

# Playbook und Modell für interkulturelle Mentoring-Beziehungen

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## **Kurzreferat:**

# **Playbook und Modell für interkulturelle Mentoring-Beziehungen**

Mentoring wird traditionell als unterstützende Beziehung zwischen einer (zumindest in einem Teilbereich) weniger erfahrenen und erfahreneren Person gesehen, wobei sich die Inhalte und Zielsetzungen je nach Kontext und beteiligter Personen unterscheiden. Es wird im englischsprachigen Umfeld schon seit vielen Jahren praktiziert und gewinnt im europäischen und auch deutschsprachigen Bereich zunehmend an Popularität.

Ausgehend von meiner eigenen Tätigkeit und Erfahrung als Mentorin für zwei Teams von jungen ostafrikanischen Sozialunternehmern, bin ich der Frage nachgegangen, wie sich interkulturelle Mentoring-Beziehungen durch Design unterstützen und wie sich eine gestaltete Intervention drei weitere Ziele auf dem Weg erreichen lassen – die beidseitige Lernerfahrung reichhaltig gestalten; das Soziale Kapital (Social Capital) beider, des Mentees und Mentors, erhöhen und diversifizieren; und die Wertschätzung für Vielfalt, über die Beziehung hinaus, steigern.

Durch die verstärkte Migration, z.B. bedingt durch den Fachkräftemangel und berufliche Mobilität ganz allgemein, sowie die Internationalisierung von Unternehmen, sehe ich Bedarf für eine Lösung. Forschungsergebnisse von Voigt (2013) denen nach Mentoring in deutschen Tech-Unternehmen eher als „Anpassungsinstrument“ eingesetzt wird, und damit Potentiale, die durch Zusammentreffen von Menschen unterschiedlicher Hintergründe entstehen, vernachlässigt werden, haben mich zusätzlich in meiner Annahme bestätigt.

Neben extensiver Literaturrecherche, Expert:innen-Interviews, diversen Erhebungen zur Einschätzung von Mentoring und Diversität bzw. der Zusammenarbeit von Menschen diverser kultureller Hintergründe, habe ich außerdem eigene Erfahrungen per Selbstethnografie erfasst. Die resultierenden Erkenntnisse, sind in Übungen bzw. Werkzeuge und ein Spiral-Model für Interkulturelle Mentoring-Beziehungen eingeflossen.

Zusammen mit Information zu den Themen Mentoring, Kultur und Lernen, wurden diese in einem Mentoring Playbook zusammengestellt. Diversität und die daraus entstehenden Potentiale wurden konsequent auch in die Gestaltung einbezogen, u. a. durch die Zusammenarbeit mit Gestalter:innen aus vier verschiedenen Ländern.

## **Abstract**

### **Playbook and model for intercultural mentoring relationships**

Mentoring is traditionally seen as a supportive relationship between a less experienced (at least in a sub-area) and a more experienced person. The content and objectives can differ depending on the context and the persons involved. Mentoring has been practised in the English-speaking environment for many years and is gaining increasing popularity in European and also German-speaking areas.

Drawing on my own work and experience as a mentor to two teams of young East African social entrepreneurs, I have explored the question of how intercultural mentoring relationships can be supported by design and how a designed intervention can achieve three additional goals – enrich the mutual learning experience; increase and diversify the social capital of both mentee and mentor; and increase appreciation of diversity, even beyond the relationship.

With rising migration, e.g., due to the shortage of skilled workers, and professional mobility in general, as well as the internationalisation of companies, I see a need for a solution. Research results by Voigt (2013), according to which mentoring in German tech companies tends to be used as an „adaptation tool“, and thus potentials that arise through the collaboration between people of different backgrounds are neglected, have additionally confirmed my assumption.

In addition to extensive literature research, interviews with experts, various surveys on mentoring and diversity and the cooperation of people coming from diverse cultural backgrounds, I also recorded my own experiences via self-ethnography. The resulting findings have been incorporated into exercises and tools and a spiral model for intercultural mentoring relationships. Together with information on topics such as mentoring, culture and learning, these were compiled in a mentoring playbook. Diversity and the resulting potentials were also consistently included in the design, for instance through cooperation with designers from four different countries.

This Playbook is part of my thesis, written in the master's programme at the University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg.

## List of Tools

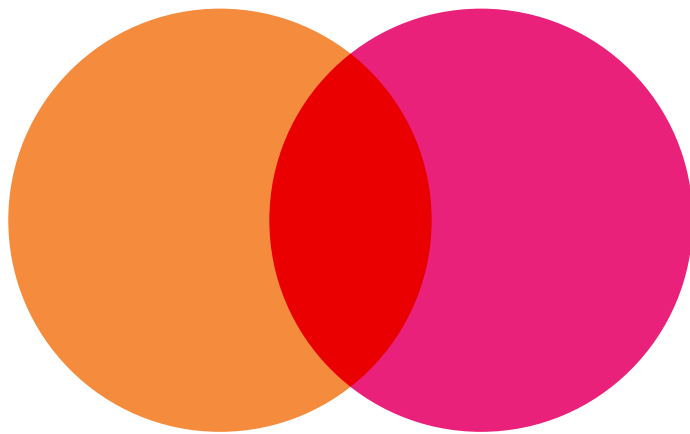
- 46-63 Mentoring Canvas
- 64-73 Mentoring Itinerary – Goals Worksheets
- 78-89 Story Worksheets
- 98-109 Value Worksheets
- 128-129 Network Worksheet





Intercultural Mentoring Playbook

Karin Bleiweiss, BA



[www.mio.community](http://www.mio.community)

This Playbook is dedicated to my own mentees and mentors...

- ... and to all those who believe in the power of human connections and that they can be the source of (infinite) learning and growth.
  - ... those who see similarities in differences and otherness as an inspiration and possible learning opportunity.
  - ... those who embrace diversity as stimulating.
  - ... those who believe that tomorrow can be better than yesterday.
  - ... and those who believe in the kindness of strangers.
- ... and to all those who want to learn all of the above.

# The power of door openers and bridge builders

*My motivation to deal with the topic of "mentoring", to address "intercultural mentoring" in particular and to look at it from a design perspective, as part of my master thesis is manifold. It is shaped by my own experiences – as a mentee and mentor – by those of many international friends and colleagues, by reports and research findings on mentoring, diversity and mobility in education and the economy.*

I feel blessed in many ways. I come from a middle class Austrian background and although I grew up in the countryside, in a rather culturally homogeneous environment, I was able to study, work and travel abroad at a quite early age. My parents believed in the power of education and supported all their children in finding their own unique path and the right education or career, one that they were passionate about and that matched their interests, talents and values. A much bigger part of our education though involved learning from someone, from role models, by demonstrating skills and approaches and living them, and through stories in which people shared their experiences. The skills I developed through this kind of social learning have proved invaluable throughout my life, but especially in times of crisis.

I "inherited" not only the love of learning and education, the belief that these change our perspective on life and the opportunities we get in it, but also relationships, social capital. There was always someone who knew someone who could help in the end.

My passion for technology and the new possibilities of (information) technology was awakened at a young age, at a time when it was not common for young women to enter this field. People back then told me all kind of things why becoming an engineer wasn't possible – from my height and weight, to my well developed social and creative skills, that they saw as hindrance on the way.

It was through mentors that I could ultimately follow my dream and pursue a successful career in telecommunications. They acted as door openers, offered encouragement, sometimes protection, supported in my personal and professional development and made it possible for my "voice" to be heard. To some of my professors and colleagues in the late 1990s and early 2000s, I must have felt like an alien, a stranger. They were teaching and working in rather homogeneous mostly male groups for years. I didn't look like them, had some different interest and values and didn't fit into their image in many ways – the image of a women's place in society, the image of an engineer, etc.

Unfortunately social capital got a bad wrap in Austria during the last years (called vitamin "B", "B" standing for "Beziehung", relationship), because of some misconception, but also misuse of people in power.

Like in my case, and the one of women who enter into formerly male dominated fields or the one of people who belong in one way or another to a minority, contacts and social capital didn't mean that we got our stuff sorted out for us. My experience matches with the stories of migrants who "made it" in their new home country. They had drive, ambition, skills, a wonderful personality, often great college or university degrees, worked hard. They had the skills and potential but (structural) obstacles were in the way. And these contacts just helped to get seen and heard, they open a door to a room, so you could speak for yourself.



Getting heard in all the before mentioned cases, also meant that people were able to share their dreams, their goals, their obstacles, their concerns and with the support of the person or group, who cared about them, and work towards or through them. Getting heard also means being able to share your skills, to contribute to the success of a company, to the well-being of a community, etc.

Social capital is so valuable, especially to people with migration history, or minorities, because it helps to get access to information, about job openings, about required skills, about new opportunities, about how things are done in a specific area, and so on. For me mentors are not only door openers, cheerleaders or supporters, they are also bridge builders, between people but also towards a future one could never imagine by themselves. [see 31,32]

Mentors, teachers, neighbours further helped to decode some aspects of the culture (the geographical one, but also the corporate culture or even that of a particular professional field). They are like tour guides if you are not yet familiar with a new area (or a new country) and speak the language. (Languages can differ significantly even between different professions and hierarchical levels. I can attest to that from my own experience. I started as a telecommunication engineer in a perceived start-up, went into technical marketing in an established international company, later into the cultural sector and then to education).

The mentoring philosophy underlying this book is one of mutual support, in which mentee and mentor develop over the course of the relationship, and one that follows a humanistic, holistic approach rather than a purely performance-oriented one. The goal is to develop as a whole person.

I define mentoring as a reciprocal, transformative learning and development relationship in which the roles between mentor(s) and mentee(s) can change at times (e.g., because the mentee is more skilled in an area or knows more about a topic, similar to "reverse mentoring").

