotiation methods, promoting listening, dialogue and communication, collaborative approaches and team development. Examples of methods mentioned here are systemic constellations, authentic relating and circling.

Organisational or values-based methods
These approaches aim at developing the organisation as a whole or the culture on a larger scale. Organisational design is by some considered as a way of promoting inner development and, more specifically, new ways of self-organisation with approaches such as Holacracy, Sociocracy, Deliberately developmental organisations, and providing feedback by assessing the culture and values in the organisation or a country.

Sustainability science-based approaches
This cluster can be found in university or professional courses or other ways of disseminating research and knowledge from the sustainability sciences, which is largely based on systems thinking. Traditional learning approaches focus primarily on transmitting knowledge and perspectives around scientific approaches to sustainability, which are also expressed in the SDGs. University courses or programs

(e.g. Master's level programs) are the most articulated in the survey responses. Importantly, they are increasingly combined with transformative learning approaches and include methods from the other clusters such as coaching, leadership or mindfulness-based approaches.

Systems thinking and complexity theory
This development cluster is based on systems thinking and complexity theory. These large fields are often applied in sustainability contexts for sense-making around the complexity of the challenges and of systems change. These perspectives are often informed by and contribute to several of the other directions.

Spiritual and transpersonal approaches
Some respondents propose approaches with historical roots in in religious or wisdom traditions focusing on achieving self-realisation, transcendence or the Eastern conception of enlightenment. These influences can also be found in the mentioned mindfulness cluster and related methods, and there are similarities in their emphasis on developing openness, self-awareness and presence. Here we find examples in meditation or contemplative practices, engaging in Buddhist philosophy or more contemporary approaches.

Embodiment-based approaches
These methods and approaches focus on developing the body by physical exercise, with e.g. some forms of Yoga related to body postures, or using the body as an instrument, e.g. systems awareness. Body psychotherapy, Drama Therapy, various approaches for enhancing body awareness and implicit and tacit knowledge are mentioned here. Embodiment is often used as a component in other approaches and methods, such as in different forms of embodied leadership.

Trauma-work
This final developmental cluster contains trauma work and practices to address trauma at the individual and collective levels. It was the least represented in terms of the number of responses. Development from this perspective means healing and reintegrating those parts of oneself that have been disassociated from a traumatic experience. This was included in responses with examples of applying simple practices such as havening or having sessions in trauma therapy.

Discussion of the results from the trainer perspective
These ten clusters represent different views and assumptions on how we develop. Several clusters overlap and several methods can be categorised in or are relevant to more than one cluster. The clusters are a way of making sense of the richness and variety of the survey responses and the proposed methods for inner development. However, in addition to the methods proposed in these ten clusters we should hold space for the unknown or for methods and practices that don't, and shouldn't, have any underlying framework (e.g development through facing different life challenges etc). This could also be a reminder of existing practices and methods that haven't been mentioned in the survey responses, for instance, due to cultural bias, coming from a perspective that is not yet widely recognised or discovered by anyone.

When overviewing these clusters or developmental directions we see that they all represent fundamentally different views on what inner development should lead to and what it is. So our answer to the question of which theoretical framework we use to describe how development takes place is that there are at least ten different categories of methods, where we have aimed to include as many as possible to give a rich and diverse picture of what inner development might look like.

Development can accordingly be described in many ways: building a healthy and stable sense of self, integrating wounded, fragmented or dissociated parts of oneself, stage-based development of skills, perspectives, insights and capacities, and deepening one's connection with other humans, nature, or the divine. Thus, development could imply either uncovering new aspects of oneself as well as reconnecting with aspects we previously lost contact with.

When we take the step from the survey to the toolkit, our intention is to preserve the diversity of approaches and developmental directions. In our attempts to bridge different IDG skills and methods from the survey, we also see that with some exceptions it's difficult to demonstrate clear relations between a method and a certain SDG. So, with this, we argue that we are treating inner development as something open-ended and organic rather than something that we can control and optimise towards a single goal.

4.6 The Scientific Advisory Board

During the autumn of 2021, as the IDG initiative grew in interest, several researchers reached out to us and asked if they could contribute to the initiative. In December, the first meeting was held and thereafter, roughly one meeting per month was held. The scientific advisory board consists of 41 researchers whose role has been to support and advise the research process concerning the construction of the survey, analysis of data, compilation of the toolkit and the writing process. Several members have contributed with texts introducing different methods of the toolkit.

The scientific advisory board has generously provided wisdom and insights around blind spots, biases and pitfalls in relation to the initiative we have aimed to include in this publication. They have also given support and holding space for the demanding process of developing the toolkit, which we want to acknowledge here. You can find the names of the contributing researchers of the scientific advisory board in the appendix.

4.7 Selecting Methods for the Toolkit

The online survey resulted in more than 1000 responses on methods people use to develop themselves and support others' inner development. From these, we selected around ten methods to be included in our first edition of the toolkit. In addition to the survey responses, we included some methods based on recommendations from our scientific advisory board. But how did we come to the selection? On which ground and according to which criteria did we choose methods?
This question may also be relevant for anyone interested in their own inner development or maybe for an organisation searching for appropriate support for their staff's development. Leadership development is a multi-billion-dollar market but far from everything is of good quality. But what do we mean by good quality and how do we assess that? Which questions should you ask when selecting which method to engage in?

The first answer is that this is not that easy. Some skills may be measured and developed in fairly straightforward ways, whereas other areas are much harder to evaluate. Some should not be scrutinised from the perspective of western psychological research. So when we introduce our toolkit it should not be seen as we have actively rejected any other methods or practices. Rather, we aimed at collecting a number of methods that we consider to be good conversation starters around how to further explore the role of inner development in relation to sustainability and the SDGs. In addition, it was important to present in the toolkit a diversity of methods by representing as many of the development directions from the trainer analysis as possible.

The method for making this selection is by applying a number of criteria or questions that the methods should be able to answer. The criteria or questions are a way of, as transparently we can, selecting methods and interventions to be included in the toolkit. It also communicates why a certain method could be regarded as working better than others. They should not be regarded as requirements on methods in order to apply them. Some methods are likely to be favoured by certain criteria. The five criteria or questions can be summarised as follows:

Empirical support
This means that there is some sort of evaluation, for instance, an assessment before and after the intervention, investigating whether the method leads to the desired result. Sometimes this may be difficult to evaluate, for instance, when developing presence which is one of the skills of the IDG framework. In more general terms, this criterion may point to a discussion that a certain method should lead to a specific outcome, which is arguably better than engaging in a practice without knowing what it should lead to. Methods that are considered good examples here are compassion training, where there are various scales that measure compassion and examples of interventions that result in a significant increase in the participants' compassion that has been published in scientific literature.

Underlying theory

If empirical support is the way, we answer if inner development happens, underlying theory points to why it happens and describes the underlying mechanisms and assumptions around development. An underlying theory can be a scientific theory such as those offered by the constructivist adult development stage theories (Subject object theory or Fischer skill theory) that are based on clear frameworks describing what development is and the process leading from one stage to the next. In some other cases, this is not as clear. Some meditation traditions do not provide an underlying theory or description of the inner landscape, but only offer a method of examining the inner self through one's own direct experience. These first two criteria may also contribute to a discussion around possible outcomes of a method in a similar way as education may be evaluated in terms of intended learning outcomes.

Connection to the IDGs and the SDGs

This criterion points to the method's relevance in the context of the IDG-framework. The framework, in turn, needs to be relevant in relation to the SDGs. Therefore, a method that contributes to making these connections and that helps strengthen the case of the IDG-framework and its relation to reaching the SDGs should be viewed as favourable in the evaluation. For instance, systems theory-based methods that are intended to promote the participants' ability for systems thinking should be favoured due to their connection to the thinking category or dimension and the complexity awareness in particular. It may also be argued that systems thinking is relevant in addressing the SDGs since it is often argued that sustainability is caused by a lack of awareness of the larger ecological and social contexts we are situated in.

Community of practice

A method, practice or intervention always starts somewhere and with someone. It is also possible that the best and most effective method has not yet been invented. The criterion of having a community of practice should therefore not exclude brilliant individuals and pioneers coming up with original ideas and practices but is rather a way of promoting more mature methods where there is a community where discussions and learning happen at this early stage of the IDG process. This could entail training and even conferences around a certain method but could, in a smaller context, be limited to someone to discuss and share experiences with. Again, the research fields around ACT and compassion training are considered as well established with a vast body of published studies.

Context

Although this should not be considered as a criterion for assessing the viability of a particular method, we consider it a relevant question to ask with regard to the application of any method to determine when and under what circumstances it works. This is meant to promote a critical discussion around the contextual validity of different methods. Some practices, such as mindfulness, may be argued to work in most contexts, whereas others, such as trauma therapy or transpersonal approaches, could be ill-suited in organisational settings, although they may offer valuable insights.

Concluding thoughts

The purpose of the criteria has been to function as guiding questions rather than ways to exclude any method. They are a way of making the selection process more transparent and contributing to a discussion of how we evaluate methods from many cultural backgrounds and development directions. Of the hundreds of methods that have been available to us through the survey and the contributions from the scientific advisory board, we haven't had enough information to exclude any method.

It should thus be noted that besides these guiding questions, the selection of the methods has not been made in a very systematic way. The time and resources haven't allowed for a process where solid criteria for evaluating methods have been applied and, at the same time, including as many of the development directions as possible and addressing all the IDG dimensions. The methods included in the toolkit should thus not be seen as equally valid in terms of scientific support. This holds particularly for the shorter exercises that are included lastly in each dimension and that don't require any facilitation.

One final thought refers to trauma-work, which is one of the development directions. Since trauma and mental health are relevant in most contexts in our assessment, it would be important to include methods in an upcoming edition of the toolkit. However, since we have obtained the methods presented here mainly through the survey's generated data and such methods are underrepresented in it, they are not yet included in this first edition of the toolkit.

The fact that those methods are underrepresented in the survey may hint at a blind spot for organisations. This aspect should be looked at more closely in the next phase of the IDG.

Chapter 5

The Toolkit

In this section we want to introduce you to the methods that we think are particularly useful for learning the skills that can help you live a more purposeful, productive and sustainable life.

We call this part toolkit because we hope you will use it not only as a pilot, but also as a companion.

In Latin there is a word for this that is still used today: vademecum. The expression was created by contracting the Latin injunction vade mecum! (= 'go with me!'). The term refers to a handy book that is carried in a pocket as a useful companion when working, travelling or in other situations in life.

We do not mean to imply that no other methods can be used to learn the skills of the IDG framework, there are in fact many more we have chosen the methods presented here very carefully. We have been assisted by many researchers and other experts in the field on our way. You will find the names of these people in the appendix. We have marked the specific contributions of third parties as such here as well. If you are interested in the criteria we used to select the methods presented in the toolkit, you will find information on this in the chapter 'Selection of methods for the toolkit'. Please note that the toolkit contains a mixture of methods from well-established research fields that require facilitation by a trained expert along with simpler exercises you can engage in by yourself. Although the amount of scientific support and descriptions may vary in style, all methods have been given a similar amount of space.

If you are particularly interested in the question of which methods are suitable for learning the skills we advocate, where you can find further information on this and how you can – quite concretely and thus practically – get started working with the methods, then this part of the publication is the decisive one for you. If you want to go deeper into the topic of inner development, however, we recommend that you take the time to read the other parts of this publication as well.

Whatever your personal focus or where your personal interest lies, there are a few things we would like to point out to you before we delve into the methods. We see inner development as something organic. In particular, we are concerned with opening up new worlds, possibilities and potentials for who we are and what we do as human beings. We have therefore tried to make the selection of methods presented here as broad as possible and to include several scientific fields, approaches and traditions. In this way, we consciously try to avoid optimization of inner development with regard to a specific perspective and thus narrow inner development itself down. At the same time, inner development is addressed in the context of the IDG initiative with regard to the implementation of the SDGs and other sustainability concepts, which limits or could limit the notion of inner development that is entirely free.

We will address this tension in the following chapter *"How to engage with the toolkit"*. However, we would like to point out this aspect at this point.

lthough many of the methods are scientifically underpinned in various ways and at different levels (personal, collective, system), there is never a guarantee that they will bring the desired result. Sometimes – at least outwardly – nothing tangible seems to happen after practising a method for a certain amount of time, and sometimes even completely unexpected results can occur. It is important to be aware of this and to have patience with oneself and the process. One should also know that more subtle changes may happen over time that build up to a momen-

tum of real and noticeable change later on.

Due to the effort and discipline that is often needed to bring about inner development and change, we encourage you to form groups with colleagues or friends with whom you embark on the journey together. Such a learning context or community is very valuable. Those communities may help to make sense of the experiences that arise. Especially in the case of unexpected events, this can be of great benefit to those who are part of the journey.

This publication is particularly aimed at people we call change agents. These can be any type of individuals, such as trainers or employees or any other person that engages in the topic of sustainability. But above all, we have leaders in organisations in both the public and private sectors in mind. In our opinion, organisations have a particularly large lever not only to initiate processes of change but also to make them tangible, i.e. to implement them. It is also precisely those people who have a special responsibility in these contexts, especially when they themselves initiate these processes and get them underway.

Because in the context of inner development, tensions can always arise that need to be dealt with – as mindfully and appreciatively as possible. It is important to be aware of this when putting together trainers and people who want to develop (or who should develop in the context of an organisation): Because ultimately, the space created between the learners decides which path the inner development takes. Inner development is always reciprocal, so it also includes trainers, coaches or leaders themselves.

Certainly, we can say, even if we cannot and do not want to make any concrete findings with regard to your personal inner development: Inner development best takes place playfully and in spaces characterised by mutual trust. What we do want, however, is for you to maintain joy in inner development and explore its linkages to collective and system change without disregarding the seriousness and discipline that is necessary for it. In the case of inner development, the latter is documented in particular by the fact that you understand inner development as a journey and handle it as such: For inner development is a lifelong task whose potential can only be realised and thus experienced through repetition.

5.1 How to engage with the Toolkit

If we are honest, we would actually prefer it if you answered this question for yourself. Because that is always the best way if you want to promote inner development – no matter if you do it for yourself or in the context of the organisation you work for. At the same time, however, we also want to give people who are just beginning to deal with this topic suggestions to find a possible starting point. So here is what you could do, for example (we refer to a group as a starting point here, as the IDG initiative is primarily aimed at organisations, but you could also use the approach as an individual):

1. Define in advance a common goal that you want to achieve as a group. This goal should relate to the implementation of the SDGs or other sustainable concepts that serve the greater good.

2. Try to become aware of the situational contexts in which you are working: What are the underlying assumptions? What are the opportunities and limitations? Where might the limits of the sphere lie that you can - for the moment - influence?

3. Stay playful. Experiment with the methods presented in the field kit, repeat them and check together if you are making progress as a group towards the common goal.

4. If you do not achieve the desired results, try to develop a sense of whether hidden aspects might be playing a role. Talking to an expert in that field might be of help here.

