

Understanding Hartman Value Profile

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Hartman Value Profile - How, what, and why do we and should we value?

The science of formal axiology, developed by Robert S. Hartman, provides rational answers to many of our questions about human values. Our values are the keys to our personalities, to self-knowledge, and to understanding others. The Hartman Value Profile unveils our values and our personalities. This Profile is immensely useful in psychology, counseling, psychotherapy, business consulting, employer-employee relations, ethics, religion, and everywhere that values matter.

The Hartman Value Profile (HVP) is structured according to the hierarchy of values later published in Hartman's *The Structure of Value*. The HVP is an axiological inventory that measures a person's capacity to make value judgments about the world and one's self. Items on the HVP are randomly ordered. Those who take it must rank-order these items according to their own system of values.

It consists of two parts. Part 1 is a list of 18 items pertaining to the world, and part 2 consists of 18 phrases related to the self. The "self" part concentrates on one's work. To complete the HVP, a person is asked to rank the items in Part 1 from best to worst and the phrases in Part 2 from most agree to least agree, as applied to oneself. The results reflect an individual's own preferences, which are measured against the objective scale given by formal axiology. Measurement is very precise, yet practically it allows and accounts for an almost infinite variety of personalities.

The results of the HVP are derived from logical or mathematical norms. They are not based statistically on the values of any specific population or group. It is not a "test" to be passed or failed. The results have no biases with respect to gender, age, race, creed, or any other socio-cultural classification. Honest ranking is the best approach for obtaining accurate results.

Excerpts from “Knowing Patients through their Values”

<https://www.hartmaninstitute.org/knownpatientssthroughtheirvalues/>

Three Basic Kinds or Dimensions of Human Values and evaluations

Not all human values and evaluations are exactly alike or on a par. Philosophers and others have traditionally recognized at least two basic kinds of value objects, intrinsic values and extrinsic values; and Robert S. Hartman recognized and identified a neglected (but still pervasive) third kind of value object, systemic values. Hartman also identified normal or normative human responses to or evaluations of these value objects.

Hartman made an important and illuminating distinction between *what we value*—values or value objects, and *how we value*—valuations. We should try to be as clear as possible about the differences between values (what we value) and evaluations (how we value), and we can profit from what Hartman had to say about such things.

Three Kinds of Good or Valuable Things—Value Objects (*What We Value*)

If we ask, “What things are good?,” we must recognize at least three basic kinds or dimensions of goodness or value. As identified by Hartman, the three elemental kinds of valuable things are:

(1) *Systemic Values*, (S): conceptual constructs that exist in our minds.

Examples: definitions, ideas, concepts, ideals, norms, standards, rules, beliefs, truths, doctrines, musical notations, mathematical and logical systems, and the like.

(2) *Extrinsic Values*, (E): tangible things, processes, actions, or roles located and observable in our common world of space and time that are actual or potential means to ends.

Examples: physical objects and processes, bodies, books, houses, cars, human actions and behaviors, and social relations, roles, and conventions, social groups, and established institutions.

(3) *Intrinsic Values*, (I): things that have value in, of, and for themselves; things that should be evaluated intrinsically because they are ends in themselves, desirable or valuable for their own sakes.

Examples: unique centers of conscious experience, choice, thought, and evaluation such as human persons, non-human animals, and God – according to Hartman. Other philosophers suggest that the pleasures of human connection, the enjoyment of beautiful objects, knowledge and/or its pursuit, pleasure or happiness as such, freedom, dutifulness, desire fulfillment, etc., are intrinsically good; but such things exist only within the lives of those unique conscious individuals (like us) who exist *for* themselves. They are good-making properties that enrich the lives of unique conscious individuals.

Three Kinds of Valuation (*How We Value*)

From the very beginning, people have attached value to things in many different ways. All evaluations include cognitive or mental elements, i.e., value standards or concepts by which objects of value are measured. Evaluations involve cognitive judgments by persons about objects of value, judgments that valued objects measure up to standards, or that they fail to do so to some degree. The good ones measure up; the fair, average, poor, and bad ones do not, or they do so only by degrees. Evaluation also includes feelings, affections, emotions, and desires that range on a continuum from minimal (systemic), through ordinary (extrinsic), to maximal (intrinsic) personal involvement.