The relationship itself, as well as the protagonists, go through a development process. Together, they define goals, desired outcomes and their collaboration culture. Goals of the process can concern both professional and personal development. Through the trust built up in the course of the relationship, it becomes more personal and the learning success more sustainable.

The mentoring that this book seeks to promote is one that takes time and care, and a willingness on both sides to self-reflect – on their own strategies, journey, goals, values, and culture.

Throughout the book you will find references to traveling, I will use the travel analogy a lot. It is not just because I love exploring and have met some of the most amazing people on the road and had some life changing encounters. It has many more reasons, that make it a very suitable analogy for intercultural mentoring.

Most of us love traveling, we tend to be more open during our vacation and willing to explore new flavours, lifestyles and ways of thinking. We are also often more open towards people.

In addition we can choose different traveling styles. All-inclusive, where we mainly follows the tour guide who takes care of everything for us and provides us with trivia and information about the highlights of the country we are visiting and its culture. The experience can be pleasant, but we don't immerse ourselves much in the culture, we might try some local food, get in touch with some locals, but mostly we stick to what we already know.

The second option is a mix of guided tour and exploring on our own, the tour guide may take care of basic needs like food, accommodation and transportation, give some insights but also lets us explore the culture on our own. We make own experiences and have new encounters, make new acquaintances, but still have our travel group, our in-group, that provides a feeling of familiarity, allows us to speak in a shared language and share delights and frustration.

The third option is more of an explorer style, an independent one. All the organisation and the route planning is with the traveller. She or he needs to gather information by themselves, learn whom to trust and how to express themselves. It might be the most challenging and demanding one, but might also lead to encounters and experiences that wouldn't have been possible in the first two. Through the connection with the locals and getting more involved in local communities, the traveller might better understand the culture and also understand interconnectedness and one's own impact. She or he might then also be able to appreciate and contribute to the country and communities differently.

The rather simplified explanation of different travel styles reflects the human development in a living, open system – from dependency, independency to interdependency. [see 27]

This transformation not only happens during adolescence, but whenever a person enters a new system – like a new country, a new company, a new professional field.

Further, traveling sometimes allows us, to discover new preferences or values, new skills and new ways of living and operating in this world. It transforms us, the more profound the travel experience the deeper and more sustainable the transformation.

All the before mentioned are elements that are part of a great mentoring relationship and journey.

During the research part of my thesis, I observed also what kind of books people like to interact with when they come to my place. It were mostly travel guides or books about travel experiences, and my collection of international cook books. So this Playbook is inspired by those and by playbooks that support in building a start-up or in the development of a new idea or innovation.

I also feel blessed because for many years I was able to maintain an almost childlike curiosity and an open-minded attitude – the more a person was different from me, the more interesting and attractive they seemed and the more worthwhile it was to get to know them. This allowed me to meet, work with, and become friends with people from different cultures and walks of life.

I talk to some on a regular basis, and to others only on special occasions. But especially during the work on this book, in the middle of the worldwide Corona crisis, it became clear how invaluable they are. People I had just spend time with for a few days, answered questionnaires, gave interviews, connected me with other.

I would like to use the opportunity to thank all those kind once strangers.

With the Playbook, I invite you to adopt an "explorer mindset", the attitude and mindset of an discoverer or explorer, and to get immersed in what is possible and what emerges in and from the encounter of the most diverse people.

Have a great journey!



” (...) the topic of different cultural/ethnic affiliations is almost systematically excluded from the mentoring relationship by both sides.

The mentors justify this either by saying that cultural/ethnic diversity generally does not have an impact within mentoring relationships, or by saying that it does have an impact on the mentoring relationship, but they did not address it within the relationship because it was not important.

The mentees, on the other hand, justify the hiding of cultural/ethnic difference by the fact that they have excluded the topic out of fear and uncertainty about how their mentor would react to it, or by the fact that their cultural/ethnic identity has no meaning for them personally.



"Based on the arguments of mentors and mentees, it can be seen that cultural/ethnic differences are negated or only marginally addressed within the mentoring relationship, even if mentors and mentees partially assume that they have an impact within the mentoring relationship. This paradox can be explained by the fact that a high pressure to assimilate is exerted on the cultural/ethnic minority, the mentors adopt only a minimally self-reflective attitude towards their own culture/ethnicity, and at the same time persist in well-established or -rehearsed knowledge and action routines within the mentoring relationship. The mentees are thus expected to adapt to the cultural/ethnic majority even before the mentoring relationship begins. For the most part, the mentees have internalised this so strongly that they completely deny their cultural/ethnic identity within the mentoring relationship. (...) almost all conflicts and misunderstandings that have arisen within the mentoring relationship are systematically excluded from the mentoring relationship instead of perceiving them as learning opportunities for mentor and mentee. (...) intercultural mentorships function more as instruments for adaptation than as tools to support cultural/ethnic diversification in the company. The mentees rather adopt the informal rules and practices that they receive through the mentors than develop their own strategies." [37]

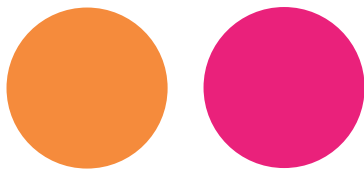
The quotes on the left and above are excerpts from a book by Viola Voigt, who studied mentoring programs and relationships in a number of German tech companies.

Her work contributed to the direction of mine. While it was positive to read that companies are adopting mentoring and have apparently recognized its positive impact. However, they are in denial about the cultural difference and thus also wasting the potential of diversity. What this type of mentoring does is create "mini-mes," at least of the professional personality – copies of the mentor that mimic their thinking, approaches, and strategies, just with a different look and background.

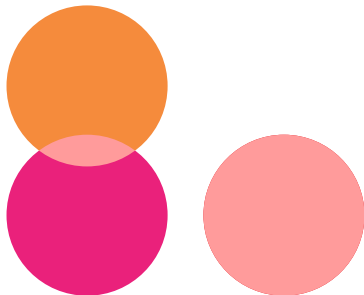
When people think and act the same, although it might appear convenient, group think is promoted and further development slowed down at the least. In this setting it becomes difficult for new approaches or innovations to emerge.

# 1+1=∞

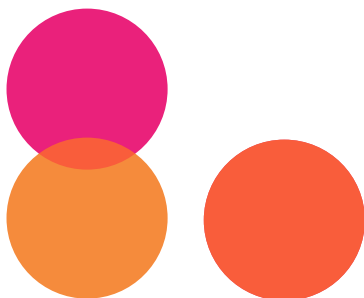
*This playbook and the exercises it contains have been developed to help mentoring couples and groups or circles make the most of the mentoring relationship and embark on a shared learning journey. It was also created for intercultural mentoring constellations, as research has shown that there is a tendency to get the minority culture partner to adapt to the majority culture so that he/she "fits in". As with travelling to a foreign country, a certain amount of adaptation is essential for a safe and pleasant experience. Too much absorption or adaptation not only causes stress of adjustment, but also reduces the possibility of unique contributions and thus the creation of something new through the interaction of the members in this relationship but also beyond it.*



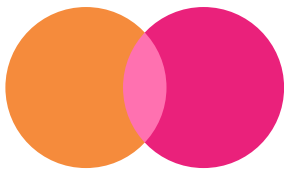
The mentoring philosophy the Playbook is build upon, is based on the idea that each of the two (or more) partners in the mentoring relationship – mentor and mentee – are two complete and unique individuals who get into this relationship to learn something (about a certain trade, approach or culture, or new skills that would allow them to get into a new job area or position, etc.) or enable/facilitate the acquisition of these skills, approaches. One of the partners is more experienced and the other less, but there will be areas/topics in which these roles swap – called reverse mentoring.



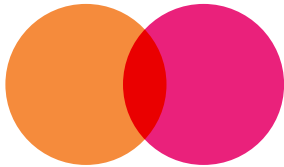
This relationship does not aim to impose on the less experienced the experiences of the more experienced in the respective field or culture. Or to get him or her to fit into this field or culture as well as possible, without gaps, to get "absorbed" in it.



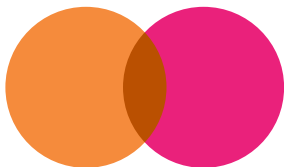
Nor shall the less experienced do everything in her or his power to best imitate the practices, behaviours, language, etc. of that field or culture. Some "adaptation" and learning of the before mentioned will be necessary, but there should be ways to find one's own unique approach.



What shall happen though is that these partners get into an exchange, bring in their knowledge, skills, experience, social capital and lots of appreciation for the otherness of each other, so eventually something new can emerge, something that wouldn't have been possible if they hadn't met.  
That could look like this...



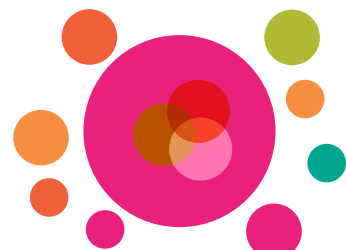
or this...



or this.



So at the time they move on again, they have "grown", developed further – integrated new knowledge, skills, experience, discovered and enriched their inner world, found out what they value and truly aim for, grown and diversified their networks – while having kept their uniqueness and individual approaches.



# What are the shapes and colours or mentoring?

*The colours and shapes on which the design of this playbook is based, follow a certain scheme and thus hopefully trigger emotions and associations that support the content. The circle, like the ball, invites us to play, it is a symbol for cycles, for life, for abundance. It has no hierarchies; in storytelling or discussion circles, each member usually has an equal say. And because of the absence of hard edges, it conveys a feeling of security. The curved shape has no corners or dead ends, direction changes are made possible. It can therefore stand for movement and symbolise that there is always a way to move on. The colours used in the playbook were tested with a number of people from 14 different countries to avoid misunderstanding the book and its contents because of the colours used, or because cultural associations or symbolic meanings evoke a negative perception.*

Usually I wouldn't share that much insight into the design process, and the symbolism of shapes and colours, but in this case it might also be interesting for the reader. I tried to create a culturally inclusive design, in many aspects, which meant a few more steps in between. I do hope that all the reflection has been worthwhile and the love for people and the desire to best support them with the tools I have as a designer shines through. I truly hope that people from different cultures and walks of life will be touched by this book and decide to go on a mentoring journey.