In short, we invite you to become a researcher yourselves to find out under which conditions you can achieve a collectively desired outcome in a given situation.

The *"collectively desired"* should always be the guiding star on your way.
To help you get started with the toolkit, you will also find a tool for self-reflection developed with the support of Thomas Jordan from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, in the chapter *"The IDG-framework"*.

Before you begin, allow us to make a few concluding remarks: There is no short-cut to inner development - whether it is on an individual or collective level. What we can do, however, is focus our energies on exploring the space of possibilities that inner development opens up for us. Anyone who engages with different methods or practices in this process should do so of their own choice.

Although we relate skills and methods to the SDGs and other sustainability concepts, no one should be used as a means to achieve the greater good of another. Earlier in the publication, we discuss, among other things, the potential conflicts between the individual and the organisation in this respect. To enable inner development, trust is a key factor.

Therefore, share your experiences with the people you trust because like any other framework, the IDG framework can be abused. And always remember: this field kit is not primarily an answer to the question of how to develop, but an invitation to find out!

5.2 Being —
Relationship to Self

Cultivating our inner life and developing and deepening our relationship to our thoughts, feelings and body help us be present, intentional and non-reactive when we face complexity.

The Being dimension, consisting of the skills: Inner compass, Integrity and authenticity, Openness and learning mindset, Self-awareness and Presence, captures how we cultivate our inner life with attention and direction. Here we are not only interested in establishing a direction in our lives and what we chose to engage in, but also how we show up in life and approach different issues, both in our personal life and our work life. It regards the quality of our presence and if we are grounded in ourselves, our values and direction when we engage.

As with all other IDG dimensions, the Being and Thinking dimensions are to a great extent intertwined and it is hard to draw any clear line between them. For instance, articulating your inner compass requires thinking about it and defusion, which is an element of Acceptance Commitment Therapy, involves how we can differentiate ourselves from certain thought patterns that doesn't serve us. This also exemplifies how some, if not most, methods address more than one of the IDG skills and span several dimensions.

The methods presented here come from contemplative practice traditions, but also from modern psychological practices and research. Other common methods or practices not included in this toolkit are different forms of coaching, therapy and self-reflection.

Being — Mindfulness Practices

Mindfulness is the capacity to attend intentionally to present-moment experience, with an attitude of openness, curiosity, and care.

It can help the practitioner establish a more conscious way of living, as well as improve focus and productivity, mental health and well-being, body awareness and emotional processing.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Presence, Self-awareness, Inner Compass
Also develops these dimensions:

Thinking   **Relating**

Overview

Mindfulness is an inherent human capacity that enables people to attend intentionally to present-moment experience, inside themselves as well as in their environment, with an attitude of openness, curiosity, and care. Mindfulness is not about emptying one's mind or trying to control one's thoughts or emotions, but it does involve paying attention in a particular way in order to become more in conscious charge of one's attentional faculties. Mindfulness can be developed through practice.

Developing mindfulness or mindful presence has been a central practice in many spiritual and religious traditions for millennia. During the last decades, it has been brought to the Western world at a bigger scale through clinical health care in the form of standardised programs called mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs), which have been adapted to educational and workplace contexts. These typically include formal practices, such as sitting meditation, mindful movement and the 'body scan', as well as informal practices that bring awareness to everyday activities – pausing and responding mindfully where one might otherwise act through habit or impulse. Increasingly, explicit kindness and compassion-related exercises may also be included.

How it can help: Cultivating mindfulness helps increase awareness of one's inner life, as well as the way one interacts with other people and the world. As such it may help the practitioner to establish a more conscious way of living on a day-to-day basis. For leaders and employees, the evidence-based effects of practising mindfulness on a regular basis are improved focus and productivity, mental health and well-being, emotional processing, communication, connection with self, others, and nature, and support of collective and systems change

How to get started

When starting a mindfulness practice for the first time, try the following:

1. Choose an object, either internally like the sensation of breathing or externally such as a thing or sound in the environment, and begin with directing and resting the attention there.

2. As one notices the mind wander, one gently redirects the attention back to observing the object – without judgement and while allowing whatever is observed or felt to be as it is in that moment. Over time one can develop the ability to be with the totality of one's experience in this way, even thoughts or difficult emotions, without getting swept away or overwhelmed.

Mindfulness is an inherent human capacity that can be developed through practice. This capacity enables people to attend intentionally to present-moment experience, inside themselves as well as in their environment, with an attitude of openness, curiosity, and care. Cultivating mindfulness helps increase awareness of one's inner life, as well as the way one interacts with other people and the world. As such it may help the practitioner to establish a more conscious way of living on a day-to-day basis, and support collective and systems change.

Mindfulness practice has an important role in Buddhism, although developing 'mindful presence' or just 'presence' has also been a central practice in many spiritual and religious traditions for millennia. During the last decades, it has been brought to the Western world at a bigger scale through clinical health care in the form of standardised programs called mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs), which have been adapted to educational and workplace contexts. These have been well-researched during the last decades, and now have a considerable evidence-base behind them. Theory and techniques from MBIs are also now an integrated part of a range of Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approaches, compassion training and personal development programs and courses.

MBIs typically include a range of different formal mindfulness meditation practices, such as sitting meditation, mindful movement and the 'body scan' practice. Increasingly, explicit kindness and compassion-related exercises may also be included. Practices are generally taught over 6-12 weekly sessions and assigned as daily home practice between classes. Throughout the program participants are also encouraged to integrate learning through informal practice by bringing awareness in particular ways to everyday activities – pausing and responding mindfully where they might otherwise act through habit or impulse.

These exercises develop attention regulation skills, including both the ability to focus on one thing at a time and the ability to open the awareness wide to rest within the flow of life. They also foster greater awareness of thoughts, emotions and body sensations and allow crucial foundational attitudes to arise (e.g openness, curiosity and care) that make mindfulness much more than just attention training or relaxation. Teacher-led inquiry and education content also helps participants develop a better understanding of their minds and a more skilful relationship to various forms of distress.

Mindfulness is not about emptying one's mind or trying to control one's thoughts or emotions, but it does involve paying attention in a particular way in order to become more in conscious charge of one's attentional faculties. For instance, when learning mindfulness practice for the first time, it can be helpful to choose an object, either internally like the sensation of breathing or externally such as a thing or sound in the environment, and begin with directing and resting the attention there. As one notices the mind wander, one gently redirects the attention back to observing the object – without judgement and while allowing whatever is observed or felt to be as it is in that moment.

Over time one can develop the ability to be with the totality of one's experience in this way, even thoughts or difficult emotions, without getting swept away or overwhelmed. This might be quite challenging in the beginning, as it is easy to get entangled in or annoyed by the different distractions in one's life. However, it is easier with practice and as it becomes a more integral part of one's life and way of being.

In an organisational context, mindfulness-based interventions and practices can support both leaders and employees in their personal and professional development, as well as in their daily work tasks and operations. Among the evidence-based effects of practising mindfulness on a regular basis are improved focus and productivity, mental health and well-being, emotional processing, communication and connection with others, and connection with nature.

Contributors: Lene Søvold, Christine Wamsler, Jamie Bristow

Mindfulness practices have also been shown to increase and support transformative qualities and capacities (i.e. awareness, insight, connection, purpose, and agency that are related to the five IDG categories) as well as sustainability activities and outcomes (particularly related to SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being) that support changes at individual, organisational, societal and system levels

Click here to read References

Being — ACT (Acceptance Commitment Therapy/Training)

Acceptance commitment therapy / training (ACT) is a psychotherapeutic intervention that mediates improvements in individuals' psychological flexibility.

It can help the practitioner increase psychological flexibility and have a more stable identity and sense of self.

DIY ——————●————— Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Inner Compass, Self-awareness, Presence

Also develops these dimensions:

Thinking   **Relating**

Overview

ACT is an evidence-based psychotherapeutic intervention that improves psychological flexibility, which consists of six core processes: acceptance, cognitive defusion, being present, self as context, values and committed action. Part of psychological flexibility can be seen as increasing your inner space. The other half is directed towards committed action, which comes from working with identifying one's values and building new behaviour towards goals that are aligned with these values.

Although the connection to individuals' engagement in sustainability issues is not that direct, nothing in the practice says that the values you identify shouldn't align with e.g. the planetary boundaries.

ACT is a non-profit, co-created open source initiative. One can take ACT therapy or ACT training, but evidence shows that the practitioner can achieve equal effects from learning through both books and face-to-face counseling.

How it can help: ACT and improving psychological flexibility been demonstrated to have a number of positive effects, such as higher performance at cognitive tasks, increased quality in relations, decreased levels of stress and depression and decreased tendencies to get caught up in conspiracy theories. There are also exercises for developing long-term perspectives and orientation.

How to get started

When starting ACT for the first time, try the following:

1. Begin with differentiate one's self from one's thoughts. For example, there is a big difference between thinking "I don't matter to anyone" and "I am having the thought that I don't matter."

2. Explore digital resources where you can learn ACT or train ACT. For example, the non-profit platform 29k.org that has several free ACT courses and exercises.

3. The official site for resources for ACT can be found here: https://contextualscience.org/ Here you can explore ACT-self-help books, TEDTalks on ACT, Free ACT Articles, Podcasts, Interviews, find a therapist and much more.

The skill named Inner Compass means having a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values and purposes relating to the good of the whole. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is an evidence-based psychotherapeutic intervention coming out of the cognitive-behavioural tradition. A core concern in ACT is to increase individuals' psychological flexibility. Psychological flexibility consists of six core processes: acceptance, cognitive defusion, being present, self as context, values and committed action. Being present is very much an act of mindfulness, but to put it simply, we can also see psychological flexibility as increasing your inner space. Cognitive defusion means how we can differentiate ourselves from our thoughts. There is a big difference between thinking "I don't matter to anyone" and "I am having the thought that I don't matter". Self as context means that ACT assumes that you have a self that is able to do this defusion and accept your thoughts as objects and accept them rather than being stuck in them or trying to fight them or get rid of them. Presence helps us in this process but is also a result of it. In this term, we can see ACT as a psychological intervention that applies mindfulness and acceptance

The other aspect of ACT is the part being directed outwards and that is committed action, which comes from working with identifying one's values. ACT uses different exercises to help a client choose life directions in different domains, such as having a family, career or environment. Then the diffusion can be directed towards thoughts that are in contrast to those: "no one wants to be with me", "I'm a failure at my work" or "I really don't matter when it comes to sustainability". These values can then guide our new behaviour towards goals that are aligned with these values.Effects of working with ACT in e.g. coaching sessions are to increase psychological flexibility and have a more stable identity and sense of self. This has been demonstrated to have a number of positive effects, such as higher performance at cognitive tasks, increased quality in relations, decreased levels of stress and depression and decreased tendencies to get caught up in conspiracy theories. There are also exercises for developing the ability for perspective taking and long-term orientation, such as imagining what your guests might say about you at your 90-year birthday party

Contributors:

Fredrik Livheim

There is a large and growing research interest alongside a large community of practitioners. ACT has been shown to contribute to human flourishing in a general sense, although the connection to individuals' engagement in sustainability issues is not that direct since ACT hasn't been developed in and primarily for this context. Nothing in the practice says that the values you identify should align with e.g. the planetary boundaries. Nevertheless, ACT offers valuable insights and tools that are relevant for sustainability in a broader sense, and which may also facilitate more sustainable perspectives and actions. ACT is here seen as primarily addressing the Being category with particular focus on the skills inner compass, self-awareness and presence. However, it also targets skills in other categories, such as perspective-skills, sense-making, long-term orientation and visioning, empathy and compassion, courage and perseverance.

Click here to read References

Being — Meet Yourself at 90

Meet Yourself at 90 is a guided exercise that helps you be present with your hopes, dreams, priorities, and values by envisioning yourself at your 90 year old birthday party.

It can help the practitioner increase awareness of what is important to you, and identify if there are things you'd like to do more (or less) of.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Inner Compass, Self-awareness, Presence

Also develops these dimensions:

Thinking   **Relating**

Overview

Meet Yourself at 90 is a guided exercise that helps you be present with your hopes, dreams, priorities, and values by envisioning yourself at your 90 year old birthday party. This is an exercise that sometimes causes strong feelings and sometimes tears. And whatever appears, it's all right. You are big enough to hold all your emotions.

How it can help: This exercise can help increase awareness of what is important to you, and identify if there are things you'd like to do more (or less) of.

How to get started

When starting the Meet Yourself at 90 exercise for the first time, try the following:

1. Sit yourself comfortably on the chair with a straight yet relaxed back. Let the body rest in itself.

2. Be aware of where you are right now. Gently shut your eyes. Feel that you are completely present in your body. Be aware of the touch of the feet against the ground, the arms touching the legs.

3. Now focus your consciousness's on breathing. See how your breath enters your body and then leaves your body. Do not change how you breathe. Just follow the breath, breath for breath.

4. Imagine that you have managed to move forward in time and become yourself when you are 90 years old. You can freely decide where you are. Are you in a room? Are you outdoors? Decide how you want it to look where you are. Imagine that you are there, really place you there.

5. You will soon be visited by a friend or relative who has meant or means a lot to you. In this future, everyone lives so anyone can come, even people who are already dead or who may not live when you are 90. Now decide what you want these important people in your life to remember you for.

6. Choose one person. Let this person come up to you. What do you want this person to say about you as a friend, partner, son / daughter or colleague? Imagine that the person says it. Be courageous imagine this person says what you most of all want them to say. Even if you do not think you lived up to what you want them to say, let them say it anyway. Do not hold back anything

Here is an invitation to do a guided exercise.

Sit yourself comfortably on the chair. Let the body rest in itself. Sit comfortably with straight yet relaxed back.

Be aware of where you are right now. Gently shut your eyes. Feel that you are completely present in your body. Be aware of the touch of the feet against the ground, the hammer's touch against the chair, the arms touching the legs.

Become aware of what you feel right now in your body and in your consciousness. What do you have for sensations or feelings in the body? Where are they? What thoughts passes in your consciousness

Allow yourself to feel everything you are feeling right now at this moment

Now focus your consciousness's on breathing. See how your breath enters your body and then leaves your body. Do not change how you breathe. Just note how to breathe. Follow breath, breath for breath. Instant moments

(Let the participants follow the breath for about 40 seconds)

Allow yourself to feel everything you know right now at this moment.

This is an exercise that sometimes causes strong feelings and sometimes tears.

And whatever appears, it's all right. You are big enough to hold all your emotions.

If strong feelings arise, see if you can open up and prepare space for all that you are experiencing

Imagine that, in a strange way, you have managed to move forward in time and become yourself when you are 90 years old.

You can freely decide where you are.

See where you are. Are you in a room? Are you outdoors? Decide how you want it to look where you are.

Imagine that you are there, really place you there.

(Short break)

You will soon be visited by a friend or relative who has meant, or means a lot to you.

In this future, everyone lives so anyone can come, even people who are already dead or people who may not live when you are 90 years old.

Now decide what you want these people who are important in your life to remember you for. Choose one person.