(1) *Systemic Valuations*, (S): dispassionate, “objective,” or “cold and calculating” feelings and judgments, as well as black or white, all or nothing, oversimplifying judgments.

Examples: “ $2 + 2 = 4$ ”

“This session will end at 10:35 a.m.”

“If you are not for me, you are against me.”

(2) *Extrinsic Valuations*, (E): commonplace feelings, role involvements, practical motives, activities, and judgments.

Examples: ordinary everyday practical feelings, likes and dislikes, emotions, appetites, needs, and interests, practical actions and vocations, fulfilling social-role expectations, practical value judgments, classifications, and comparisons.

(3) *Intrinsic Valuations*, (I): complete self-identification with valued objects; intense personal involvement with, concentration upon, or investment in value objects; judgments of identification, totality, wholeness, and uniqueness. This kind of evaluation includes all the ways in which conscious individuals like us combine or unite ourselves totally, intensely, and passionately, (either positively or negatively), with objects of evaluation, so that distinctions between self and valued-other cease to matter or to be noticed, and “the subject/object distinction” is overcome or overwhelmed psychologically and valuationally.

Examples: profound love and empathy, intense delight and joy, conscience, creativity, deep religious devotion, and mystical union.

Without going into it in detail, negative systemic, extrinsic, and intrinsic disvalues and disvaluations, the opposites of the preceding positive values and valuations, must also be recognized. Also, anything can be evaluated in any dimension, as when some people relate only with detachment to other people, or treat other people as mere things, or relate with total intrinsic devotion and self-identification to material possessions or to ideological dogmas.

“Better than” and the Hierarchy of Values and Valuations

Hartman offered a formal definition of “better” to complement his formal definition of “good.” He wrote that “‘Richer in qualities’ is the definition of ‘better,’ ‘poorer in qualities’ is the definition of ‘worse’” (Hartman, 1967, p. 114). For clarity, we find it helpful to add “good-making” to this definition, especially since so many philosophers now use this terminology. Let’s define “better than” as “having more good-making properties than.” Given that definition, we can then ask if any of the above three dimensions of value and evaluation are better than any of the others. The answer is definitely affirmative.

Hartman’s “Hierarchy of Value” affirms that *intrinsic values are better than extrinsic values, and extrinsic values are better than systemic values*. Given this formal definition of “better than,” *intrinsic values have more good-making properties than extrinsic values, and extrinsic values have more good-making properties than systemic values*. In application, this means that *people have more good-making properties than mere things, and real things and people have more good-making properties than mere ideas of things or of people*. Our value priorities, our hierarchy of value, should thus put people first, things second, and ideas of or about people and things third. Many if not most serious human moral problems arise from assuming that people are less valuable than things or beliefs, or from valuing only a few people intrinsically but not everyone.

Robert S. Hartman realized that systemic, extrinsic, and intrinsic values and valuations can be combined with one another in many different ways, that some of these combinations enhance or increase value (e.g., milk chocolate and nuts), and that other combinations decrease, degrade, or destroy value (e.g., milk chocolate and motor oil).

Individual persons will actually rank the eighteen items in the assessment from “best” to “worst” in an incredibly diverse number of ways, but just how they rank them discloses their most basic personality structures and value systems. In each paired value combination item, one value or evaluation either enhances or diminishes overall value when it is combined with the other value. For example, in the item “Love of nature”, intrinsic loving enhances the value of extrinsic nature. The item “My work makes me unhappy,” disvalued extrinsic work diminishes the value of an intrinsic “me” or person.

The scales of the HVP most directly measure a person’s overall value sensitivity, including his or her abilities to distinguish between different kinds of value, to have a sense of proportion about them, to see and solve value problems, to distinguish between good and bad, and to discern, differentiate between, and prioritize values in individuals, in the world, and in systems (Hartman, 1973, pp. 1-2). In turn, all of these value capacities can be and in fact are with good evidence correlated with a vast array of personality and behavioral traits. Hartman himself did it originally through his own profound personal knowledge of and insight into human nature and individuals, as expressed in both his theory of values in the *Structure of Value* (Hartman, 1967) and in his *Manual of Interpretation* (Hartman, 1973).