## **The shape of endless opportunities**

The shape that appears most throughout the book, the circle has different functions:

- a. it is used as a "container" for important information (usually a summary or "good to know" at the end of a chapter), here the circle is yellow coloured.
- b. it is used as a framing element for the icons marking the different tools and helping orientation; the colour of the circle plays an additional role here, and is intended to support orientation additionally
- c. differently coloured circles are used to explain models, concepts and philosophies, and are often used as symbol for (diverse) people or opinions.
- d. when they are used as symbol for people, they suggest that every human being that gets into a (mentoring) relationship is already "complete" and has already a lot of potential, skills, knowledge, experiences and strategies inside, internalised. A mentor or other person can bring in new knowledge, indicate new directions, or help with the acquisition of new skills, but also the person the mentee can "bounce" ideas and thoughts off and who helps to get a more "round", more holistic view, to "smoothen" challenges. The mentee though should be the one who keeps things "rolling".
- e. through the overlapping of two or more circles, new forms and colours are emerging. If two circles are aligned and overlaid like in the beginning of the book, the resulting shape looks like an eye. The mentee-mentor relationship should ideally help to "see things differently", to get a "different view" of oneself, of life or a culture, but also to see new possibilities. Further to "see new people", to get to know them through the mentor or mentee.

” **...the circle is the synthesis of the greatest oppositions. It combines the concentric and the eccentric in a single form, and in balance.**

*Wassily Kandinsky*

### **Round, fluid movements increase creative abilities**

Slepian and Ambady tested three skills associated with creativity in an experiment in which they had participants trace different shapes (one had more curves, one had more sharp edges), hypothesising that one would elicit fluid arm movement while the other would elicit non-fluid arm movement.

The first experiment tried to find out whether different movements would improve creative generation. After tracing three fluid or non-fluid shapes, participants were asked to generate as many creative uses for a newspaper as possible within 1 minute.

The second part attempted to assess whether cognitive flexibility was affected by different movements. Cognitive flexibility allows one to comprehend an entity in an atypical way. They hypothesised that *“flexibility embodied in fluid movement might lead to a similarly flexible thought process.”* [34] In the third study, they tested the ability to form distant associations and whether tracing round shapes would also allow participants to move mentally in multiple directions with ease.

They found that *“fluid movement enhanced creativity in three domains: creative generation, cognitive flexibility, and the ability to make remote connections.”* And that *“Participants who made fluid movements demonstrated greater fluency and originality than did those who made non-fluid movements”.* [34]

The results of their research suggest that creativity can be influenced by certain types of physical movement and tracing or moving in fluid shapes can lead to more flexible thought processes. [see 34]

So maybe we should all dance a bit more or draw circles...

” **Our heads are round so our thoughts can change direction.**

*Francis Picabia*



### **A designer's journey towards culturally inclusive design**

Before deciding on the colour palette for the book, I did some extensive research and collected images of toys, but also traditional celebrations and costumes around the world. I further read about the different meanings of colours and the emotional and physical reactions they cause.

Given the main themes of the book, play, learning, diversity, culture or interculturality, collaboration and communication, some obvious colour choices, at least in the European context, would have been colours similar to those of children's toys (primary colours such as yellow, red, blue and secondary colours such as orange and green, maybe a bit of pink), or orange as a symbol of openness, energy and communication and dark blue (which exudes a calming mood) or green (the colour of the chalkboard or blackboard).

The first part of the research already resulted in an extensive series of mood boards (collections of images organised by different categories – e.g. toys, costumes, shades of colour).

In the second part of the design research I collected images, illustrations, posters, and other visual artefacts that I associate with some predefined words or categories – like communication and exchange, reflection, exploration, play, learning, etc. – and additionally images that symbolise the feelings that I link to these words (e.g. learning feels exciting, increases energy, reflection makes me feel calm, focussed, also refreshed, etc.). Which led to another set of mood boards.

From the mood boards generated in part one and two of the research, I extracted main colours, grouped them (e.g. all greens together) and created different possible colour schemes for the book, each consisting of five to seven individual colours or colour shades.

I had before identified that I needed four different colours for the overall design – one as main colour, that sets the tone or mood of the book, one for highlights or good to know, one for all the more playful exercises, and one for the ones that involved reflection, self-discovery – and one for body text, as alternative to black.

” I found I could say things with colour and shapes that I couldn't say any other way – things I had no words for.

*Georgia O'Keeffe*

The last part was a survey sent to international friends and via social media to collect personal and cultural associations with different colours. The survey consisted of a short part that gathered demographic data, plus the country of birth and the one the person currently lives in, as well as the culture they associate themselves with.

This was followed by 10 colour cards (orange, light orange, yellow, a warm pink, a light spring green, a turquoise shade, royal blue, dark/midnight blue, an orange-red and a warm reddish purple).

For each card, participants could choose several options from a range of words assigned to them. In addition, they had the opportunity to share their own association with that colour via an open text box. For each card, an additional open question asked about possible (symbolic) meanings of this colour in the participant's respective culture. In the last part, they were asked about their own free association of colours to the words – "LEARNING", "CULTURE", "MENTORING".

### **What's the colour of mentoring?**

24 people from 14 different countries answered the survey (from India, to Iran, DR Congo, Colombia to Central Europe).

Orange, which was already favoured in the design of the colour schemes because of its engaging, cheerful aura, turned out to have very positive connotations in all cultures (cooperation, play, innovation, exploration, communication, support, development, playfulness, abundance, learning).

The only negative associations that emerged were warnings (mainly due to high-visibility waistcoats) and a woman from France answered that although she loves orange for its cheerful aura, she cannot wear it because it is the colour of provocation, sometimes of prostitution. As there was a slight difference in the answers between a more intense, bright orange and the more muted shade, the colour was slightly adjusted for this book.

A darker, reddish-orange tone, had similar positive responses, but significantly more people associated it with warning, but also with such things as fire, war, the devil, etc.

Interestingly, in addition to the obvious love, care and femininity symbolism, the shade magenta was also strongly associated with communication, cooperation, creativity and play, by both female and male respondents and across cultures. A single critical comment was that it is associated with homosexuality in Russia.

Turquoise was associated with calm, communication, cooperation, possibility, growth, introspection, balance, self-discovery, development, abundance, so it appeared to fit best with the reflective exercise colour. It is a mixture of blue and green, which emerged as colours that people either like most or associate with a wide range of words/categories.

Yellow triggered mostly positive reactions (the top 4 were play, innovation, exploration, cooperation), but warning was also high on the list, to my surprise also illness, sadness and "bad feelings". Since I needed a highlight colour, I still decided to use a warm yellow tone, sparingly and if yellow is used, then in combination with some additional colours.

The results in the section where respondents could freely associate colours with words, were interesting: Learning seems to be blue and green (very few noted also orange, yellow and white), culture or intercultural is related with red, orange, yellow, but also surprisingly brown/chocolate (the respondents really used the term chocolate), mentoring got mainly orange and blue responses and communication seems to be multicoloured – blue, green, yellow, red, orange.

The resulting colour scheme can be found on the right.

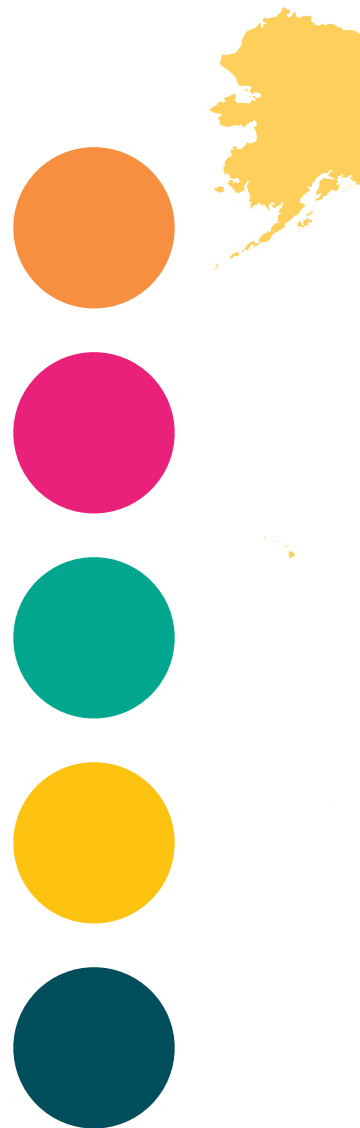
**orange** – for general information related to mentoring, culture and core tools or essential exercises

**pink/magenta** – for experimental or playful exercises with a strong focus on sharing, but also trust building and empathetic exchange

**turquoise/teal** – for reflective exercises that can "go deeper" but also can be/feel "liberating" or "clearing"

**yellow** – for important information, good to know and in combination with additional colours to share cultural insights

**dark blue** – for body text and as contrast to the bright colours where needed







### **Creative collaboration**

One element that was important to me in creating the playbook is not only to write about diversity and intercultural cooperation, but also to follow through with it.

The original idea was to do a kind of call for entries and select a group of designers from that. The selected candidates should be different in terms of cultural background, geographical location, but also in terms of visual styles.

The brief only included the dimensions of the book, the main themes (mentoring, culture/intercultural, learning, diversity) and the colour palette, but the designers were free to use them or not.