Now let this person come up to you.

What do you want this person to say about you as a friend, partner, son / daughter or colleague?

Imagine that the person says it. Be courageous now and imagine that this person just says what you most of all want him or her to say if you could choose completely.

What do you want this other person to tell you? What do you want the person to tell you about you? How was you like a person? What has your life been about? Even if you do not think you lived up to what you want them to say, let them say it anyway. Do not hold back anything.

Then make a small note in your memory of what the person says.

This exercise is now coming to its end. In a little while, I will ask you to open your eyes.

When you are back and ready, I suggest you take a few moments to write down what was said on your 90th Birthday

Was there anything that was said that reminded you of what is important to you? If so, are there things you'd like to do more (or less of?)

No one will ever have to see what you have written so be completely honest with what you are writing.

Contributors: Fredrik Livheim

Feel that you are completely present in the room, that you are completely present in your body.

Now open your eyes and stretch a little bit on you if you want

Click here to read References

5.3 Thinking —
Cognitive Skills

Developing our cognitive skills by taking different perspectives, evaluating information and making sense of the world as an interconnected whole is essential for wise decision-making.

The Thinking dimension, consisting of the skills: critical thinking, complexity awareness, perspective skills, sense-making and long-term orientation and visioning, relates to how we take in and process information, primarily from our surroundings but also to some extent from our inner world. Most sustainability issues are complex as they are interconnected with each other and require taking in and coordinating several perspectives, interests and stake-holders. Before engaging in them, we need not only to recognise the complexity but also (or 'to be able' if you wish) to ask the right questions

The skills in this dimension can be seen as the most apparent outputs from academy and studies in general. Engaging in theories, methods and frameworks, such as the IDG framework, doesn't only convey useful facts about the world, they may also help us think and open up new perspectives to us

Most methods included here originate from the field of adult developmental psychology where theories describe how we may develop abilities beyond linear and formal logical thinking. Several methods build on theories that give a clear description on how, for instance, complexity-awareness is built up in distinct steps. Others are more directed towards recognising that several problems and phenomena cannot be fully understood

A separate section placed after the five dimensions gives examples of university courses, which are likely the most common ways of s building skills such as complexity awareness, perspective-skills and critical thinking, in addition to their purpose of conveying appropriate knowledge around topics such as sustainability.

Thinking — Dialectical thought form framework

The dialectical thought form framework (DTF) offers insights into reality's messiness and complexity beyond our attempts to categorise it.

It can help the practitioner see how things depend on each other rather than existing in isolation.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Complexity Awareness, Sense-making
Also develops these dimensions:

Being   **Relating**

Overview

Categorising skills and methods into different boxes is commonly associated with formal logical and linear thinking. DTF offers insights into unlock our thought habits to see reality's messiness and complexity beyond our attempts to categorise it. From a dialectical standpoint, it is more natural to find good questions and ask what's missing than to provide answers. The framework is a collection of thought forms ordered in the four moments structure, process, relation and transformation.

How it can help: It can help the practitioner begin to see reality more as a process of evolving and developing, as phenomena in a larger, integral, interdependent context rather than as discrete things. This helps the practitioner see how things fit together and depend on each other for their existence rather than being isolated, building complexity awareness for the challenges we are solving.

How to get started

When starting with DTF for the first time, try the following:

1. Start by applying the dialectical framework to yourself, by thinking of yourself not as a static being but as an evolving and learning being that is in a development process. Consider yourself more as a part of the larger context, your organisation, your culture and your lineage. And rather than seeing yourself as an individual having relations, you may acknowledge more how the relations you have define who you are.

2. Identify a coach who can assess your individual ability for dialectical thinking through an interview. One's thought patterns are identified and mind-opening exercises can support the development where needed.

Maybe you react against how the IDG framework seems to categorise things into different boxes, being and relating etc, when these aspects are in reality intertwined. Can we really differentiate our thoughts from who we are, and see ourselves as individuals rather than relational aspects? Do certain schools of leadership or coaching really fit into a certain category or shouldn't they be illustrated by bubbles stretching over several categories and in the interaction between trainer, individual and organisation?

Categorising skills and methods as mentioned in the former paragraph is commonly associated with formal logical and linear thinking. It is commonly and traditionally used in the natural sciences, organising academic research into fields and faculties, organisations into departments and the challenges of sustainable development into the 17 SDGs. It's not wrong to do this, but we may delude ourselves that things are neatly dealt with one at a time

The dialectical thought form framework, DTF, developed by Otto Laske building on Michael Basseches' work, offers insights on how we can loosen our habits of grasping at phenomena as separate to see reality's complexity and phenomena's interdependence. From a dialectical standpoint, we look for what is excluded by our concepts and systems and use those excluded aspects to find the commonalities between things thus forming more inclusive thoughts.

If you think of reality as static and individual, what happens if you apply the dialectical framework? You might begin to see reality more as a process of evolving and developing. You would also likely see phenomena in a larger, integral, interdependent context. And rather than seeing phenomena as discrete things, you might begin to see that all things fit together. You might start to see how things depend on each other for their existence rather than being isolate

From a dialectical perspective, the IDG framework could be seen as something temporary that may be updated, a framework with permeable boundaries, that exists in the context of challenges of sustainability and because of these challenges. The IDG categories may from this mindset work as windows or perspectives to dive deeper into inner development

There is a strong theoretical foundation to the DTF framework and through an interview, a person's ability for dialectical thinking can be assessed. During the assessments, the person's patterns of thought are identified and mind-opening exercises can support the development where needed. It is then often used in coaching and counselling so the participant or client may, hopefully, improve their ability for dialectical thinking.

Click here to read References

Thinking — Immunity to Change (ITC) Process

The Immunity to Change (ITC) process addresses the foundation of how we make sense of the world and our place in it, by accessing our hidden assumptions.

It can help the practitioner to gain insights into emotional reactions and assumptions, giving greater freedom and allowing one to harbour more complexity in one's inner space.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:

Complexity Awareness, Sense-making

Also develops these dimensions:

Relating   **Acting**

Overview

The ITC process came out of Robert Kegan's Subject object theory, which addresses how we may differentiate ourselves from what we are stuck and embedded in. The ITC process starts with an individual development goal, and explores our emotional reactions and assumptions when we try to pursue this goal.

How it can help: ICT can help put our assumption into words and take them as an object, resulting in us no longer being owned by the assumption and it losing control over us. That will then give us greater freedom and allow us to harbour more complexity in our inner space.

How to get started

When starting the ICT process for the first time, try the following:

1. Begin by setting an individual development goal, which could be to exercise more or set boundaries and say no to others' expectations and wishes.

2. When we try to pursue these goals and try to make a significant change in our lives, often something in us seems to resist the change and prevents us from changing our behaviour to something that is unfamiliar to us. According to the process, this happens since this new be-haviour challenges assumptions we have about ourselves that we may not be aware of. Try to identify the assumptions that are preventing behaviour change. For example, if I want to be better at saying no to others' wishes, it may challenge my assumption that I see myself as someone that is needed by others.

One theory that addresses how we may differentiate ourselves from what we are stuck and embedded in, be it our emotional responses, our thoughts, our relations or on ourselves, is the Subject object theory, developed by Robert Kegan. Development according to Kegan takes place as we step out of embeddedness so that we can take our previous self as an object. The Subject object theory describes development in stages, but here the mechanisms around development and what happens inside of us as we transform are of most interest. This is where our assumptions and ways of seeing the world become visible for us. This gave rise to a method called the Immunity to change process (ITC)

The ITC process is performed by individuals or in group sessions and starts with the participants setting an individual developmental goal, which could be to exercise more or set boundaries and say no to others' expectations and wishes. When we try to pursue these goals and try to make a significant change in our lives, often something in us seems to resist the change. There seems to be some sort of emotional reaction, some sort of immune system that gets triggered, that prevents us from changing our behaviour to something that is unfamiliar to us.

We may even start self-sabotaging our own development. According to the process, this happens since this new behaviour challenges assumptions we have about ourselves that we may not be aware of. If I want to be better at saying no to others' wishes, it may challenge my assumption that I see myself as someone that is needed by others

The intended outcome of the ITC process is not primarily to reach the developmental goal we set in the beginning, but rather to get an insight into our emotional reactions and assumptions about this. When we can put this assumption into words and take it as an object, we are no longer owned by it and it loses control over us. That will then give us greater freedom and allow us to harbour more complexity in our inner space.

The ITC process addresses the foundation of how we make sense of the world and our place in it. But it also facilitates our ability for complex thinking around our own emotions and meaning-making by using language as a tool to access what was previously hidden from us. This demonstrates how language and being are intertwined and how hard it is to place a method in a certain category.

The Subject-object theory has a measurement instrument called Subject-object interview, where you can assess a participant's stage of development in how they make meaning. The more you are able to see yourself and what you previously took for granted, the more complex your meaning making becomes.

Click here to read References

Thinking — Personal Growth through a Polarity Lens

The Polarity Map organizes wisdom around your Greater Purpose Statement and your Deeper Fear.

It can help the practitioner to identify and manage seemingly unsolvable or paradoxical problems.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Complexity Awareness, Sense-making

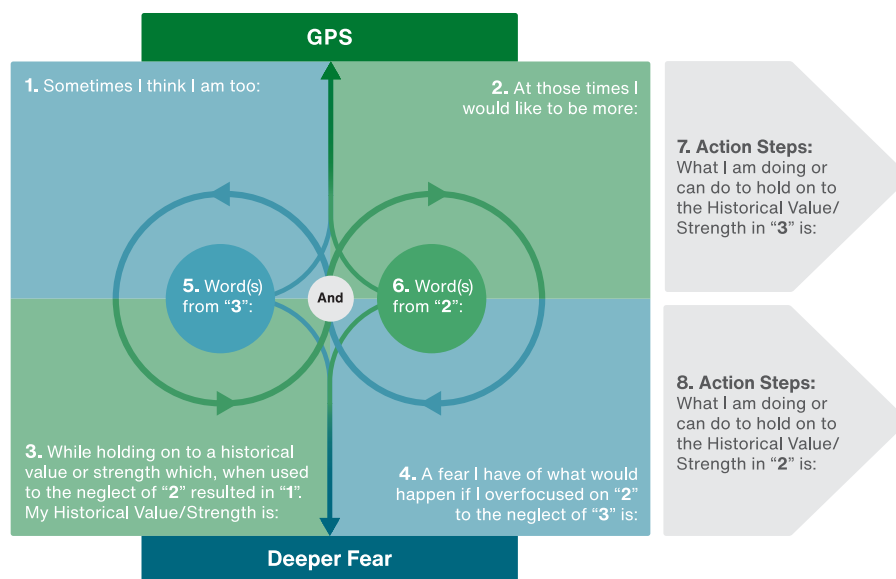**Also develops these dimensions:**

| Being | Relating |

Overview

The Polarity Map is a wisdom organizer. The wisdom is in you. At the top of the map is your GPS – Greater Purpose Statement, for example "personal growth." At the bottom is the Deeper Fear of what will happen if you do not leverage this polarity well, for example "stuck" which indicates a lack of personal growth.

How it can help: The 8 sections of the map help you identify and manage seemingly unsolvable or paradoxical problems.

How to get started

When starting the Polarity Map for the first time, try the following:
1. On a blank piece of paper, copy the Polarity Map with just the numbers (1-8) in the spaces without any of the print.

2. Write your Greater Purpose Statement at the top and Deeper Fear at the bottom

3. Write one word answers or simple statements to fill in the sections numbered 1-8 in order.
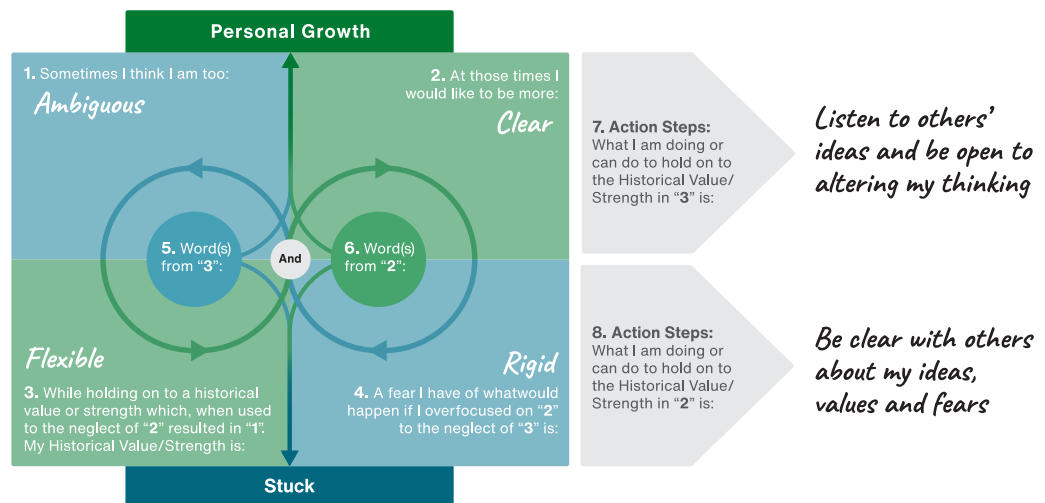
On a blank piece of paper, please draw the Polarity Map® above with just the numbers (1-8) in the spaces without any of the print The Polarity Map, above, is a wisdom organizer. The wisdom is in you. At the top of the map is your GPS – Greater Purpose Statement. In this case I have entered: Personal Growth. This answers the question, "Why bother to leverage this map?" At the bottom is the Deeper Fear of what will happen if you do not leverage this polarity well. I have entered the word "Stuck" to indicate a lack of personal growth. The rest is for you to fill out in 8 steps with my personal example to help you fill out your map. We often experience personal growth as going from something about ourselves that we would like to change:

1) Sometimes I think I am too Ambiguous (put your word(s) in your map.
2) At those times, I would like to be more Clear. **3)** While holding on to a historical value or strength which when used to the neglect of being Clear resulted in me being Ambiguous. My historical value/strength is: Being Flexible. **4)** A fear I have of what would happen if I over-focused on being Clear to the neglect of being Flexible is that I would be experienced as Rigid. It is the fear of being seen as Rigid and losing my Flexibility that was keeping me from being as Clear as I wanted to be in my personal development. We can now fill in the two poles names **5)** & **6)** by taking a word or words from the two upsides of the polarity map. In this case, I have taken Flexible from 3 and put it in 5 and taken Clear from 2 and put it in 6.

You can do the same from your map.
The question becomes: *"How do I hold on to my value of Flexibility And pursue my personal development desire to become more Clear?"*

Contributor:

Barry Johnsson

The answer is to: **7)** Identify Action Steps first to hold on to my Flexibility:Listen to others' ideas and be open to altering my thinking and. **8)** Action Steps to gain the benefits of being Clear. Be clear with others about my ideas, values and fears. Paradoxically effectively holding on to whatever you have in "3" will help you get to "2."

Click here to read References

5.4 Relating —
Caring for Others & the World

Appreciating, caring for and feeling connected to others, such as neighbours, future generations or the biosphere, helps us create more just and sustainable systems and societies for everyone.

If Thinking regards how we understand different challenges, the Relating dimension addresses why we should care. We care if we feel connected to and identify with a larger context, with people of other families, organisations and cultures, those who have passed away as well as those not yet born, and with other species and nature. The Relating dimension involves appreciation, connectedness, humility and empathy and compassion

Methods involved here focus to a great extent on supporting connectedness, by training our ability for compassion and empathy towards other people and by spending time in close contact with nature. It's also about cultivating listening, not only to words and texts but also to more subtle messages from what's behind the words and trying to uncover the deeper mechanisms of our surrounding social context and nature. Therefore a good portion of intellectual humility is a good starting point when listening.
To allocate space or a buffer zone for the unknown

This dimension intersects with Being since you need to have a relationship to yourself and also with Collaborating since it's hard to do just that without first being in a relationship. We imagine the distinction between Relating and Collaborating by asking if something is to be achieved.

Relating — Compassion Training

Compassion training can help build empathy and compassion, described as an ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness and the intention to address related suffering.

It can help the practitioner increase their well-being and have a higher quality of relations, as well improve leadership qualities.

DIY — Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Empathy and Compassion, Appreciation

Also develops these dimensions:

Being   **Collaborating**

Overview

We are generally considered to be born with an inherent ability for empathy and compassion towards those we are in close contact with, and this can be expanded to wider circles, such as organisations and cultures. Our ability for compassion can also temporarily decrease, such as in stressful or hostile situations or if we get stuck in our own judgements or unhealthy self-criticisms or even shame. The ability for compassion and self-compassion is an asset, and fortunately, it can be trained and developed. Compassion training that we will focus on here can be performed by different exercises such as meditation training. A common way of doing this exercise is to start with mindful awareness - connecting to oneself, one's body and breath. Compassion training often aims to address one's own suffering, which is self-compassion, but here we will address relations and others' suffering. Voluntary work helping disadvantaged people and being conscious about one's consumption of different resources are examples of supporting and connecting with other people and nature to develop oneself.

How it can help: Several studies point towards increased well-being and higher quality of relations of the individual who engages in compassion training. In the professional life, our leadership qualities improve if we understand the suffering of our colleagues and work towards alleviating it so that they can do their job properly.

How to get started

When starting with compassion training for the first time, try the following:

1. Start with connecting to yourself, your inner, your body and your breath. You can then relate to yourself without judgement and self-criticism (self-compassion), meaning that you are not attached to your thoughts or feelings in this situation. We do the best we can with our available means.

2. You can then direct your compassion towards another person that is close and relate to him or her the same way without judgement. After this, you can direct compassion to someone not that close, or someone you have a conflict with and wish that they are well, happy and in peace.

3. Exercises can be added where you engage in alleviating others from suffering by practising acts of generosity, hospitality or kindness towards the ones of your concern.

One of the 23 skills is Empathy and Compassion, which we describe as an ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy and compassion and the intention to address related suffering. We define empathy as the capacity to understand and feel what other people feel and compassion adds the wish to ease that suffering. But why is it needed and how can you train it?

We are generally considered to be born with an inherent ability for empathy and compassion towards those we are in close contact with, which we see in studies on small children and primates. Adult developmental perspectives also demonstrate that this ability may be expanded from close relations to wider circles, such as organisations, cultures and wider. We may also experience that our ability for compassion temporarily decreases, such as in stressful or hostile situations or if we get stuck in our own judgements, unhealthy self-criticisms or even shame. Then the ability for compassion and self-compassion is an asset, and fortunately, it can be trained and developed.

Compassion training that we will focus on here can be performed by different exercises such as meditation training. A common way of doing this exercise is to start with mindful awareness - connecting to oneself, one's body and breath. Then the attention and compassion can be directed and related to oneself without judgement and self-criticism. Striving not to be judgemental means that we are not attached to our thoughts or feelings in this situation. We do the best we can with our available means. Compassion training often aims to address one's own suffering, which is self-compassion, but here we will address relations and others' suffering.

After grounding oneself, the compassion can be directed towards another person that is close and relate to him or her the same way without judgement. After this, one can direct the same compassion to someone not that close, and then someone one has a conflict with and wish that they are well, happy and in peace. The compassion can then be extended further to all living beings. Training is also practised in courses or classes, for instance, in Compassion mind training that is commonly used in leadership development. Here exercises can be added where one engages in alleviating others from suffering by practising generosity, hospitality or kindness towards the ones of one's concern, close ones, people not that close and someone with whom one has a conflict.

From our survey results, we can see several examples of supporting and connecting with other people and nature to develop themselves. For instance, this can occur through voluntary work and helping disadvantaged people, hosting a refugee family, having a vegetarian diet and being conscious about one's consumption of different resources. Although one's own development may not be the prime motive for engaging this way, the ability for compassion is likely to follow as an outcome.

What does different forms of compassion-training lead to and how can you measure its effect to make sure that a course or practice gives the intended results? Compassion is generally measured using different self-report scales where the individuals rate themselves in relation to different statements such as "Sometimes when people talk about their problems, I feel like I don't care." or other questions that focus on practical aspects such as what you actually do when someone else suffers. Several studies demonstrate that practices and interventions such as those described above increase the self-reported compassion of the participants.

Then, why would we be interested in developing our ability for compassion? First, several studies point towards increased well-being and higher quality of relations of the individual who engages in compassion training. Another argument for increasing our ability for compassion is that our leadership qualities improve if we understand the suffering of our colleagues and work towards alleviating it so that they can do their job properly

Recently, compassion has been also shown to support transformative qualities and capacities i.e. awareness, insight, connection, purpose, and agency that are related to the five IDG dimensions) as well as sustainability outcomes across individual, collective and system levels.

Click here to read References

Relating — Nature Quest

Connections with nature have the potential to leverage deep societal change toward respect and care for our environment.

It can help the practitioner recognize that we do not exist independently and that our sense of self includes nature, fostering pro-environmental behavior.

Primarily builds the following skills:

Appreciation, Connectedness

Also develops these dimensions:

Being   Acting

Overview

People mainly protect and restore the natural world for the sake of relational values: due to attachment to a special place in nature and in general due to the feeling of being connected with nature. Our level of connection to nature increases with time spent outdoors, especially with time spent in wild nature. Nature quests further develop emotional connection to the natural word, and deepen our awareness towards the environment and the relationship between humankind and the natural world.

How it can help: Expanding our sense of self so that it includes the natural world can fostering proenvironmental behaviour, as we will be less likely to harm it because harming the natural world would then be experienced like self-destruction.

How to get started

When starting with a nature quest for the first time, try the following:

1. Start by going on a walk in a forest and focus on relating to your surroundings, e.g. by naming the trees. Be aware issues connected to nature such an environmental pollution, and the related actions you can take, e.g. not leaving trash behind.

2. Observe what is already there: listen to the sounds around you, feel the ground which is carrying you, smell the air, taste it, and sink into your visual field. The aim is to leave everyday habits and patterns behind so that something new can emerge.

3. Explore questions that may come to mind on the walk, such as: What is nature? And why does it matter? What is humanity's relationship to the natural world?

As disconnection is one of the main root-causes of the social-ecological crisis we are in, reconnection is one of the key processes required to make our world more sustainable. We need to reconnect both to ourselves as well as to the natural world. Research shows that we mainly protect and restore the natural world for the sake of relational values: due to attachment to a special place in nature and in general due to the feeling of being connected with nature.

The assumption is that if we feel connected to nature, we will be less likely to harm it because harming the natural world would then be experienced like self-destruction. Accordingly, one way of fostering pro-environmental behaviour would be through expanding our sense of self, so that it includes the natural world. Furthermore, nature connectedness supports us in listening to ourselves and tuning into what we actually want from our lives.

But how can we get there? What can we do to strengthen our inner connections to the natural world? As research shows, our level of connection to nature increases with time spent outdoors, especially with time spent in wild nature. Studies have shown that the more time children spend outdoors, the more environmentally responsible young adults they become later in life. However, access and interaction with nature do not only have a significant impact during childhood but also later in life. People across time and of all ages have gone into nature to seek guidance and wisdom.

One approach to doing that nowadays is a so-called nature quest. With the purpose of slowing down and cultivating qualities such as awareness and oneness, you go to a special place in nature where you can be completely by yourself. The power of solitude in nature arises from the balanced harmony which is inherent in wild nature.

The decision of actively wanting to reconnect with ourselves and nature is the start of the process of a nature quest. Then what follows is the preparation of the nature quest time: taking care of practical questions, addressing our worries concerning the time in nature and creating inner space for new transformative experiences. Once we get to the step of leaving our everyday life behind and going into solitude in nature, we connect with our non-distracted self and the mutual interconnectedness of all living beings. Guiding teachings with regard to reconnection as well as practices such as meditation and Tai Chi can support this process. The so-called re-entry phase is directed towards cultivating a post-nature quest process to internalise the new awareness in everyday life

Contributor:
Alina Stöver

You can do a nature quest by participating in an organised retreat or by organising your own trip into nature. Wherever you go, in the end, it is always about reconnecting with the web of life, with our sense of belonging and oneness. We experience that nature is not only around us but that we are nature inside and recognize that we as humans are inseparable from the natural world.

Click here to read References

Relating — Listening to Pause

Pausing on what we just heard is an inner skill that enables connecting to "what the person just said" and "how those words landed on oneself."

It can help the practitioner act from a more conscious state of being.

DIY

Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Appreciation, Connectedness

Also develops these dimensions:

Collaborating   **Acting**

Overview

The importance of pausing to listen had been highlighted without methodological steps in ancient wisdom and the western literature describing the listening process for discernment. It is a state in which one gathers information in quiet observation and deep listening, building knowledge by becoming aware. In this space of contemplation, the invisible inner qualities are working, which informs action. Allowing the time to pause is as important as the quality of the space created for that pause to happen.

Pausing to reflect is embodying what we just heard, and developing that inner quality of being more conscious during the process has the capability to change the outcome. When practicing in teams, pausing can also help us notice from which level of listening we are operating from Otto Scharmer's four levels of listening: "downloading" (reconfirming what we know), "factual" (what is different from what we know), "empathic" (allows us to connect with the experience of the other), and "generative" (connects us with who we are and whom we want to be).

Practicing listening more deeply to sense a deeper connection with the environment enables us to relate with our surroundings. Elder Miriam Rose Ungunmerr said we learn by watching and listening, waiting and then acting.

How it can help: The awareness gained in pausing forms the quality to act from a more conscious state of being.

How to get started

When starting with listening to pause for the first time, try the following:

1. In teams, each person can be given the same amount of time for communicating, e.g. 5 minutes.

2. Around 1 minute (more or less) is given to pause between each person's interaction.

3. During the pause is space for awareness to know from which level of listening you are operating, and to discern the quality of how to continue the dynamic.

Pausing is key to consider what we just heard. It is an inner skill that enables connecting to "what the person just said" and "how those words landed on oneself". Allowing the time to pause is as important as the quality of the space created for that pause to happen. The importance of this quality had been highlighted without methodological steps in ancient wisdom and the western literature describing the listening process for discernment.

The invitation to pause lies in evidence-based sources to understand the awareness gained in pausing.

Indigenous knowledge, Dadirri for example, is to listen deeply and connect, said Aboriginal Elder Miriam Rose Ungunmerr from the Northern Territory in Australia. It means contemplation, and it is a way of life. It is about living versus conceptualising. Miriam listens to Nature, she pauses to be in-form from other living systems and relate with them and within. For Judy Atkinson, Dadirri means the state in which one gathers information in quiet observation and deep listening, building knowledge by becoming aware. In this space of contemplation, the invisible inner qualities are working, which informs action.

The inner movement gives the quality of the action. In Dadirri, learning is an embodied experience, Ungunmerr reminds us that listening and waiting is key and enables us to act. With this action, we give a different quality of relating with the environment.

Deep listening can also be viewed as a process. In the three key elements used in Theory U to open the mind, open the heart and open the will —to risk, Otto Scharmer, highlights listening as the most important and underrated skill.

The 4 levels of listening are: "downloading" (reconfirming what we know), "factual" (what is different from what we know), "empathic" (allows us to connect with the experience of the other), and "generative" (connects us with who we are and whom we want to be). It is doable to be with others and inwardly, pausing in order to notice from which level of listening we are operating —downloading, factual, empathic, or generative.

For example, in teams, each person can be given the same amount of time for communicating (E.g., 5 minutes), followed by one (more or less) minute of pausing. The time of pausing depends on the time given for each person to communicate. Then the next person can speak for the same amount of time, and so on. In that pause, before it is the next person's turn to talk, is when the magic happens. It shifts from reaction to being able to respond.

Contributor:

Vivianna Rodriguez
Carreon

Pausing to reflect is embodying what we just heard, and developing that inner quality of being more conscious during the process has the capability to change the outcome.

Click here to read References

Relating — Imagination Activism & the Symbiosis Meditation

Imagination activism is a new kind of activism that pairs imagination exercises with calls to action in community to enact the better world we envision. It can help the practitioner create connections to the Earth and nature, explore future world possibilities, and inspire hope that fuels their activism.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Appreciation, Connectedness
Also develops these dimensions:

Being	Acting

Overview

Imagination activism is a new kind of activism that pairs imagination exercises with calls to action in community to enact the better world we envision. By imagining a different future, fueled by a deep sense of connection to self, others and planet, activists can sustain themselves through hope and inspire others to create the kind of flourishing world they imagine. The Symbiosis Meditation is a short (8 minute) example of an imagination activism meditation that invites you to explore your experience being alive through the vibrant material, energy, atoms, living beings and connections your experience of being a "human being" is made up of.

How it can help: Imagination activism can help create connection to the Earth, establish interconnectedness with nature, bring alive the concept of future generations, and foster an expanded sense of time. It also enables the exploration of alternative worlds and possibilities and allow the visioning of the future, inspiring hope and helping the practitioner find the steps to put vision into action.

How to get started

When starting with listening to pause for the first time, try the following:

1. Start by visualising all parts of your body that are made up of elements of solid material, or "Earth element" - bones, skin, teeth, hair, and the physical sensation of their weight. Then visualise all of the solidity and Earth element present in the world, and imagine the connections to you.

2. Move on to visualising water and all of the liquid elements in your body, and then again visualising the rivers, storms, waterfalls and oceans of the world outside.

3. Move on to visualising air and the breath, focusing on the air and oxygen bubbles inside the body and projecting out to the air and its sounds and sensations out in the world.

4. Move on to visualising the "fire element" of heat and energy which also guides listeners to imagine the mitochondria in the body that were once bacteria, but now live in our bodies.

5. Finish by imagining the chain of unbroken relationships and cooperation, embodied through the chain of heartbeats that have supported them to be alive at this time.