The call posted in different design groups led to no response, but through my social media networks and those of friends I was able to get contributions from Austria, Georgia, Uganda/Congo and Columbia, last minute.

Social capital applied.

### **Further Readings & Resources:**

**Haller, Karin (2019) *The little book of colour. How to use psychology of colour to transform your life.***

The book explains in a brief and engaging manner the history and psychology of colours and how they can be applied in different settings.

**Fetell Lee, Ingrid (2018) *JOYFUL. The surprising power of ordinary things to create extraordinary happiness.***

The book, written by a design researcher and designer, follows her on a wonderful journey around the world, to find shapes, colours and patterns that make people happy.

**[bouncethemovie.com](http://bouncethemovie.com) Bounce – How the ball taught the world to play.**





# Benjamin Bahati Kajigi

## **What country were you born in?**

I was born in Congo, Kinshasa.

## **What country do you currently live in?**

I'm living in Uganda by now.

## **Which culture or subculture do you consider belonging to or do you associate yourself with?**

I belong to the African Bantu culture, but I associate with any culture.

## **What does DIVERSITY mean for you, and what impact does it have on you, your work and the society as a whole?**

Diversity, the character of what is diverse, varied, different, variety and the impact that it has on me is to not underestimate anyone or anything.

## **How can DIVERSITY be expressed in images?**

Diversity can express in an image by choosing or capturing photos/images that intentionally put different types of people in the spotlight and allow them to be the centre of attention.

## **How can CULTURE be visualised in images?**

Culture can be represented in a picture by making the norms, values, texts visible. This coherence of symbols is the main point in the understanding of culture and also the image.

## **How can LEARNING be put in pictures?**

Learning can be put in a picture by providing more details than words; you can tell a story with a series of photographs.

## **Why would you like to be part of this project?**

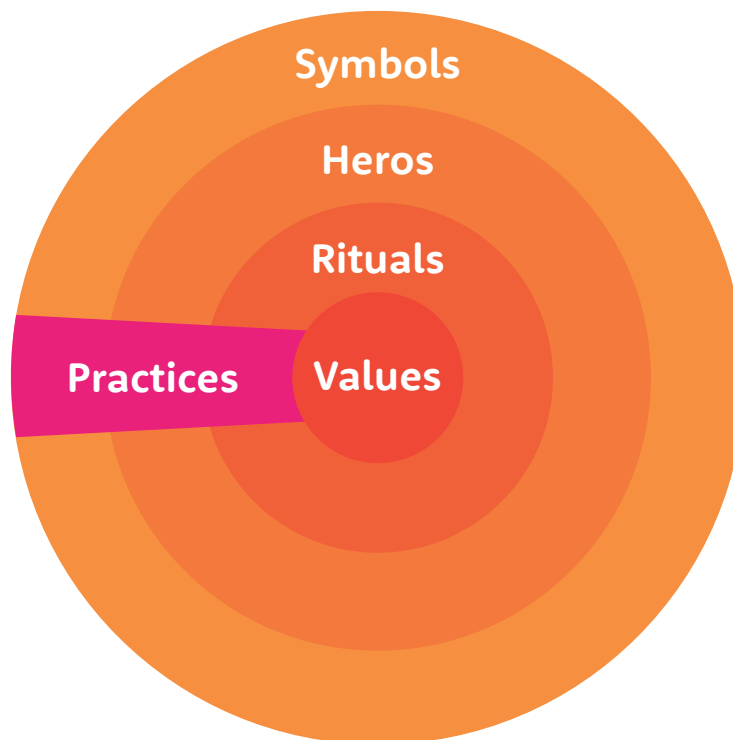
I would like to be part of this project to also contribute to the diversity of the culture and also gain experience again. When you work with different people, and that we are talking about culture it is a good thing, because you learn a lot and for me it would be really a pleasure to be part of the project.



# Conceptual models of culture

Many researchers over the years have tried to make "culture" easier to understand by extracting core elements of it and bringing them into abstract models.

I am showing two of these models that are commonly used in many disciplines, to explain what impacts culture and people's behaviour, which elements can be changed easily and as a result can change also people's approach and which ones will be more persistent and harder to change. The two models here actually complement each other and can help in understanding culture.



## Hofstede's Onion Model of Culture

Geert Hofstede developed a model based on the analogy with an onion. The outer shells are easier to "peel," it takes time to get to the core. The values are the hardest to change. Hofstede defines culture as "the programming of the human mind that distinguishes one group of people from another." [A5]

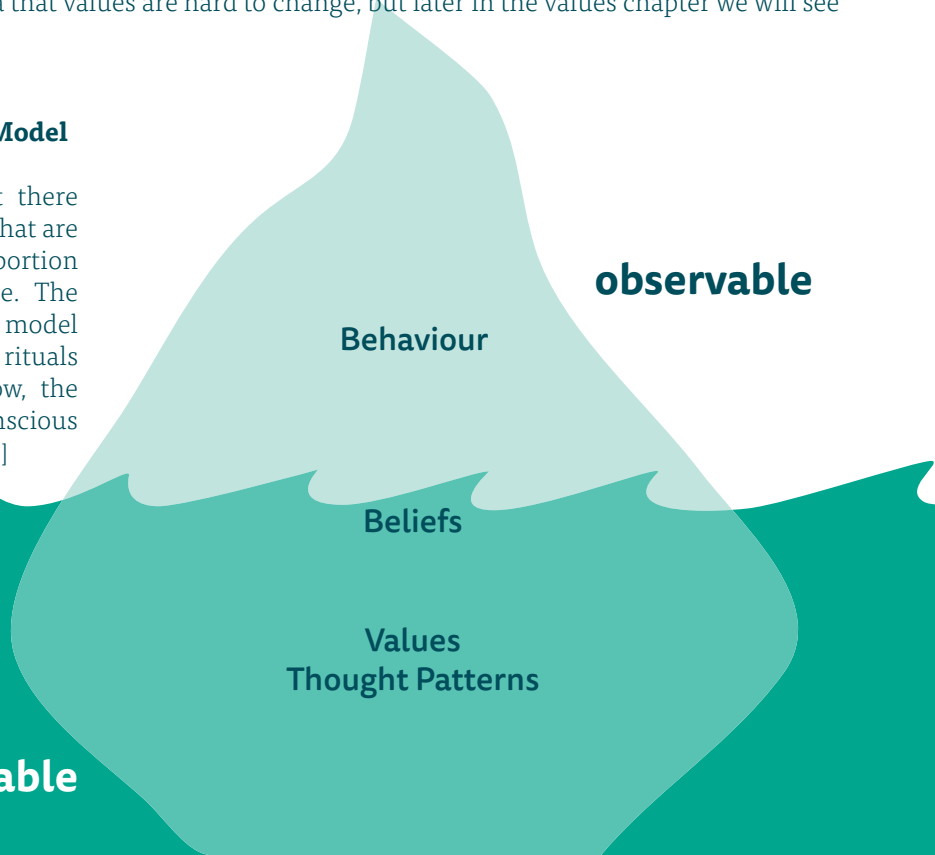
Symbols are visible, e.g., food, colours, (traditional) costumes and clothing styles, flags, architecture, etc. Heroes are characters, real or fictional, who embody what is considered valuable in a particular culture. They can be real life public figures, such as statesmen and -women, founders, athletes, musicians, or fictional ones, such as movie characters or those in stories and fairy tales. Rituals, are "recurring events that shape our unconscious." In a society, these can be celebrations of national holidays, for example, but also gestures such as tipping in restaurants; in organisations, rituals show up in meeting practices. [see 19]

Values are preferences that we've learned through our environment, e.g. parents or that were instilled by educational or religious institutions – we learn from early age what is "acceptable and what isn't".  
*"Issues with culture don't usually pop up when everything goes well – it is when we feel threatened or uncomfortable that we have a tendency to go "back to basics". Back to the values instilled within us when we were young."* [A5]

Practices refer to the fact that values were learned in childhood and remain in memory as "mental programming" throughout life and influence our actions, while "rituals", "heroes" and "symbols" are learned throughout life and change with new practices at the individual level.  
Hofstede promotes the idea that values are hard to change, but later in the values chapter we will see that changes can happen.

### **Edward T. Hall's Iceberg Model of Culture**

Hall's model indicates that there are some aspects of culture that are visible, but there is a larger portion hidden beneath the surface. The first 2-3 layers in Hofstede's model would be above the surface, rituals and values would fall below, the lower part is often not conscious and hard(er) to access. [see 15]





# Descriptive models of culture

*Descriptive models of culture usually try to quantify differences based on a set of dimensions. One culture's values are measured against the other's; and they only work when comparing one with the other. One has to remember that these are models, that only represent certain aspects of one culture or society, but they can be very helpful in the beginning of a mentoring relationship or any other type of collaboration, because they can give an idea of potential differences, e.g. in working styles, relationship to hierarchy, the usage or perception of time, etc. Most of the exercises in the Playbook are designed in such a way, that they help to move beyond these dimensions, stereotypes and attributions and get to know and work with the whole individual.*

## **Edward T. Hall's Model of Culture (1914 – 2009, US-American)**

Hall was an American anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher, who also wrote many different books on cultures and intercultural communication, that explain his understanding of cultures and how his concept and dimensions apply in daily interactions. His concepts and dimensions are not presented in one work, but are developed successively and described in different publications.

His model is interesting because of one of his main findings, which is also represent through one of the dimensions in the model – called "proxemics" or the use and definition of different spaces. It indicates how people in different cultures perceive and apply personal space and act accordingly. What is seen as "personal space" and what a violation of it, can have serious consequences for the relationship.