Imagination Activism is a new kind of activism that pairs imagination exercises with calls to action in community to enact the better world we envision. It is a movement born out of hope for the future and imagination of a better world. Rather than despair, it focuses on hope. Rather than fighting the old, it invites us to build the new. Imagination exercises: create connection to the Earth, establish interconnectedness with nature, bring alive the concept of future generations, and foster an expanded sense of time. They also enable the exploration of alternative worlds and possibilities and allow the visioning of the future. Activists need hope and positive imagination to fuel their actions and inspiration. By imagining a different future, fuelled by a deep sense of connection to self, others and planet, they can sustain themselves and inspire others to create the kind of flourishing world they imagine - a world without poverty, no pollution, free high quality education for all, clean water, and good health and well-being for all. Finding the steps to put vision into action is at the heart of imagination activism.

Imagination Activism uses imagination, creative methods and visioning to expand empathy, cultivate a stronger sense of self and connection to values, and promote new perspectives, sense-making and cognitive flexibility. It primarily addresses the Relating category with particular focus on the skills Inner compass, Empathy and Compassion, Perspective-skills and Long-term orientation and Visioning. It also targets skills in other categories such as Self-awareness, Presence, Sense-making, Courage and Perseverance. The Symbiosis Meditation is a short (8 minute) meditation that invites you to explore your experience being live through the vibrant material, energy, atoms, living beings and connections your experience of being a "human being" is made up of. You are guided through the process of visualising and feeling experientially all parts of your body that are made up of elements of solid material, or "Earth element" - bones, skin, teeth, hair, and the physical sensation of their weight. Then you are guided to visualise all of the solidity and Earth element present in the world and Universe externally to you, and to visualise and imagine the connections between the two.

The same is done for water and all of the liquid elements in your body, and then again visualising the rivers, storms, waterfalls and oceans of the world outside - and the continuum that exists between the two. Then the same is done with air and the breath, focusing on the air and oxygen bubbles inside the body and projecting out to the air and its sounds and sensations out in the world. Lastly, the meditation focuses on the "fire element" of heat and energy which also guides listeners to imagine the mitochondria in the body that were once bacteria, but now live in our bodies through the process of endosymbiosis.

Contributor:

Phoebe Tickell

The listener finishes by imagining the chain of unbroken relationships and cooperation, embodied through the chain of heartbeats that have supported them to be alive at this time The meditation mixes using cognitive ideas, concepts and visualisations from the sciences which are then brought alive by experiential practice, breath, contemplation, and embodied cognition to create a rigorous, feeling-based experience and intelligence of our interdependency with all Life.

Click here to read References

5.5 Collaborating —
Social Skill

To make progress on shared concerns, we need to develop our abilities to include, hold space and communicate with stakeholders with different values, skills and competencies.

Collaborating involves communication skills, co-creating skills, inclusive mindset and intercultural competence, trust and skills of mobilisation. This dimension is a good reminder that we need to develop skills on a collective level as well as the individual. SDG goal no 17 regards partnerships for the goals and stresses how we need to cooperate over boundaries to address the sustainable development goals.

There is a vast number of methods for supporting groups in addressing complex issues. Some will be addressed here. This involves both cognitive focus, how to support and scaffold collective understanding of complexity, and how to build trust and safe spaces where different seemingly opposing views can coexist. The starting point in this dimension of the toolkit is to focus on how we communicate in a way that is mindful of reducing violence and unnecessary conflicts.

The dimension and the methods presented in them intersect with most others and, also with the Acting dimension, since most methods aim at producing some sort of action towards addressing the issues at hand.

Collaborating — Nonviolent Communication

Nonviolent communication (NVC) aims at going beyond what people are saying and doing to make explicit people's internal feelings and needs. It can help the practitioner open a room for shared understanding, discover needs that they were unaware of, and facilitate a solution in line with everyone's needs that solves a conflict.

DIY — Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Communication Skills, co-creation Skills

Also develops these dimensions:

Relating   **Acting**

Overview

When we listen to another person, there is always a risk that we draw conclusions about what the person is expressing that are not accurate and lead to misunderstandings. These conclusions are often just our own interpretations, which are coloured by our own thoughts, emotions and assumptions around this person as well as by our own (unfulfilled) needs in the situation. A nonviolent communication (NVC) approach asks of us to go beyond our first interpretation of what is being expressed and try to listen deeper.

How it can help: NVC can establish contact and conversation between all parties in cooperation or a conflict by identifying and expressing everyone's needs, and then developing a shared strategy that leads to a solution to the tension as a next step. Acknowledge that there are different needs and that no strategy has yet been found to meet them amicably makes it easier to solve a conflict. NVC supports us to express what we want and ask for things in a way that is more transparent with our needs and feelings and in line with the needs of the other people in the situation.

How to get started

When starting with NVC for the first time, try the following:

1. When listening to another, hold space within you for the other person's view and emotions without subsuming your own needs and emotions. Go beyond your first interpretation of what is being expressed and try to listen deeper.

2. Instead of instinctually responding as if you were being attacked, ask further questions on how this person feels and about needs that are not being met.

After the relating category, we will turn our focus to the interaction between individuals and different actors, where communication is at the core. In the IDG framework, we define communication skills as the ability to really listen to others, foster genuine dialogue, advocate own views skillfully, manage conflicts constructively and adapt communication to diverse groups. What do we mean by "really listen to others" in this context?

When we listen to another person, there is always a risk that we draw conclusions about what the person is expressing that are not accurate and lead to misunderstandings. We may think that he or she may be misinformed, have unreasonable demands or is just plain wrong. But these are often just our own interpretations, which are coloured by our own thoughts, emotions and assumptions around this person as well as by our own (unfulfilled) needs in the situation.

Nonviolent communication, NVC, is a method that is suitable here since it aims at going beyond what people are saying and doing to make explicit people's interiors in terms of feelings and needs. Not only the interior of the one you are communicating with but also of yourself. As individuals, an NVC approach asks us to go beyond our first interpretation of what is being expressed and try to listen deeper. We can do this by, instead of instinctually responding as we were being attacked, asking further questions on how this person feels and about needs that are not being met.

Opening ourselves up like this to welcome the perspective, and possibly suffering, of the other person or group may be more demanding for us than just reacting and defending ourselves. It requires that we can hold space within ourselves for the other person's view and emotions without subsuming our own needs and emotions. But practising doing this in different situations may also contribute to the development of our inner space and capacity to harbour different emotions and perspectives. NVC opens a room for shared understanding and a deep sense of connectedness

Applying tools such as NVC in a situation may help us establish contact and conversation between all parties in cooperation or a conflict by identifying and expressing everyone's needs to then, as a next step, develop a shared strategy that leads to a solution to the tension. The basic assumption of NVC is that all human behaviour is motivated by needs. Accordingly, anger and reproaches can be seen as unhappy expressions of unfulfilled needs. It makes it easier to solve a conflict if we acknowledge that there are different needs and no strategy has yet been found to meet them amicably.

Contributor:

Alina Stöver,

Kristian Stålne

NVC supports us to express what we want and ask for things in a way that is more transparent with our needs and feelings and in line with the needs of the other people in the situation. It may also help us discover needs that we previously weren't aware of, such as a need for freedom or respect.

Click here to read References

Collaborating — Methods for Scaffolding Collaboration

Structured methods for facilitating collaboration on complex issues can scaffold productive collaboration and overcome interest conflicts among diverse stakeholders. It can help the practitioner facilitate collaboration and problem-solving on a specific issue, as well as long term openness to diverging perspectives and co-creation skills.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Co-creation Skills, Inclusive Mindset

Also develops these dimensions:

Relating   **Acting**

Overview

When issues are very complex, no single actor possesses the knowledge and competences that have to be weighed in and used when developing action plans. Over the last five decades or so, a very large number of methods have been developed in order to scaffold productive collaboration and overcome interest conflicts among diverse stakeholders.

Some examples (of very many) of such methods are:

- TIP, The Integral Process for Working on Complex Issues
- Soft Systems Methodology
- Open Space
- Future Search
- the Strategic Choice Approach
- WorkOut
- the Consensus-Based Approach
- the Inquiry-Based Approach
- Deep Democracy
- Future Workshops

How it can help: These structured methods facilitate collaboration, problem-solving and strategy development in relation to specific issues. They also support long-term learning among participants regarding awareness of complexity, openness to explore diverging perspectives and concrete co-creation skills.

How to get started

When starting with methods for scaffolding collaboration on complex issues for the first time, try the following:

1. Identify the complex issues and high level purpose for which you would like to use the method.

2. Seek out structured facilitation, either using an established method, or a bespoke design by a skilled facilitator. A trained facilitator can adapt the design of a group process to the specific conditions in the particular case, and can facilitate each phase of the process in order to mobilize the competences of the participants and ensure productive collaboration.

When issues are very complex, no single actor possesses the knowledge and competences that have to be weighed in and used when developing action plans. In particular when stakeholders with quite different interests, perspectives, roles and knowledge base are involved, there is also a considerable potential for miscommunication, lack of trust, lack of shared focus and outright conflict. Over the last five decades or so, a very large number of methods have been developed in order to scaffold productive collaboration and overcome interest conflicts among diverse stakeholders.

Some examples (of very many) of such methods are: TIP, The Integral Process for Working on Complex Issues; Soft Systems Methodology; Open Space; Future Search; the Strategic Choice Approach, WorkOut, the Consensus-Based Approach, the Inquiry-Based Approach, Deep Democracy and Future Workshops. Picking one method from the diverse field of methods is problematic, since different methods have been developed for different purposes and have different profiles regarding what functions they perform (see Jordan, 2014). Some of these methods are specifically designed to support participants to develop more complexity awareness; to creatively make use of tensions between different perspectives; to be able to collaborate even when there is a considerable conflict potential; to facilitate trust and creativity, and so on.

Using structured facilitation (either using an established method, or a bespoke design by a skilled facilitator) might be necessary in order to find consensus on purpose and delimitation, create trust and openness, mobilize creativity, explore complex conditions and causal relationships, make use of different perspectives, defuse conflicts, and other functions. These methods do not only facilitate collaboration, problem-solving and strategy development in relation to specific issues, but also support long-term learning among participants regarding awareness of complexity, openness to explore diverging perspectives and concrete co-creation skills. There is a very large literature on methods for collaborating on complex issues and also a large community of experienced facilitators. Much of the literature is practically oriented, such as methods and facilitation manuals and textbooks. However, there is also a body of research on methods, not least among British scholars in the field of operational research and systems engineering, and in the field of deliberative democracy.

Contributor:

Thomas Jordan

One argument for including references to this family of methods is that the IDG framework really needs to evolve from a focus on individual skills and qualities toward collective capacities. Methods for complex issues are designed to build collective capacities for enabling strategy development and implementation that go far beyond what an individual can hope to accomplish. In order to fully realize the potential of using methods for complex issues, it might be necessary to involve a trained and experienced facilitator. Such a facilitator can adapt the design of a group process to the specific conditions in the particular case, and can facilitate each phase of the process in order to mobilize the competences of the participants and ensure productive collaboration.

Click here to read References

Collaborating — Training in Intercultural Competence

Training in intercultural competence can include earning about common dimensions of cultural differences in endeavors involving participants with different cultural backgrounds. It can help the practitioner reduce the risk of misunderstandings, frictions and outright conflict.

DIY ———●—— Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Co-creation Skills, Inclusive Mindset

Also develops these dimensions:

Relating   **Acting**

Overview

When working with people with different cultural backgrounds, such as international collaboration on the SDGs, cultural differences may constitute a considerable conflict potential. The most well-known and relevant dimensions for cultural differences are power distance, individualism/collectivism, femininity/masculinity and uncertainty avoidance, which can influence communication and collaboration practices, relationship building, leadership and followership and attitudes toward gender roles,

Training in intercultural competence can include learning about common dimensions for cultural differences through lectures and reading, reflecting on others' or own experiences with intercultural conflict, and conducting group simulations and communication exercises.

A more open-ended approach to training in intercultural awareness can help reduce the risk of stereotyping, while offering clear examples of how cultural differences potentially can be problematic, and providing guidance on insights and skills that increase the capacity for creative collaboration across cultural differences

How it can help: Training in intercultural awareness can reduce the risk of misunderstandings, frictions and outright conflict in endeavors involving participants with different cultural backgrounds, as well as facilitate personal and collective development through a broader repertoire of values and behavior.

How to get started

When starting with training in intercultural competence for the first time, try the following:

1. Seek out books and articles written for the general public with the purpose of strengthening skills in intercultural collaboration.

2. Identified facilitated training on an individual or group level that can include readings, lectures, reflections, and group simulation and communication exercises.

When working with people with different cultural backgrounds, cultural differences may constitute a considerable conflict potential. The relevance of this challenge is particularly large in relation to issues that require international collaboration, such as the SDGs. Awareness of common cultural differences that may influence collaboration and communication can reduce the risk of misunderstandings, friction and outright conflict. There are several frameworks describing and explaining typical cultural differences, such as those developed by Geert Hofstede and colleagues, Fons Trompenaars and colleagues and Erin Meyer (see references below)

The most well-known and relevant dimensions for cultural differences are (following Hofstede) power distance, individualism/collectivism, femininity/masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. Such differences (and others) can influence communication and collaboration practices, relationship building, leadership and followership and attitudes toward gender roles. Training in intercultural competence can include learning about common dimensions for cultural differences through lectures and reading, reflecting on others' or own experiences with intercultural conflict, and conducting group simulations and communication exercises.

It should be recognized, though, that some scholars and practitioners caution against the risks of stereotyping when using frameworks like Hofstede's and advocate a more open-ended approach to training in intercultural awareness. Intercultural training should be designed to minimize the risk of stereotyping, while offering clear examples of how cultural differences potentially can be problematic, and providing guidance on insights and skills that increase the capacity for creative collaboration across cultural differences

Training in intercultural awareness can be crucially important in endeavours involving participants with different cultural backgrounds, by reducing the risk of misunderstandings, frictions and outright conflict, as well as by facilitating personal and collective development through a broader repertoire of values and behaviours

Contributor:

Thomas Jordan

The volume of empirical research on intercultural differences is very large. There are also many books and articles written for the general public with the purpose of strengthening skills in intercultural collaboration. Training in intercultural competence has been around for a very long time, there is a large community of skilled trainers using different approaches.

<div style="border:1px solid #000; display:inline-block; padding:8px 16px;">**Click here to read References**</div>

Collaborating — Psychological Safety

Psychological safety refers to the experience of being able to be oneself in a group without fear of being rejected or ridiculed by other group members. It can help teams increase performance, increase learning, and have higher work satisfaction.

DIY

Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:

Communication skills, Trust

Also develops these dimensions:

Relating   **Acting**

Overview

Psychological safety refers to the experience of being able to be oneself in a group without fear of being rejected or ridiculed by other group members. Teams with a high degree of psychological safety are open about their mistakes and are encouraged to talk about and learn from them. The concept of psychological safety applies to groups/teams and organizational settings where individuals are highly dependent on each other and are working towards a common goal. Without the help from all individuals in the group, the goal is hard to reach.

Psychological safety is best conceptualized as a group phenomena, but it cannot be achieved without engagement from all team members. Individual awareness and actions will contribute to increased psychological safety in a group they are a part of.

How it can help: A high degree of psychological safety can lead to increased performance, increased learning, and higher work satisfaction.

How to get started

When starting with the shield for the first time, try the following:

1. Hand out a paper and pencil to each participants, one for each.

2. Ask participants to draw a large shield on the paper, which is then divided into four parts.

3. Speak up about your own mistakes

Psychological safety refers to the experience of being able to be oneself in a group without fear of being rejected or ridiculed by other group members. Or, in the words of Amy Edmondson, professor at Harvard and very much associated with this concept, "a team-climate characterized by interpersonal trust and mutual respect".

Teams with a high degree of psychological safety are open about their mistakes and are encouraged to talk about and learn from them. The concept of psychological safety applies to groups/teams and organizational settings where individuals are highly dependent on each other and are working towards a common goal. Without help from all individuals in the group, the goal is hard to reach.

The concept of psychological safety has been around since the 1960's and grew again in popularity in the 1990's. It recently got a lot of attention with the famous Aristotle study done by Google, in which the company collected data from over 180 teams within their organisation to gain knowledge on what is at the core of successful teamwork. The one factor that stood out and had the most impact on team effectiveness was Psychological safety. Other factors also contributed, such as dependability, structure and clarity, meaning, and impact, but to a lesser extent.

There has been a lot of research on psychological safety at the individual, group and organizational levels showing that a high degree of psychological safety can lead to increased performance, increased learning, and higher work satisfaction. And that psychological safety is best conceptualized as a group phenomenon.

Even though psychological safety is a group concept and cannot be achieved without engagement from all team members, there are lots of things an individual can do to increase the psychological safety in a group they are a part of. Small behaviours such as asking questions, being interested in and respectful to other group members, accepting differences in personality, making sure everyone is included in conversations and decisions, asking for the opinion of others, speaking up about your own mistakes and trying new behaviours in the group.

Contributor:

Kristofer Vernmark

Psychological safety addresses the Collaboration dimension and can be a powerful tool to increase the possibility of better functioning teams and higher work satisfaction. It has a clear connection to SDG 3, 8, and 17, but can also be considered to influence all the SDGs since how we work together will have a profound impact on how fast we can reach the global goals and create a better future.

Click here to read References

Collaborating — The Shield

This shield is an exercise for three or more participants that takes 30 min to 4 hours to do. It's main purpose is to get the participants to talk about and share about themselves.

It can help groups connect, get to know each other, and create a climate of trust.

Primarily builds the following skills:
Inclusive Mindset, Trust
Also develops these dimensions:

Being   Relating

Overview
The shield is an exercise with many purposes but mainly to get the participants to talk about and share about themselves, as well as getting to know each other. The exercise is for three participants or more and takes 30 min to 4 hours to do. Material needed is paper (preferably flip-chart size) and pen (preferably whiteboard variety). Psychological safety is best conceptualized as a group phenomena, but it cannot be achieved without engagement from all team members. Individual awareness and actions will contribute to increased psychological safety in a group they are a part of.

How it can help: This exercise can help participants share deeper about themselves and create climate of trust.

How to get started
When starting with the shield for the first time, try the following:

1. Hand out a paper and pencil to each participants, one for each.

2. Ask participants to draw a large shield on the paper, which is then divided into four parts.

3. In each quarter, participants are asked to describe themselves based on four different themes. It is essential that participants use pictures and not words. The themes can be varied, but suggestions can be, for example: This describes me...; A difficulty I got over...; I am proud of this...; This is what you didn't know about me...; Then I made myself disappear...; My dream is to... ; In twenty years...

4. The participants then share their shields one by one and give a short oral presentation for about a minute. Those listening are invited to take notes and provide positive feedback on the presentations. This feedback is saved for later for the optional feedback session.

5. When everyone has presented their shields, the exercise can end, or can continue with a feedback session. During the feedback session, the participants must, one by one, turn away outward from the group. When feedback is given, the person receiving feedback must only listen and not comment. Feedback is then given in a round; the person sitting to the left of it starts receiving feedback, and then goes clockwise. When everyone has given their feedback, the person who received feedback turns back to the group and says thanks to the group.

This is an exercise with many purposes but mainly to get the participants to talk about and share themselves, as well as getting to know each other. The aim may also be to create a climate of trust. The exercise is for three participants or more and takes 30 min to 4 hours to do. Material needed is paper (preferably flip-chart size) and pen (preferably whiteboard variety) This exercise can have different outcomes depending on the group and what is shared. You may have to take a little height because the rendering may take a little extra time depending on what emerges.

1. Hand out paper and pencil to the participants, one for each. Instruct on a blackboard or whiteboard (or own paper) how the exercise is carried out before the participants are allowed to start

2. Participants are asked to draw a shield on the paper, which is then divided into four parts. The shield should cover as much of the paper as possible.
3. In each quarter, participants are asked to describe themselves based on four different themes. It is essential that participants use pictures and not words

4. The themes can be varied, but suggestions can be, for example:
This describes me...; A difficulty I got over...; I am proud of this...; This is what you didn't know about me...; Then I made myself disappear...; My dream is to... ; In twenty years

5. The participants show their presentations one by one and give an oral presentation for about a minute

6. When the participants present their creations, those listening are invited to take notes and provide positive feedback on the presentations. Inform that this is to be saved for later

7. When everyone has given their speech, the group leader can either continue with the exercise immediately or ask to come back with the next step later. Both options have their pros and cons

8. Feedback. Arrange the group's chairs in a circle formation. Ask the participants to produce the feedback that was recorded. The participants must now, one by one, turn away outward from the group when feedback is given. When feedback is given, the person receiving feedback must only listen and not comment. Feedback is then given in a round; the person sitting to the left of it starts receiving feedback, and then goes clockwise

9. When everyone has given their feedback, the person who received feedback turns back to the group and says thanks to the group.

Contributor:

Stefan Dahlberg

10. When everyone has gone around the group, the group gets to tell what they experienced and reflect on what this aroused.

Click here to read References

5.6 Acting —
Driving Change

Qualities such as courage and optimism help us acquire true agency, break old patterns, generate original ideas and act with persistence in uncertain times.

Finally, the Acting dimension involves courage, creativity, optimism and perseverance. We are still involving skills and inner qualities but these are the ones closest to taking action on different issues.

The methods here aim at building hope and agency for taking action, but also cultivating creativity and imagination. As before the methods here and the dimension in itself intersect with the other dimensions. Some methods aim at collaborative problem-solving and could be placed in the Thinking or Collaborating dimensions as well

Although many leadership programs aim at covering most of the IDG dimensions, at least this is an ambition of the IDG initiative, this is likely the dimension where their centre of gravity is. Leadership development will be discussed separately as an application along with education.

Acting — Personal Agency & Personal Initiative Training

Personal agency and personal initiative train-ings are interventions designed to catalyze actions towards specific life goals.

It can help participants take meaningful action towards their goals, create resilient, proactive habits, and increase livelihoods of individuals living in resource poor settings.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Courage, Optimism, Perseverance
Also develops these dimensions:

Thinking   **Collaborating**

Overview

Personal agency, defined as the ability to make and act upon important decisions in one's life, is central in the promotion of overall well-being. Personal agency interventions take the form of behav-ioral and/or digital interventions designed to catalyze actions towards specific goals and to support behavioral change. Examples include:

- The Empowered Employee and Empowered Entrepreneur training (EET) programs, developed by Dr. Shankar and colleagues through the SEE Change Initiative. In these trainings, which are adapted to local contexts, individuals undertake a personal journey to understand their own belief systems, identify goals in several life areas and learn various mental tools to take purposeful action to achieve their goals. Specific skills in action planning include goal setting, improved communications, systematic planning, and active problem solving.

- Personal initiative training, developed by psychologists Dr. Frese and colleagues. This training focuses on motivational skills, proactive behaviors, goal setting, planning and innova-tion and overcoming obstacles, and teaches participants how to anticipate problems, look for new opportunities, and plan ways to overcome obstacles. These training were designed for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

How it can help: Personal agency and personal initiative trainings can enable meaningful action towards the participant's goals as well as forming cyclical, proactive habits that individuals can maintain throughout their life, enabling a growth mindset alongside a sense of power and voice. These trainings can directly improve livelihoods for small businesses and entrepreneurs as well as improve overall well-being for individuals living in resource poor environments.

How to get started

When starting with personal agency and personal initiative training for the first time, try the following:

1. Review the SEE Change curriculum, which is available as open-source documents through the Self-Empowerment and Equity for Change (SEE Change) website at Johns Hopkins University.

2. More about the personal initiative program can be found **here**.

Personal agency, defined as the ability to make and act upon important decisions in one's life, is central in the promotion of overall well-being. Recent research studies from psychology, cognitive science, behavioural economics, and public health have demonstrated that personal agency can be nurtured, even within populations faced with significant resource constraints and environmental threats.

In the past decade, there has been an increase in personal agency interventions designed to catalyse and support the following sustainable development goals: Goal 1) no poverty, Goal 3) enhancing health and well-being, Goal 5) gender equality and Goal 8) decent work and economic growth. Personal-agency interventions take the form of behavioural and/or digital interventions designed to catalyse actions towards specific goals and to support behavioural change. Two specific examples of tested interventions in low resource settings are described below:

The Empowered Employee and Empowered Entrepreneur training (EET) programs, both of which are personal agency focused trainings were developed by Dr. Shankar and colleagues through the Self-Empowerment and Equity for Change (SEE Change) Initiative, and adapted and tested within numerous settings and sectors in resource poor environments. This behavioural training was designed through a gender and socio-cultural lens to foster personal agency and is locally adapted through a human-centred design process. In these trainings individuals undertake a personal journey, allowing them to understand their own belief systems and identify goals for various life areas.

The experiential exercises equip participants with the ability to understand and implement the actions they need to take to achieve their goals. Specific skills in action planning include goal setting, improved communications, systematic planning, and active problem solving. These practical and psychological skills support proactivity while enabling meaningful action towards the participant's goals – often unprompted by others or outside forces -- to reach their vision. These deliberate actions lead to cyclical, resilient habits that individuals can maintain throughout their life, enabling a growth mindset alongside a sense of power and voice.

Early research trials show that personal agency training provided to Kenyan energy micro-entrepreneurs doubled business longevity and nearly tripled sales, while enhancing confidence, self-esteem, and improved interpersonal relations. The EET program has been used to improve livelihoods for micro and small entrepreneurs, strengthen confidence and agency of women in male dominated sectors such as energy and agriculture, to improve interpersonal relationships and reduce gender-based violence.

Personal initiative (PI) training, developed by psychologists Dr. Frese and colleagues and tested in collaboration with economists, was designed to focus on motivational skills, proactive behaviours, goal setting, planning and innovation and overcoming obstacles.

This training was developed to support economic interventions focused on entrepreneurship and business improvements. Personal initiative training strives to coach small business owners on how to be self-starting, future-oriented and persistent. It also teaches participants how to anticipate problems, look for new opportunities, and plan ways to overcome obstacles.

Contributor:

Anita Shankar

A large-scale randomized trial of 1500 entrepreneurs in Togo showed that over the course of two years the personal initiative training increased firm profits by 30%, compared with a statistically insignificant 11% for traditional business training, making it a cost-effective intervention. Modifications and enhancements continue to be explored to improve outcomes based on recent results from research and trials.

Click here to read References

Acting — Arts, Creativity and Imagination

Multi-disciplinary arts practices are used in many sectors to liberate people from normative identities and structures.

Creative practice can help people increase their health and well-being, as well as enhance their empathy and compassion, empowering them to care more for others.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Creativity, Optimism

Also develops these dimensions:

Relating   **Collaborating**

Overview

Creativity and the arts enable people to liberate themselves from normative identities and structures and follow imagination's wild and spontaneous flow. This can increase people's potential to care for the world, work well with others, and drive change.

Beyond providing personal entertainment and relief from the stresses of everyday life, arts practices are now woven into healthcare and social care for their demonstrated health and well-being benefits. Hospitals and surgeries are being re-envisioned with innovative arts designs that are said to enhance patient experience and speed up recovery. See Institute for Medical Humanities for an interdisciplinary example.

Multi-disciplinary arts practices are now widely used in education, community development, restorative justice, and peace-building, enabling self-exploration, dialogue and healing. Creative methods can help generate visionary narratives and pilot initiatives that help seed more benign futures in the present. Underpinning these visions is the understanding that the imagination – through images, metaphors and language – has generative power.

How it can help: How it can help: Creative practices have demonstrated health and well-being benefits which in turn lead to greater courage, optimism and perseverance. They also lead to more active citizenship and enhance social skills, as well as empathy and compassion, empowering people to care more for others.

How to get started

When starting with arts practices for the first time, try the following:

1. Consider how you engage or might engage with creative activities as a hobby.

2. Identify a creative activity that brings you relaxation and inspiration as well as enjoyment & fun.

3. Explore opportunities for synergies between your everyday work and your creative activities. Consider where your creativity might innovate or reframe your work, enabling you to shift from established rules, norms and structures, discovering new ways of doing and being through play or imagination.

Many people engage with creative activities as a hobby, and when asked they will readily affirm that creative activities bring them relaxation, as well as enjoyment and fun. Beyond providing personal entertainment and relief from the stresses of everyday life, creative practices have demonstrated health and wellbeing benefits which in turn lead to greater courage, optimism and perseverance. In many countries around the world arts practices are now woven into healthcare and social care. A summary of the latest literature from the UK, including clinical and community research studies, can be found in below.

The arts are also beginning to play a larger role in the training of medical professionals, revolutionising the dominant bio-medical approach, in an attempt to make medicine more compassionate, appreciative and holistic, enabling doctors and nurses to care better for their patients. Around the world hospitals and surgeries are being re-envisioned with innovative arts designs that are said to enhance patient experience and speed up recovery. An example of interdisciplinary practice and research involving the arts in medicine can be found in below

Critically, there is a growing recognition that arts, culture and creativity lead to more active citizenship and enhance social skills, as well as empathy and compassion, empowering people to care more for others. Many creative activities engender states of flow, leading to a greater sense of interconnectedness with other people and the world. Multi-disciplinary arts practices are now widely used in education, community development, restorative justice, and peace-building, as they enable self-exploration, dialogue and healing.

Researchers working in arts and social change highlight the value and power of creative methods in projects envisioning change. Creative methods can generate visionary narratives and pilot initiatives that help seed more benign futures in the present. Underpinning these visions is the understanding that the imagination – through images, metaphors and language – has generative power. As Lakoff and Johnson assert,

"Metaphors have the power to create a new reality. This can begin to happen when we start to comprehend our experience in terms of a metaphor, and it becomes a deeper reality when we begin to act in terms of it. [...] Much of cultural change arises from the introduction of new metaphorical concepts and the loss of old ones." (p. 145

Contributor:

Jessica Bockler

Creativity and the arts enable people to liberate themselves from normative identities and structures and follow imagination's wild and spontaneous flow, increasing their potential to care for the world and drive change.