He also researched how people organise their spaces and ultimately design their physical surrounding, their houses and cities. One part of this dimension is also the concept of territories – it indicates areas/spaces and items that people claim as theirs and even defend against others, e.g. in German speaking and US American settings, "my house", "my car", etc. plays an important role in people's lives. [see 14-16]

### **Time**

Based on their relationship to and handling of time, cultures are divided in monochronic or polychronic ones.

In the first doing one work steps after the other, keeping a predefined schedule is very important here. The priority is on finishing tasks.

In the second multiple activities are done at the same time. A schedule is a "can", but not a "must". The priority is on the personal relationship.

### **Context**

Hall divided cultures into high-context (a significant part of the information is implicit), and low-context ones (nearly everything is explicit).

In high context cultures, innuendos, facial expressions, the circumstances of the encounter, and other contextual factors are information carriers; to be able to decode the message, one needs to be able to "read between the lines".

This dimension can be found in most of the other models also.

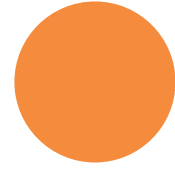
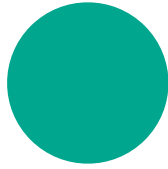
### **Space**

Among other variables, he distinguishes between intimate, personal, social and public distance zones, that can change, e.g. with increasing familiarity between people. Depending on the culture, these zones each have different dimensions.

### **Information Speed**

The dimension expresses the different information processing speeds depending on the culture. High speed cultures prefer short messages, in low speed one needs to take the time to gather all the relevant information or read the message. Hall compares the different speeds with the time it takes to get to know a person in different cultures, e.g. it takes longer to "read" a Japanese.





## Geert Hofstede's 6-D Model of Culture (1928 – 2020, Dutch)

Hofstede and his model are probably the most famous ones. His original study, conducted in the late 1960, was based on data from a worldwide employee survey conducted by IBM. His model was criticised because of this single source of data and it was suspected, that the results would reflect a corporate culture rather than national cultures. The initial model had only four dimensions, two were added later. The six dimensions *"represent independent preferences for one state of affairs over another that distinguish countries (rather than individuals) from each other."*

*"The country scores on the dimensions are relative, in that we are all human and simultaneously we are all unique. In other words, culture can only be used meaningfully by comparison."* [19]

### Power Distance

*"This dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. The fundamental issue here is how a society handles inequalities among people."*

In cultures with a high value of Power Distance hierarchical order is accepted and everyone has and knows their place in this hierarchy. In low Power Distance countries, the distribution of power is more equalised.

### Individualism vs. Collectivism

This dimension expresses how individuals are integrated into primary groups within the society.

In a collectivist culture the "we-experience" is central and the integration of an individual in any kind of network.

In individualistic cultures the "I-experience" plays a central role, so do self-determination and personal responsibility.

### Uncertainty Avoidance

It relates to how a society deals with the "unknown future" and whether its members feel comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity or not.

Countries with a high value in that dimension, have rigid codes of belief and behaviour, and tend to be less tolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas, countries on the opposite side of the scale have a more relaxed attitude.

### Masculinity vs. Femininity

That one has two aspects to it – first it says something about the "division of emotional roles" between females and males in a society; second it indicates an overall tendency. High masculinity cultures tend to show a preference for "achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success. Society at large is more competitive". Societies on the feminine side are more cooperation- and consensus-oriented; modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life are central.

### Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation

The dimension relates to *"the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past."* It says something about the time planning horizon in a society. It was added due to a collaboration with Chinese researchers and managers who emphasised the influence of the Confucian heritage with its long-term orientation over several (re-)births. Countries with long-term orientation value thrift and perseverance, short term oriented flexibility.

### Indulgence vs. Restraint

*"Indulgence stands for a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun. Restraint stands for a society that suppresses gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms."* [see A5]



# Mentor vs. Sponsor

*The definition of what mentoring is varies across cultures and even professions. Sponsorship Mentoring seems to be more common in the US-American context, in the European one, the developmental approach is more widespread. The first one requires the mentor to be in a position that enables her/him to support the mentee's professional advancement, the second requires additional skills, as it follows a more holistic approach. More about the different mentoring functions and the related activities in the next chapter. When starting a mentoring programme or a relationship it is crucial to discuss the type of mentoring that will be offered, to avoid expectations not being met.*

The definitions of mentoring below illustrate the different mindsets and approaches.

US context:

*"A person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counselling, providing psychological support, protecting and at times promoting or sponsoring."*  
(Zey, 1993, [in 25])

*"Mentors are individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward support and mobility to their protégé's careers."*  
(Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985, [in 28])

European context:

*"Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be."*  
(Parsloe & Wray, 2000, [in 25])

*"The role of the mentor is one of support to the mentee. The mentor will listen and give advice and guidance, when it is appropriate. Mentoring focuses on developing capability by working with the mentee's goals to help them realise their potential. The mentee is responsible for their learning and development and setting the direction and goals for the relationship. The flow of learning is two-way in a mentoring relationship and the mentor often gains as much as the mentee."*  
(Merrick, 2005, in [in 25])

Both types can exist on both continents and outside of them, and the picture of what mentoring is can even differ from company to company. This is why discussing the different types, the functions the mentor can provide, and the expectations of both the mentee and the mentor is so critical at the outset. For formal mentoring programmes, this discussion often needs to take place before the programme starts, as the different types have different benefits for the organisation and the mentors, and can impact whether or not the organiser gets buy-in by the management or not.

Benefits for the organisation and mentor in through a sponsorship relationship might include: *"helping the mentor to perform their job and contribute to the increase in the mentor's reputation (a form of empire building) and the mentee can contribute to the stock of knowledge the mentor requires to maintain their position in the organisation."* [25]

Sponsorship Mentoring	Developmental Mentoring
The mentor is more influential and hierarchically senior.	The mentor is more experienced in issues relevant to the mentee's learning needs (perhaps life in general).
"The mentor gives, the protégé receives and the organization profits" (Scandura et. al., 1996)	A process of mutual growth.
The mentor actively champions and promotes the cause of the protégé.	The mentor helps the mentee do things for him or herself.
The mentor gives the protégé the benefit of his or her wisdom.	The mentor helps the mentee develop his or her own wisdom.
The mentor steers the protégé through the acquisition of experience and personal resources.	The mentor helps the mentee towards personal insight from which they can steer their own development.
The primary outcome or objective is career success.	The primary outcome or objective is personal development, from which career success may flow.
Good advice is central to the success of the relationship.	Good questions are central to the success of the relationship.
The social exchange emphasises loyalty.	The social exchange emphasises learning.

Differences between sponsorship and developmental mentoring [25]

Benefits from a developmental mentoring relationship can be: (...) *the mentor can improve their communication, management and coaching skills, stimulate their own learning – a two way learning relationship – improve their own processes and performance, gain insights into relationships with other people, have an opportunity to be challenged and take time out to reflect and renew focus on their own career and development.*" [25]

*"In both types of mentoring the mentee's development provides the mentor with a feeling of pride and a sense of contributing to the organization."* [25]

## Emotional Functions



## Career Functions

The Talent Mentoring Wheel [based on 25]

# Mentoring Functions

Over the course of a mentoring relationship mentors take on various functions or display certain behaviour that help the mentee in her or his professional and personal development. Kram defined two main functions – career development and psychosocial. Merrick and Stokes mapped those functions and the responding activities in The Talent Mentoring Wheel. It can provide an overview and some orientation to both the mentee and mentor, but it is also helpful when establishing a mentoring program. The functions might differ between a sponsorship and developmental mentoring relationship, in the first the orange side, activities like giving challenging assignments, or making sure that the mentee is getting noticed in the organisation play an important role, in the second the pink side of the wheel and the respective activities will be more in focus.

"Mentors help their protégés by providing two general types of behaviors or functions: career development functions, which facilitate the protégé's advancement in the organization, and psychosocial functions, which contribute to the protégé's personal growth and professional development." [23a]

Kram defined five different career development functions: providing challenging assignments (**challenging assignments**), sponsoring promotions and lateral moves (**sponsorship**), protecting him or her from adverse forces (**protection**), coaching the mentee or protégé (**coaching**), and increasing the mentee's exposure and visibility (**exposure**).

The psychosocial/emotional functions help the mentee to increase her or his sense of competence, self-efficacy, and professional and personal development and include providing identification and role modelling (**role modeling**), helping the mentee to develop a sense of professional self (**acceptance & confirmation**), giving respect and support (**friendship**) and providing problem-solving and a sounding board (**counselling**). [see 23a]

**Research shows that mentoring, being accompanied and supported by a mentor can have various benefits for the mentee. They tend to get more promotions and higher salary. Their career and job satisfaction is higher than those of non-mentored individuals and they have higher retention rates within a company. Especially women and people of colour can profit from having a mentor. Having a circle of mentors, in this case seems to be even more beneficial.**

[see 9, 25, 28]

” **Career development functions depend on the mentor's power and position in the organization, whereas psychosocial functions depend on the quality of the interpersonal relationship and the emotional bond that underlies the relationship.**

**Career development functions focus on the organization and the protégé's career, whereas psychosocial functions affect the protégé on a more personal level and extend to other spheres of life, such as the protégé's personal development. [28]**

*Belle Rose Ragins*

# Mentoring Cycle & Phases

*The mentoring relationship moves and evolves through different phases, from the beginning (initiation or rapport building) to the phase of separation. A relationship between the mentor and mentee may still exist after this phase, but may have developed into more of a (professional) friendship. I will present two models commonly used in the mentoring literature and propose a model developed as a result of my own mentoring experience.*

## **Kram's four mentoring relationship phases**

Kathy Kram identified four stages of a mentoring relationship through an empirical qualitative study of 18 dyads in informal development relationships. These are:

### **Initiation** (six months to one year)

During this stage the relationship becomes of increasing importance mentee and mentor. The phase is characterised by the mentee's feeling of being "cared for, supported and respected by someone who is admired and who can provide important career and psychosocial functions." [23]

### **Cultivation** (two to five years)

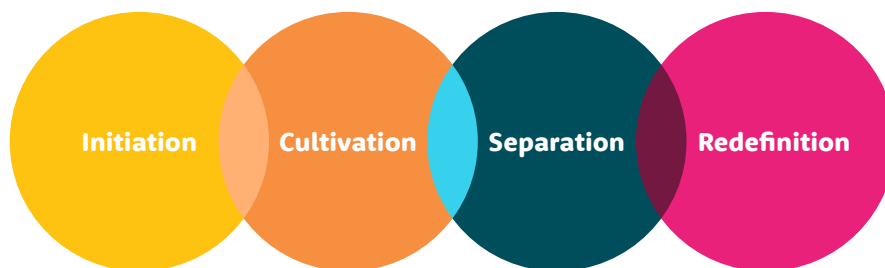
In this phase "boundaries are clarified and career and psychosocial functions have the greatest influence and impact the bond and level of intimacy strengthens." [28] The mentors functions extend to counselling and friendship. Both mentee and mentor benefit in the cultivation phase and report positive outcomes.