Click here to read References

Acting — Theory U for Group Work & Prototyping

Theory U, also known as 'Presencing', offers a framework for collaboration and engagement using awareness-based and contemplative practices.It can help groups sense more deeply into team dynamics, and organisations engage in purposeful planning, prototyping of projects and initiatives, and acting more purposefully.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Creativity, Optimism

Also develops these dimensions:

Relating   **Collaborating**

Overview

Theory U, also known as 'Presencing', offers a framework for collaboration and engagement using awareness-based and contemplative practices. A key principle in teams is a common intention. For aligning a core team to create a shared sense of purpose and direction, initial framing is important. Presencing practitioners sense into the interior conditions, asking organisations to consider the quality of spaces they create for deep inner and relational inquiry. For example, how to see, sense and feel the inner quality of team dynamics. The U-school offers a set of tools and practices to support holding spaces for transformation: Sensing Journeys, Dialogue Interview, Stakeholder Interview, Guided Journaling, Case Clinic Coaching Circles, Prototyping, and more. These practices are freely accessible and can be used independently and adapted to other transformative processes.

How it can help: Theory U offers insights and processes that enable working in a group to sense more deeply into team dynamics and conscious leadership relationships, helping organisations engage in purposeful planning, prototyping of projects and initiatives, and acting more purposefully.

How to get started

When starting with Theory U and in particular Prototyping for the first time, try the following:

1. Start by asking what problem the team wants to see, including the invisible forces in the system.

2. Then, list the stakeholders within the organisation and/or the actors that directly or indirectly relate to the situation. Represent invisible forces, such as dynamics of feelings, for example, power, frustration, with an object. Also consider distance between objects as well as shape and size.

3. Reflect on the sculpture from four different perspectives: East (Feeling): What do you love in this sculpture that ignites your best energy? What frustrates you? South (Truth): What hard truths need to be spoken? West (Reflection): What assumptions might be underlying this situation? What systemic barriers lock us into the current state of operating? North (Purpose/Presence): What in this situation is ending, wanting to die, and what is emerging, wanting to be born? If this sculpture could speak, what advice might it offer?

4. Give time to rearrange the sculpture to the current reality the team wants to see. What is the item or dynamic that, if removed or changed in position, will create a dramatic change within the sculpture?

Theory U, also known as 'Presencing', offers a framework for collaboration and engagement using awareness-based and contemplative practices. Theory U offers insights and processes that enable working in a group to sense more deeply into team dynamics and conscious leadership relationships, helping organisations engage in purposeful planning and prototyping of projects and initiatives.

For example, Scharmer said one of the key principles in teams is a common intention. How does a core team align to create a common intention? Initial framing is important, so a group has a shared sense of purpose and direction. Then as a group process is convened, group members are called upon to show up with authenticity and transparency, enabling the greatest attunement in the group. It is important to highlight that attunement is an inner skill that requires practice. There is both an inward and an outward orientation of awareness, sensing into what wants to unfold in the group and what is happening in each individual. It is this awareness, directed to inner experience as well as to relational dynamics, that fosters organic emergence.

Another core concept in Scharmer's work comes from his interview with Bill O'Brien "the success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervenor." Presencing practitioners sense into the interior conditions, asking organisations to consider the quality of spaces they create for deep inner and relational inquiry. For example, how to see, sense and feel the inner quality of team dynamics. The u-school offers a set of tools and practices to support holding spaces for transformation: Sensing Journeys, Dialogue Interview, Stakeholder Interview, Guided Journaling, Case Clinic Coaching Circles, Prototyping, and more.

These practices are freely accessible and can be used independently and adapted to other transformative processes. Indeed, some of these practices have become a language, literacy in itself, a way to express and to know, to develop the U process, such as Scribing and SPT (Social Presencing Theater), encapsulated as the social arts. U Theory has become a distinct practice in leadership, management and coaching, and many practitioners join the U journey each year, individually and in groups, taking part in the so-called u-lab 1x and u-lab 2x, in which members go through the process of co-initiating, co-sensing, co-inspiring, co-creating, and co-evolving emerging projects and initiatives.

Prototyping example: It is a 3D sculpture that uses objects to represent a situation's problem. This adaptation is from the 3D mapping in Theory U to be able to see the invisible forces playing in the system. According to the Presencing Institute, "the power of the practice lies in participants relying on their hands, rather than on habitual ways of thinking, to discover new insights". Prototyping with the hands is contemplating the social system or an individual reality that one wants to visualise.

For the toolkit, this activity is recommended for a team to prototype their current reality or their organisation's problem. This activity will map and inform the team to act more purposefully. As a first step it is recommended to ask what problem the team wants to see.

Then, list the stakeholders within the organisation and/or the actors that direct-ly or indirectly relate to the situation. Represent them with an object. It is also important to represent with an object the invisible forces such as dynamics of feelings, for example, power, frustration, etc. Also, consider the distance between the constituent parts of the problem and the shape in the size of the objects.

If this is done in a physical place, a table can be placed so the team can have the flexibility to move around. In the case of facilitating it online, it is recommended one person guide, and another be the "hands" of what the team voices for the position of the objects. To sculpt the current reality, one needs to integrate the voices of all the participants in the team, and voice what each object represents. For this, it is recommended a facilitator guide the 3D modelling. The steps for the process can be found in the free toolkit of the u-school for Transformation.

Time: Around one hour and a half is needed for the mapping and reflection.

This includes the 10-20 minutes to map the sculpture.

Below is quoted the questions to reflect the sculpture from four different per-spectives: East, South, West and North. The process starts from the East (team members locate themselves on the East perspective), and the Facilitator can start reading the questions

"**1. EAST:** Feeling - What do you love in this sculpture that ignites your best energy? - What frustrates you?

2. SOUTH: Truth - What hard truths need to be spoken?

3. WEST: Reflection - What assumptions might be underlying this situation? - What systemic barriers lock us into the current state of operating?

4. NORTH: Purpose/Presence - What in this situation is ending, wanting to die, and what is emerging, wanting to be born? - If this sculpture could speak, what advice might it offer?"

Then, the team is given time to rearrange the sculpture to the current reality they want to see. It is important to remember the first step, what is the item or dynamic that, if removed or changed in position, will create a dramatic change within the sculpture?

Contributor:

Prototyping example:
Vivianna Rodriguez
Carreon

Then, allow time for a reflection to find out the differences between both model-lings. Finally, if the system requires a monumental change, what are the first steps that can be taken?

Click here to read References

Acting — WOOP

WOOP is short for wish, objectives, obstacles and plans and is a simple and research-based method for setting goals with something you want to achieve or experience.

It can help participants increase increase the probability that they will actually be able to achieve the goal that they set for themselves.

DIY   Facilitated

Primarily builds the following skills:
Courage, Optimism, Perseverance
Also develops these dimensions:

Thinking   **Relating**

Overview
WOOP is short for wish, objectives, obstacles and plans and is a simple and research-based method for setting goals with something you want to achieve or experience. It only takes a few minutes and only requires that you wholeheartedly try to focus on the task. You can do WOOP individually or with someone (for example, a coach, a colleague, a teammate, a leader, etc.).

How it can help: WOOP increases the probability that you will actually be able to achieve the goal that you set for yourself.

How to get started
When starting with WOOP for the first time, try the following:

1. Think of something you would like to achieve or experience in a given time, such as an upcoming meeting or the day ahead. For example, it could be something new that you would like to learn or an achievement of some kind that you would like to perform. Something that feels challenging but certainly not impossible. Write this down on a piece of paper.

2. Think about the positive feelings and consequences that would result from achieving what you would like to achieve, big or small. Write these down and then focus for a little while on the two or three things that would be the single best in achieving this.

3. Next, think about all the possible obstacles and problems that you can come up with that can make it difficult or prevent you from achieving what you want. Obstacles may lie with you (e.g. motivation problems, concentration difficulties, fatigue, illness). They can also lie outside of yourself (eg being misinformed, a colleague getting sick, bad weather). Write down all obstacles, big or small.

4. For each obstacle, think through what you can do to prevent it from happening and what you can do to deal with it should it happen. Write down each such plan on the paper as follows: "For _____ not to happen, I will _____ and if _____ happens, I will _____."

5. Read through what you have written and feel free to tell someone else about what you have written.

WOOP is short for wish, objectives, obstacles and plans and is a simple and research-based method for setting goals with something you want to achieve or experience and increasing the probability that you will actually be able to achieve this. WOOP is like taken from an instruction book for how to work on strengthening one's hope, the first characteristic of our psychological capital. You can do a WOOP pretty much as often as you want. It only takes a few minutes and only requires and put these minutes in and that you then wholeheartedly try to focus on the task.

You can do WOOP individually or with someone (for example, a coach, a colleague, a teammate, a leader, etc.). Doing it individually can be beneficial to have a paper and pen and write down your thoughts while you WOOP. In short, a WOOP works like this if you do it yourself:

1. Sit down and close your eyes. Breathe in through your nose while counting to four and then hold your breath while counting to four again. Release the air through your mouth without pushing it out. Think of yourself as a balloon that you release the air from. Count to eight as you exhale and then count to four before doing it all over again the same way. Do this five to ten times and feel how you relax.

2. Think of something you would like to achieve or experience in a given time, such as an upcoming meeting or the day ahead. For example, it could be something new that you would like to learn or an achievement of some kind that you would like to perform. Something that feels challenging but certainly not impossible. Write this down on a piece of paper.

3. Think about the positive feelings and consequences that would result from achieving what you would like to achieve, big or small. Write these down and then focus for a little while on the two or three things that would be the single best in achieving this. Feel free to say these out loud and circle them on your paper.

4. Next, think about all the possible obstacles and problems that you can come up with that can make it difficult or prevent you from achieving what you want. Obstacles may lie with you (e.g. motivation problems, concentration difficulties, fatigue, illness, etc.). They can also lie outside of yourself (eg being misinformed, a colleague getting sick, bad weather, etc.) Write down all the obstacles you can think of, big or small.

5. For each obstacle, think through what you can do to prevent it from happening and what you can do to deal with it should it happen. Write down each such plan on the paper as follows: "For _____ not to happen, I will _____ and if _____ happens, I will _____.

6. Read through what you have written and feel free to tell someone else about what you have written.

5.7 Applying the IDG framework in Leadership and Education

Beyond these examples of methods and practices that aim at developing the skills of the IDG framework, we also want to share a few examples on how these may be integrated in larger programs. These involve leadership programs as well as educational courses and programs, starting with the former. Previously in the publication we described results from our survey indicating that a transformational approach is needed to address sustainability issues. But how can this be approached in a leadership setting?

Leadership programs
To act is in itself an act of leadership. Anything and everything we do has an impact. Thus it is important to be intentional about the purpose of our actions, align our actions with that purpose, and develop skillful means for accomplishing the purpose. Leadership is thus essential to reaching any goals, whether inner development or the SDGs. Organizations spend hundreds of billions of dollars training people in it. There has been rapid growth in academic degree programs focused on it. Yet we are often still left frustrated by the leadership we experience.

Theoretical diversity around what leadership is has contributed to this frustration. Yet it is also because our expectations of others who are in positions to lead are idealistic and unrealistic projections of our own unfulfilled hopes. We neglect to include our own work, the need to develop ourselves to make progress on commonly held goals. Thus leadership is a two way street. It is not simply the job of people in positions of leadership to tell others what to do. Leadership is a team sport, where everyone needs to contribute. In other words, everybody is a leader, and in a context of sustainability, leadership means to support personal, collective and systems change and transformation.

In order to approach acting in this manner, the IDGs aim to include references to a number of programs that are implementing what is a key principle of leadership. This principle focuses on leadership as an act of creating a space for people who have direct ownership of the issues to enable them to develop their own capacity to act. This includes transformative leadership approaches, building on the work of James MacGregor Burns, Bernard Bass and others, that focus on raising the moral level of action by stakeholders.

It also includes Heifetz's adaptive leadership approach, where leadership is about going beyond management and authority and creating a holding environment that enables people to face their own work of questioning traditions, loyalties, values and mental models that have contributed to existing challenges. Enabling these inner changes is essential to making progress on difficult societal issues. While the programs described below could be categorised under the Acting dimension, they are in fact engaging all five IDG dimensions.

Qualities of Being, such as cultivating self-awareness, being able to have a clear presence, integrity and authenticity, an internal moral compass and a learning mindset are all well established as essential for leadership. Self leadership is often the most difficult to do, yet has the most impact for others if we can model how to change and at the same time link it to collective and systems change. Cognitive skills are also essential for leadership. In our knowledge driven economy, thinking tools are the main skills we need to succeed. Research has found that cognitive ability is the single most successful predictor of success when hiring. Research has also found that transformational change requires a complexity and maturity of cognitive skills that go beyond the complexity of the challenges facing organizations and society.

Yet being clever in itself is insufficient. Research on what leaders say about good leaders has shown that subject knowledge and task accomplishment by themselves are not what marks good leadership. It is the quality of relating, how leaders care for others and the world that distinguishes leadership. The five skills listed here are all found in the leadership literature.

At the same time, it is clear that all of these qualities are never found fully developed in one individual. Collaboration is absolutely essential to bringing together a diverse and robust set of qualities that are necessary for leading change. This is based on trust and relies on the ability to communicate, co-create and mobilize. As globalization has increased, it has also become more important to include intercultural competence so that our collaboration skills extend beyond our local social circles. All of this is implicitly necessary in acting. What distinguishes acting as an energy to drive change are the skills required to apply all of the above; courage, creativity, optimism and perseverance. While the programs described below do not explicitly describe this synthesis, they implicitly rely on how leadership develops and applies all of the Inner Development Goal dimensions and skills.

Radical transformational leadership approach: The conscious full-spectrum response framework is a theory of change that is linked to a three-step pedagogy aimed to connect personal, collective and systems transformation. In the context of climate change, it has been adapted and articulated as the three spheres of transformation. The goal is to generate lasting results by: i) sourcing internal human capacities for strategic action (within oneself and others); and ii) increasing integrity through blending internal and external dimensions in policymaking, planning and implementation. Its development was based on more than twenty years of work for the UN, particularly UNDP and other organisations, and it has been applied to many projects in fields such as HIV/ Aids, disaster recovery and food security. The three-step pedagogy involves operational tools and exercises that are aimed at: i) sourcing interior capacities; ii) designing to make a difference; and iii) practicing/ implementing new processes.

Climate leadership program BEYOND: BEYOND is a Climate and Environmental Leadership Programme, from the Awaris and its Inner Green Deal Initiative.

It aims to drive sustainability from within by supporting decision makers to cultivate mindfulness and compassion, develop new habits and collaborate with a common purpose. 100 leaders from the EU - including 40 from the European Parliament, Council and Commision - took part in the pilot programme, exploring both the inner dimension of sustainability qua mindfulness, compassion, values and beliefs, and outer aspects such as behaviour change, collaboration and workplace initiatives. A pilot study was conducted in 2021/22. According to preliminary findings, participants demonstrated:

- significant increase in nature connectedness;
- significant increase in climate agency (e.g. voting for environmental parties, signing petitions) and adaptation behaviour (taking measures to prepare for climate impacts);
- clear links between compassion and pro-environmental behaviour;
- increased integration of sustainability concerns into work, such as budget al locations, human resource allocation, internal working structures and stake holder relationships;
- significant increase in well-being; and
- significant reduction in climate anxiety.

The programme has received widespread recognition. The EU's training Institute EUSA funded the development and launch of a new series of programmes for management across EU Institutions.

The Work That Reconnects: Mainstream sustainability discourse has only recently begun to recognise the inner dimension of the climate crisis, underpinned by disconnection. However, some practitioners and pioneers have spent decades exploring this issue and developing interventions that can help participants develop a sense of interconnection. Chief amongst these is Joanna Macy, a scholar of systems theory, who in the 1970's began to develop a visionary approach to social change based upon deep understanding of interdependencies. According to Macy, experiencing our interconnection allows us to develop awareness of our 'deep ecology' and realise the potential we have to make a difference in the world, which in turn engages us in appropriate behavioural response to the realities we face.

She developed these ideas into a programme called The Work That Reconnects, popularised through books including Coming Back to Life and Active Hope. Based on this work, experiential workshops and courses have been delivered to many thousands of people for several decades. The programme's four stages resonate with many of the principles in this report. Participants engage in practices to resource themselves before turning towards the fear and pain associated with global realities, developing the ability to 'see with new eyes' the interconnection of all phenomena before mobilising practical applications through relevant action. Empirical testing of the programme is still in its early stages, but pilot studies have shown it to be engaging and popular. More recently the meditation-based six week programme Integrated Action has further integrated mindfulness and compassion-based approaches with Macy's frameworks.

Educational programs and courses

Similarly as with leadership, we now turn our eyes towards educational settings. Transformational learning steps beyond the bounds of traditional education which teaches skills and transmits knowledge. Transformational learning invites whole-person engagement through intellectual as well as experiential and applied work, fostering the expansion of awareness and the transformation of worldviews and perspectives. Transformational learning programmes engage students in multi-disciplinary inquiry, providing opportunities for personal, embodied, emotional, relational and spiritual self-search. A transformational learning process can fundamentally alter our self-image and our values, as well as how we perceive the world and others around us.

Transformational learning programmes tend to be informed by participatory forms of pedagogy and curriculum development. Students are learning partners and help shape the learning journey through their ongoing experiential engagement with programme content. Educators work as facilitators, creating safe spaces for reflection and discernment, thereby fostering critical engagement with both theory and practice.

At the heart of transformational learning processes is a revolution of our personal meaning structures (or predispositions) which shape the horizons of our expectations. Transformational learning programmes enable questioning of personal beliefs and value systems by offering transdisciplinary perspectives as well as expanded, integrative epistemologies which enable new forms of meaning-making.

"The 'Sustainability and Inner Transformation' course is part of a Master's Program on 'Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science' (LUMES) offered by Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS) in Sweden. It runs annually over a period of three months. The course includes a series of lectures, seminars, councils and a practice lab that are intended to explore the role of inner dimensions (i.e. individual and collective values, beliefs, worldviews and associated cognitive, emotional and relational capacities) to support collective and systems transformation toward sustainability. Issues such as integrated climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, environmental leadership, activism, social justice, indigenous knowledge, and human–nature connections are addressed. Knowledge, tools and practices from sustainability science, social neuroscience, psychology, behavioural economics, contemplative studies and transformation theories are systematically integrated. As a results, scientific studies have shown the course's relevance for nurturing transformative capacities (or so-called inner development goals), inner-outer transformation and the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

Websites: Related Master Program **LUMES**, Course webpage, **Syllabus**, related information on education activities of the Contemplative Sustainable Futures Program. Scientific and popular science publications about the course **here**. Course on 'The inner dimension of sustainability: the role of values, emotions and world views'.

In this short course at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (Austria), interested students can explore the inner dimension of sustainability both on the theoretical and practical level. During two theory lessons they examine various concepts at the interface of inner development and sustainability (e.g. values, ecological mindfulness, subjective wellbeing, human-nature-connection, etc.) and critically reflect on their contribution to sustainable development. In the experimental week, which they design a transformative learning process, they use various methods and exercises aiming at reflecting one´s own values, emotions and worldviews

Decolonial Systems Thinking & Resilience Courses. The Waterloo Institute for Social Innovation and Resilience (WISIR) offers a series of senior undergraduate and graduate seminar and professional development courses that help to foster the capacities for inner depth work and cross-cultural capabilities for broad, systemic change. Through decolonial practices and methodologies, these courses support the cultivation of new skills and capacities required for sustainability transformations. These courses, as well as those offered in partnership between the University of Waterloo and the Haida Gwaii Institute (University of British Columbia), are either co-taught with an Indigenous Knowledge Holder (Elder) or with direct support from members of local Indigenous communities. Indigenous knowledge holders offer their teachings to help students unlearn colonial mindsets and explore new ways of seeing and being in the world.

Contributor:

Christine Wamsler,
Jonathan Reams

Through these traditional practices and teachings, students foster inner capacities that support their development as sustainable change agents. These unique courses are profoundly different yet complementary to conventional university programs. By promoting cross-cultural understandings of challenges to systems transformation, these hybridized pedagogies help elucidate and ground complexity in real world applications and interrupt patterns of unsustainability. Drawing from theories including resilience, complexity, social innovation, transsystemics, and systems change, these courses support sustainability progress by bridging the inner and outer dimension of systems transformations.

Click here to read References

Chapter 6

Discussion

We would like to conclude this publication with a discussion of the boundaries of our scope and how the toolkit and this whole publication can contribute to more sustainable pathways into the future.

The fields of inner development and sustainability are both extremely broad and complex, and we attempt here to provide an overview of the evolution of one, describe it and link it to the other. This is a task that we can only describe as challenging. And it entails that we are – inevitably – prone to various simplifications and different forms of prejudice about what we do. In the following, we would like to discuss the simplifications and blind spots that we are aware of. It may well be that as you read this section you think: but there is another blind spot that has been overlooked. If that is the case, we would be pleased.

A first blind spot is the focus on the Western or Modern world. The majority of survey participants, contributing scientists and both authors of this report are from Western countries. To some extent, we have tried to include perspectives from the so-called Global South and from independent cultures. In the context of the IDG perspective, this will be further addressed in the third phase of the project. Our bias is evident in the choice of methods included in the toolkit, but also in the way the toolkit is organised and presented. Even though the main target audience of this publication is change agents in organisations, who again probably represent mainly a Western audience, we hope that the publication can also be read in other cultures and contexts and serve as a source of inspiration.

Another bias lies in the IDG framework itself, which has its own blind spots. One criterion for selecting practices is that they should be relevant to IDG skills and dimensions. As a result, we have probably overlooked many practices that target other aspects of inner development or sustainability. For obvious reasons, there are individual needs and preferences that you as readers and practitioners should take into account. In any case, we believe that there is no single method that works for everyone. It should also be noted that the methods selected have been developed and discussed primarily by researchers rather than practitioners with experience in the field. As researchers, we tend to focus on what has been proven to work, rather than what has been proven successful and useful in practice. After all, if a method has been proven to work, how can it be that practice leads to different results? We would like to point out that proof is only as good as the way that made it possible to derive a certain result. Researchers are trained to produce evidence, so they are good at it. And they too have blind spots. To get to the bottom of at least some of our own blind spots in this context, we talked to several practitioners who have decades of experience in what works in practice in developing leaders for sustainability in different sectors. Although this publication aims at bringing research around inner development into practice, there is still a need to inform research about practice in a similar manner.

In this context, we would also like to point out that the choice of methods is also not the result of a systematic literature review in the field of inner development. The survey was our main source of data, followed by suggestions and proposals from the scientific advisory board. The interviews with practitioners served primarily to prepare the survey as well as to deepen individual aspects on the way from the evaluation of the data to this publication. The review of the entire field of inner development methods has so far been outside the scope of this project and this initiative. We see this publication primarily as a way to generate interest

in exploring our inner world and how it relates to sustainability and to enter into a dialogue about it. What we do not want to do here is to give clear answers to the question of how we can promote inner development in order to better address specific issues of sustainability yet. Because there is still a long way to go. We are not there yet, and we also question whether it would even be desirable to narrow down the issue of inner development to the achievement of a specific goal. In the introduction to this publication, we outlined a theory of change that can be summarised as follows:

We want to raise awareness of the inner dimension in relation to addressing sustainability issues. We also take a developmental perspective on our inner worlds, individually and collectively, which means that inner capacities and qualities can be developed. We assume that if we apply these methods, interventions and practices, we will be better able to deal with the challenges ahead. What challenges these are in detail and concretely remains open for us. This question could only be answered if it were clarified what the term sustainability actually means and what the respective individual or collective relationship to it is or could be. The latter, in turn, cannot be answered in general terms, but is part of our individual and collective journey. That is the basic idea, and we hope that this toolkit and this publication can offer some steps in that direction

As we said, we do not yet have sufficient evidence of how we get from the inner to the outer and how we best integrate it, thus how we get from the IDGs to the SDGs. Whereas for some of the methods described in the toolkit, we do indeed already have such evidence, both for developing certain IDG skills and qualities and for promoting the implementation of the SDGs. But there are still many gaps to be bridged. So, although some methodologies show this linkage, the broad areas of internal development and sustainability are far from being connected. This is the main reason why this task will be further explored in the coming phases of the IDG project. We wish that all those dealing with these or similar issues would proceed mindfully, in fact, perhaps we should not make this chain too strong in the first place (although we do not mean to say that it would not be desirable to explore the connections. On the contrary, it is about time, otherwise we would not have engaged in the IDG initiative). However: both inner development and sustainability are still far from being well understood and mapped.

In terms of future work, we are now looking forward to implementing, testing and getting feedback on this toolkit in different contexts and environments. Here we aim to approach the IDG framework from a psychometric perspective to explore which skills that allow themselves to be measured so that methods and interventions can be evaluated. We therefore hope that you will be inspired by the publication and the toolkit, find interest in it and engage in your own inner development and that of others. We wish you an interesting journey and would like to ask you for a favour in conclusion: If you are on this journey with us, please share your insights and experiences in various forms and forums. We invite you to do this even if you don't agree with everything we write here, although it is important to us that we treat each other with respect always.We hope that our paths will cross even if we find ourselves growing in different directions.

Chapter 7

Appendix

7.1 References and Resources

Being — Mindfulness Practices

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Being — ACT (Acceptance Commitment Therapy/Training)

ACT is a non-profit, co-created open source initiative dedicated to the alleviation of human suffering and the advancement of human well-being through research and practice grounded. There are several ACT self-help-books, courses and trainings for professionals available. A quick search on the Internet will take you far. The official site for resources and more information and ACT can be found here: https://contextualscience.org/ Explore books and digital resources where you can learn ACT or train ACT. For example, the non-profit platform 29k.org that has several free ACT courses and exercises.

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Acting — Arts, Creativity & Imagination

Cardboard Citizens, UK: An innovative arts organisation dedicated to addressing social inequities and injustices though creative practice https://cardboardcitizens.org.uk/

Collective Encounters, UK: A leading arts organisation specialising in theatre for social change https://collective-encounters.org.uk/

Creative Health: A summary of the latest literature from the UK, including clinical and community research studies:

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Creativity & Transformation: A 10-week online learning course, exploring how creativity engenders inner development and social change
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Institute for Medical Humanities: An example of interdisciplinary practice and research involving the arts in medicine:
https://www.dur.ac.uk/imh/
Contributor: Jessica Bockler

Acting — Theory U for Group Work and Prototyping

Case Clinic Coaching Circles: https://www.u-school.org/case-clinic
Contributors Theory U: Vivianna Rodriguez Carreon
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Dialogue Interview: https://www.u-school.org/dialogue-interview
Guided Journaling: https://www.u-school.org/journaling
Presencing institute: https://www.u-school.org/
Prototyping: https://www.u-school.org/prototyping
Sensing Journeys: https://www.u-school.org/sensing-journeys
Scribing: https://www.u-school.org/visual-practice
Social Presencing Theater: https://www.u-school.org/spt
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7.2 List of Partner Organisations of the IDG-Initiative

Here follows a list of partner organisations, contributors and collaborators, whose support and input we gratefully acknowledge.

Contributing partners (companies)
Baker & Mckenzie, Burren College of Art, Cati och Sven Hagströmers stiftelse, Close, Doings, Electrolux, Ericsson, Explayn, Fundación Melior, Google, Granitor, Haufe Akademie, Howspace, Husqvarna, Icebug, IKEA, Institut für Praktishe Emergenz, Jung Relations, Linden Gruppen, Mannaz, OX2, Soceity Beyond, Spotify, Stena, Telia Company, Tenant & Partner, V3VO / Growloop

Supporting partners
ASHOKA, AWARIS / Inner Green Deal, Berghs School of Communication, CAD-RA, Houdini, Howspace, The Inner Foundation, MindShift Sweden, Motivation.se, Presencing Institute, Region Stockholm, The Inner Foundation, UNPD - CoFSA, World Human Forum, Shomei

Academic Partners
DTU/Technical University of Denmark, Göteborg University, Harvard University, Human Flourishing Program, Learning Planet Institut, Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies - LUCSUS, Rotterdam School of Management Erasmus, Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm School of Economics - Executive Education, Stockholm University

Initiating Partners
The New Division, 29K Foundation, Ekskäret Foundation

7.3 The Scientific Advisory Board and other Contributors

The persons listed below have contributed significantly along the process of developing this toolkit and publication. Their listing here does of course not imply that each person approves of every detail in the IDG framework and publication.

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7.4 The IDG Initiative is Collaborating with the CADRA Project

CADRA is a project funded by the European Union through the Erasmus + education programme. The project focuses on the theme of adult education. The programme started in December 2020 and will end on 31 August 2023. The acronym CADRA stands for: Cognitive Adult Development from Research to Application. Within the framework of the project, six organisations have joined forces over the three-year period to jointly make the topics of inner development and adult development accessible to a wider circle audience.

These organisations are (listed in alphabetical order)

Eskäret Foundation (www.ekskaretfoundation.com), Sweden
Permakulturpark Steyerberg GmbH (www.permakulturpark.de), Germany
Possert KG (www.possert.at), Austria
Pro action learning Ltd (now named Fraendi, (www.//fraendi.org), Liechtenstein, lead partner of the CADRA project
Tripl bv, Netherlands
World changers & co, UK

The specific goal of CADRA is to equip political and business leaders as well as non-profit organisations with development practices that enable them to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex world and thus also accelerate the transformation towards a more sustainable world and peaceful coexistence

Find out more about the CADRA here: https://fraendi.org/cadra/

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