**Separation** (six months to five years) The mentee will begin to outgrow the relationship. The phase signals "changes in both the structure and psychology of the relationship: structural separation can occur through job role changes such as an internal promotion, while psychosocial separation occurs as the mentee experiences autonomy and independence and the relationship becomes less pivotal in his or her development." [28]

This phase can be accompanied by feelings of loss and anxiety, something is coming to an end and a new chapter begins. The phase might be caused by the above mention changes, or also happen because the relationship lost it's drive, or expectation set in the beginning were not met.

**Redefinition** Now "the relationship dynamic changes", the relationship is characterised by greater informality and moves towards friendship or a relationship between peers.

Although she looked at very long lasting informal mentoring relationships (average length five years), these phases will also apply in shorter and formal ones. [see 9, 23]



## Clutterbuck's five mentoring relationship phases

Clutterbuck's model comparatively consists of five phases and also applies to formal and informal mentoring relationships. Phase one and two can be completed in a few conversations, at the beginning.

### Rapport Building

*"Developing a high degree of rapport is essential in ensuring the positive development of the mentoring relationship."* [18] The first stage is about understanding whether mentee and mentor can and want to work with each other (alignment of personal values, mutual respect, agreement on the purpose of the relationship).

### Direction Setting

Goal setting, developing a sense of purpose for the relationship and working out long-, mid-, short-term directions are part of the direction setting phase.

### Progress Making

Is the core phase of the relationship. *"The intensity of learning for both the mentee and mentor is greatest during this period of the relationship, with both the mentee and mentor experiencing learning and growth."* *"(...) the mentee leads the meetings and content while relying increasingly on his or her own judgement."* [28]

**Winding Down** Mentee and mentor start to plan the closing of the relationship, review it and celebrate. *"The mentee has developed confidence, capability, and competence, and gained a greater insight to enable career success."* [18] The close down of the relationship and clear ending are relevant. One chapter is finished, the next one can start.

### Moving On

Mentee and mentor can choose to become friends or continue to work together as two professionals at eye level. [see 9]



### **Constructing an alternative model of mentoring**

Over the past four years, I have mentored two groups of young East African social entrepreneurs. They were initially a team and split up (which was the plan anyway) to work on establishing two different organisations. What I observed with them individually, but also as a team, is that they developed at different rates and that issues that came up before came up again, but at a more advanced level. For example, the topic of organisation – it started with self-organisation or management, later it became about organising a team, and now it's about team organisation plus that of their own students. So although the topic has been dealt with and worked on in a way, the discussion is not over, it continues, but with a broader focus.

The development follows the human development in open systems from dependency, independency to interdependency. In the beginning it was about the individual, the more they understood how to manage themselves, the more the focus shifted towards the bigger group, the team, and at last, to the small ecosystem. In the values chapter an explanation on the three forms of agency – individual, proxy and collective – can be found.

I am not a social scientist, but a designer and design researcher. I observe, look for patterns, similarities, turn things around, change perspective, connect seemingly distant themes and try to find something that is original. Or I try to translate complex ideas and information, I extract, reduce, focus, I use symbols, analogies or abstract forms, I make use of colours, shapes, patterns, etc., to structure these complex idea, to then communicate them to different groups of people (target groups). The goals can be different, an obvious one is to help people understand, but also to make them aware of an issue, to touch them or to make them do something.

So for my design research project on mentoring, I did a self-ethnography. Like an ethnographer I collected "field notes" of my own relationship. I analysed the WhatsApp chats I had with my mentees, I wrote conversation notes, etc. As the mentoring relationship evolved, I researched the discourse on mentoring, what researchers and practitioners have found out, etc. For example, I found the models I just presented on the previous page helpful for my own relationship. They helped me understand that some changes I observed in my mentees and in my relationship are normal; they are part of the (developmental) process.

But the models were missing something for me – they seemed linear, process-oriented, but somehow did not show the movement (emotional, mental and physical) that I perceived. I work with a very intercultural team of mentees, people who belong to a culture that is in many ways so different from my own. Similar to the onion-culture model, I began to peel back layer after layer and understand more. My mentees experienced some personal challenges over the last two years; it seemed as though these caused them to regress to an earlier state of development and Hofstede's statement proved true.



*"Issues with culture don't usually pop up when everything goes well – it is when we feel threatened or uncomfortable that we have a tendency to go "back to basics". Back to the values instilled within us when we were young." [A5]*

There were moments of crisis, both for me as mentor, but also my mentees, but what kept the relationship moving on and not breaking apart, was a strong connection on a personal level, the care for each other and my desire to help them move past their issues into a better situation and future.

So how could one get all these elements into a model, that reflects the essence but isn't too complex and overloaded with symbols and information.

### **Spiralling upwards**

I discovered that the spiral would represent much of what I wanted to express. One that moves upward to indicate progression. The slightly twisted and tilted coils of a spiral could suggest that one can also slide backward in development. At the same time, the spiral symbolises a movement, like a dance, revolving around a core, like dancing dervishes. This rotation around a core, could symbolise the purpose of the mentoring relationship, it evolves around its core, if it doesn't, if there is no purpose, it falls apart.

I would not be a design researcher studying intercultural design if I did not look for references in other areas and cultures and the meaning of certain symbols there. The spiral is found in nature is and was used in many cultures around the world, one that stood out in my research was interpretation in the Maori culture in New Zealand. The spiral shape is called "Koru", derived from the name of a fern and symbolises new life, spiritual growth and progress.

In the Maori culture Koru has many meanings, as a symbol of prestige it represents authority, prestige and spiritual power.

It is a symbol of life: *"The spiral design of the Koru symbol represents a sprouting fern. The fern which springs from the folds of the earth is believed to represent survival and existence. Maori civilization gave immense importance to newly budding plants and cherished them as a symbol of life and vitality."* It is a symbol of (eternal) movement, the Maori *"believed in a transfer of energy that was always in movement and could not be fully destroyed."* [A12]

The fern that the Koru symbol is based upon, reflects growth and development. *"Growth can be in terms of spiritual changes such as newly attained wisdom or enlightenment. It can also reflect growth in terms of physical prowess and the strength of youth."* [A12]

It is a symbol of harmony, for the *"harmonious and balanced universe"*. Koru jewellery is gifted to couples as a symbol of harmony and companionship and it is used to decorate meeting places.

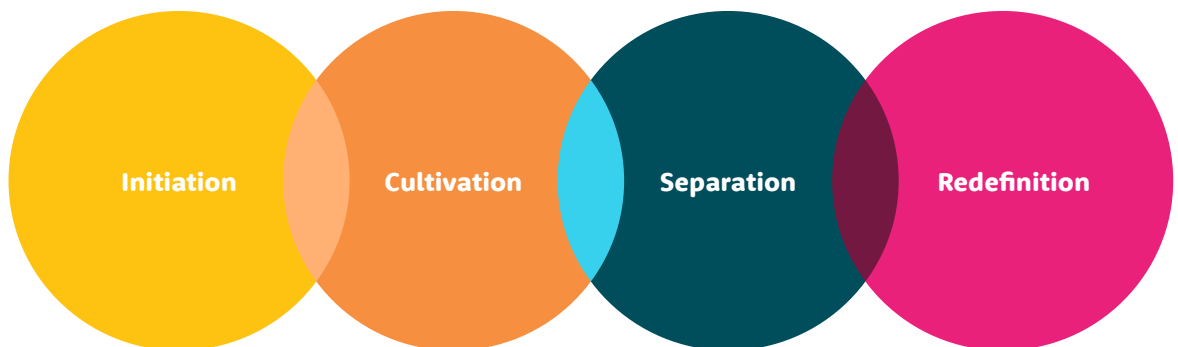
So the spiral as the basis of the model has many interpretations that support the overall theme – growth, development, progress, life, energy transfer, harmony and balance, but also the special care given to the baby fern can be equated with the care for the young(er) and their development.

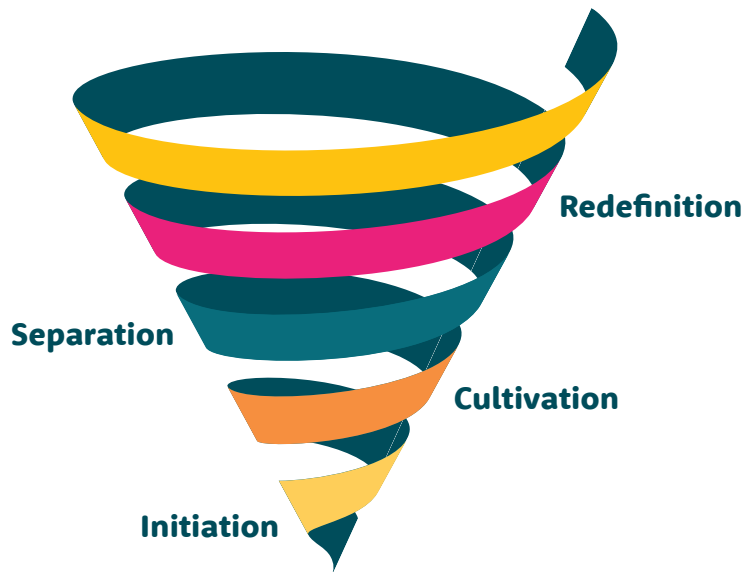
The first part of the model already seems to illustrate this upward movement and progress.

What was still missing, and what I very much noticed in my own mentoring relationship, are the different phases.

They may differ in the extent and duration of each phase, and sometimes you don't even notice dramatic changes and that the couple or group has moved on to the next phase, or only in retrospect, but they do exist.

From what I've observed in my own mentoring interactions, I would say that the more regular the exchanges and the closer the relationship, the more one tends to notice the change of phases or be more sensitive and attentive to (impending) changes. They may be less noticeable if the mentoring conversation only takes place occasionally, or, they may not be noticeable until the change is more pronounced.





### **Phases applied**

The advanced version already has most of the elements, progress and phases, it also reflects somewhat that the phases build on each other. However, it only lightly suggests that these phases may also repeat within an ongoing mentoring relationship.

One example: In the course of my own relationship, there were moments when it almost ended. Communication had stalled, I felt that the mentees were not engaged and mostly unprepared for our online exchanges. I sat down in front of the computer, had reserved time for meetings, but the team didn't show up, without notice. These problems had multiple causes (lack of internet connection, personal challenges, etc.) and caused feelings of frustration, and in some cases that existing trust got damaged. So we had to go back, at least briefly, to the initiation phase.

Another example was that the phase of separation and redefinition seemed to happen more quickly for some of my mentees than for others. Two became parents somewhat unexpectedly this year, which seems to have spurred their development and ambition to implement change more quickly than I had initially anticipated.

The situations just explained or others can occur in any mentoring relationship, and change the length of the phases and, in some cases, their sequence, so that an illustration of the phases might look something like this – each phase occupying a part of the circle, the size of the segments is depending on the length or duration of the phases.



So if you look at the mentoring relationship in retrospect, the phases might have looked like the diagram on the left below. What I also noticed, when I tried to map the phases onto the spiral, that the abstract and simplified shape, results in concentric circles. So, looking back at the mentoring relationship, like looking at the age rings on a tree, you can see how much you have developed over time, how much your confidence, skills, impact, sphere of influence, etc. has grown compared to the starting point, in the middle.



# The Spiral Model for Intercultural Mentoring

*Through self-ethnography and a process of visual mapping, and through further abstraction, I arrived at a spiral model for intercultural mentoring relationships. What moves the spiral, a symbol for development, upward is self-discovery, but also discovery of each other and each other's cultural backgrounds and preferences, and the integration of these findings – e.g. through adapted practices, increased mindfulness towards the other and their culture, an adaptation of communication styles, etc. What holds the relationship together, regardless of differences, is the care for the other, the dedication and commitment towards each others personal and professional development.*

After the mapping, I took a step back to ask myself: What is the essence of the model? What holds the mentoring relationship together and what moves it forward? What keeps the "spiral" moving and keeps it from falling apart?

Don't worry, I won't go into the details of the physical forces that affect the spiral.

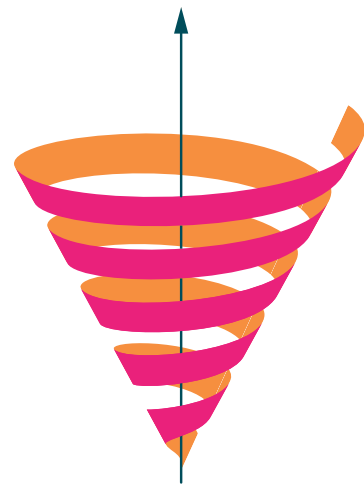
## **The forces that hold the relationship spiral together**

But also in a mentoring relationship there exists a force, or several, that hold it together and move it forward.

What holds the spiral of the mentoring relationship together, regardless of cultural differences, different approaches and perceptions, and some challenges, misunderstandings, and frustrations along the way, is a concern for each other's well-being, personal and professional development.

(In my mentoring relationship, for example, this is reflected in the fact that I want my mentees to use their talents in ways that are fulfilling, I want them to have a better life, and I want them to be successful because that also means a better life for their families; it means that I feel their excitements and frustrations and that I see their potential and that I want to and do everything in my power to help them use it.)

Here the colours come into play – pink although an obvious choice for care, was also associated with "communication, cooperation, creativity and play" – all the elements that are essential too for the well-being of the mentoring relationship. Communication and cooperation are common denominators in any successful relationship. Creativity, finding unconventional solutions, is often a requirement when two or more cultures and people come together. The models on the previous pages are helpful to get started, but no textbook or model can provide all the answers.



In my relationship, this means that I, and all of us together, improvise, assess needs, prototype, solicit feedback, and iterate, e.g. with my mentees, internet and power outages are constant issues, they are frustrating and challenging for the relationship, so I started giving little assignments in written form. I kept the file size really small, so they could download them with their phones, and they replied per mail or Whatsapp whenever they had mobile data coverage. Or, I sensed that, although their organisation is based on holocracy (an organisational form that distributes authority and decision-making), in online meetings just one of them was speaking, the others kept quiet or were busy with other things happening at the same time in the room (polychronic time culture). So we implemented one-on-ones every few months, where I would just exchange with one of the mentees.

"Play", is about keeping humour and light-heartedness in the relationship. In my case it was easier to implement while I was on ground, meeting them regularly, and is less so online, but just recently after a phase of frustration and realignment within the team, one of my mentee's again reminded me of the importance of play and fun, by saying "you know, sometimes all I want, is a good laugh with you".

"Play" can be implemented in many ways, by sharing funny stories, by doing an activity together, that has the only purpose to create a sense of fun or light-heartedness within the dyad or group.

The core or the inside of the relationship spiral is kept in orange, symbolising that when all the forces and exchanges are in balance, the relationship is alive, thriving, engaging and feels energising.

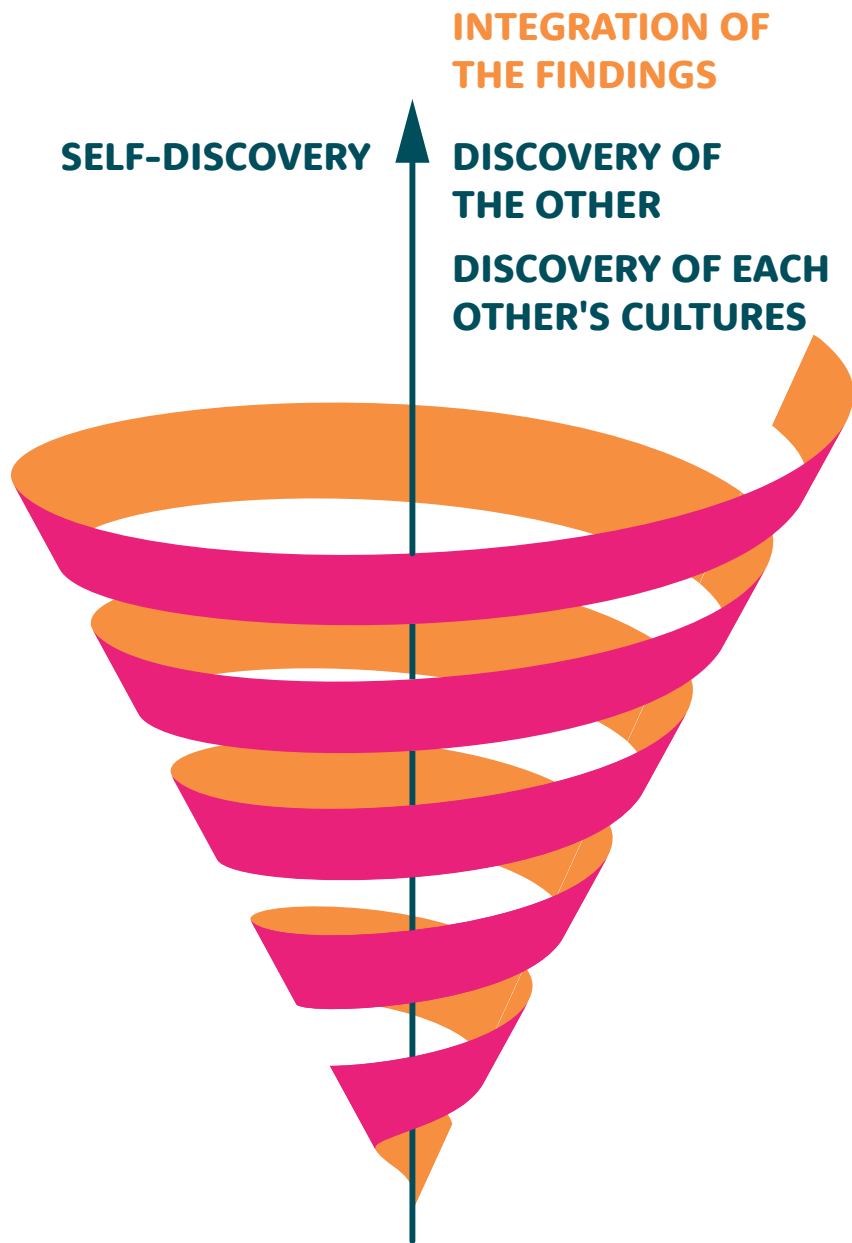
### **The forces that move the relationship forward**

What keeps the relationship moving and spiralling upward, allowing the relationship and the people in it to develop, is on the one hand self-discovery, getting to know one's own abilities, talents, fears, values, etc. and working with them or developing them further (e.g. through challenging tasks, by stretching the comfort zone, etc.), and on the other hand discovering the other person(s) who is/are part of the mentoring relationship, and the cultures or the cultural-mix they belong to. This can happen again through storytelling, observation, by showing real interest in her/him, etc.

The "force", however, that continues to drive the spiral upward is the integration of these insights, e.g., into how you work together, how you communicate, how you deal with differing values, understandings of time, etc.

Again one example taken from my mentoring relationship. I realised that despite a lot of empathy and different approaches, I had difficulties in understanding certain aspects of my mentees' background, their (hi)story and the influence of their culture on their behaviour or applied strategies, especially when the only means of communication was digital.

That made me feel hesitant to provide an appropriate input or feedback even when they asked me for it. So I agreed with one of them that he would be my cultural translator or mentor. It became almost like a ritual: Whenever a problem arose that I couldn't understand, I would text him and we would talk about it, and he would explain his perspective and possible reasons rooted in the culture, certain values or value conflicts, that were associated with the problem, or gave some background information, e.g. about the roles in the family, families' expectations, practices in public life, etc.











# Anna Kakabadze

## **What country were you born in?**

I was born in Tbilisi, Georgia.

## **What country do you currently live in?**

I currently live in Hamburg, Germany.

## **Which culture or subculture do you consider belonging to or do you associate yourself with?**

I associate myself with the Georgian, German and Czech cultures, the cultures of the countries I have lived in, as well as those of countries linked to the languages I studied additionally: English, French and Russian.

## **What does DIVERSITY mean for you, and what impact does it have on you, your work and the society as a whole?**

Diversity is enriching for the society as a whole; being exposed to more perspectives and world views, is not only beneficial personally but can also help solve problems. Being exposed to new ideas can stimulate one's own creativity. To me diversity is a coming together regardless of physical or mental „disadvantages“, a flowing together through art, music and dance for instance, that transcends the cultural differences. It`s about the beauty, the truth in it's rawest, purest form.

## **How can DIVERSITY be expressed in images?**

See above.

## **How can CULTURE be visualised in images?**

Culture can be visualised in images (or in sculpted form), if characteristic traits such common symbols, traditional dress or costumes (masks, insignia, sceptres, crowns), rituals and helping tools to perform them are portrayed. Take the Chauvet Caves in France for instance, with their Palaeolithic paintings, they functioned as a 'writing' or communication tool...only through common knowledge or awareness of the concept of hunting or the archetypes of the animals painted upon those walls, could they be understood universally by any culture. Perhaps, the key to an understanding one another interculturally across the board, are the same archetypes. One of the key themes in my sculptural works is language. One of my latest works: Dma

### **How can LEARNING be put in pictures?**

Learning could be put into pictures in different ways. For instance one could create a chronological sequence, where one draws the same face or say even something as simple as a line or a circle over a period of time.. one would soon notice, some improvement, you hand starts to develop a memory and skills.

### **Why would you like to be part of this project?**

I would like to be part of the project because I'm curious to discover new artists and their works, in order to be inspired by and to learn from them. I also want to share what I'm working on for anyone who finds it interesting enough.

Anna had contacted me after I had posted the call for entries and asked if a three dimensional writing would work for the project.

I was hesitant at first, because I had been more looking for illustrations or paintings, so I asked her: How do you think the script could visualise culture, learning or diversity?

She replied: *"On the one hand, one can argue with script as the representative of all scripts as an element of expression, communication and unifying power between different cultures.*

*And on the other hand... the development of humans... through migratory movements etc. out of these primal humans... writing as a carrier of culture."*

Mzia and Zezva are the names given by scientists to the remains of two human bodies, a male and female, that were found in Georgia, the Homo Georgicus. Their age is amounted to at least 1.8 million years, the oldest human bones that where found outside Africa. So Mzia and Zezva are considered to be the first Europeans. Georgian is one of the oldest languages in the world.

Dmanisi: Mzia and Zezva – is written in Georgian letters and is made of chicken-wire and modelling clay. Writing is used as a form of bearer of cultural values. It converges diversity regardless of social class, religion gender and sex and builds relationships.

# Mentoring Canvas

*Starting a mentoring journey, together with your mentor by your side is an exiting endeavour. Like with every other journey, no matter your traveling style, a bit of preparation always helps. The Mentoring Canvas collects a few of the “coordinates” before departing.*

## Which materials do you need?

### The Mentoring Canvas

Either make a copy of the Canvas in the Playbook or download and print it directly from the website.

Shall you need more space to write or want a larger format to e.g. hang it on your wall, you can just enlarge it on the printer or copier or draw your own version of the Canvas.

### PC or pens, pencils & markers

Choose the medium that you feel most comfortable with, both have their advantages.

The printed version of the Canvas allows you some off-screen time and you can just leave the Canvas at your desk and add elements later. To share it with your mentor just take a picture of it once you are done answering all the questions.

The digital version can easily be edited, saved and shared.

## How much time do you need?

### About 1,5 hours

To complete your Canvas in one go. You can also divide the exercise and work on one question after the other in shorter time frames.

The Canvas is a good starting point before you embark on your journey together, or even before you have found your travel partner/mentor. So it can be used before matching with a mentor, or shortly after that.

It is like a first sketch of what you want to get out of your journey, where you need someone to guide you, connect you with others or to assist you with know-how, information, etc.

## Aligning expectations

Research and responses from expert interviews show that mentoring relationships can be less transforming/impacting than they have the potential to be, or even fail because of some reasons:

The mentee doesn't know where she/he wants to go to, what she/he wants to achieve, or has no idea about how a mentor can help, which questions they could potentially answer. So the mentee has no clear idea of what she/he can and wants to take away from the relationship with the mentor.

Another reason is that there are different expectations on both sides. There may be different ideas about what mentoring is and what a mentor can do, or generally about the roles of the mentor and the mentee. Often, these divergent images are not discussed because it is assumed that both have the same image of mentoring, the roles and the tasks involved.

An example of these different understandings can be that the mentee expects the mentor to get her/him a higher position or a better job.

There is a somewhat different understanding of mentoring in the European and US contexts, in the former sponsorship is less often seen as part of the mentoring role, whereas in the US it is more often a part of it. [see 25]

A sponsor is usually in a position of authority and can provide you, the mentee, with job opportunities, he/she can introduce you to people in relevant positions and advocate for you.



In return, there may also be expectations linked to it, that you perform and get the right results.

Although your mentor can help you to improve yourself, by sharing stories and advice so you can learn from her/his experience, by connecting you with others, by giving you feedback, etc., which then enables you to find a better job, she/he might not be the one who can or will promote you to an improved position.

### **Reflecting on the starting point and wishes for the journey together**

The Canvas lets you ask yourself a few critical questions and to reflect on them. There are two distinct Canvases – one for the mentee and one for the mentor. The design builds on a mentoring philosophy in the background that fosters mutual learning and growth.

As the mentee, the answers you come up with, can help you (or if you are a part of a mentoring programme the mentoring coordinator) to find the right mentor for your current development needs. Or it can provide the necessary information for your current mentor so they can assess whether and where she/he can support and assist you.

The same applies for the mentor side – the answers can allow the matching with a mentee that can really profit from your knowledge and experience at her/his current point in the development journey and they can help to align expectations with the mentee in an existing relationship.

Take about 1.5 hours to work on the questions. You can either answer them in one go or block shorter periods of time and work on one question per time block. However, ensure uninterrupted time to focus on the questions and reflect on the answers thoroughly. To stay with our travel example: you don't want to end up in Iceland instead of Ireland because of a careless mistake (although both countries are beautiful).

### **Who is it for?**

#### **For the mentee**

To get an overview of your current situation, development wishes, challenges and support needs, and ultimately to find the right mentor.

#### **For the mentor**

To collect what kind of guidance and support you can offer to a mentee, but also to note down what you want to get out of the relationship.

#### **For both**

To discuss the wishes and support need of the mentee, potential benefit for both and align images and ideas about mentoring and the roles in the process.

### **In which part of the mentoring journey is it useful?**

#### **In the beginning of the mentoring journey**

To find a matching mentor/mentee or with an existing one, as a starting point, to align images and expectations.

#### **After about 3-4 month**

To readjust and redefine needs.

## The Mentee Canvas – Mapping yourself

### **Where am I now?**

Use this section to write briefly about your current job or study situation, or the stage of your own business. Indicate in which area you are working in, what your role(s), responsibilities and tasks are. Optional: Include personal details, if they can allow the mentor to get a better picture of your actual situation. Are you volunteering in an organisation? Are a caretaker for children or parents? Did you just buy a flat and can't/don't want to move for a new job? Do you have other responsibilities that have an impact on your professional decisions?

### **What am I really good at?**

Some people, depending on their personality and in some cases their cultural background, don't like to be in the spotlight and talk about their special skills, talents, qualities and things they are good at or very good at.

But noting them down helps the mentee to get an overview and be reminded of them, and the mentor to give you the right guidance to make the most of them.

In this section you can note skills, talents and personal qualities that you see as relevant to your job, but also those that you don't necessarily use at the moment but still have.

Maybe you are a great host, have a creative talent or are a meticulous organiser... skills that can become a great asset in a new job, in a new area of work, or can turn into a rewarding and fun side project that invigorates you in your current job.

### **Where do I want to be?**

In this section you can take a practical approach, but also dream a little. Imagine your future self. If everything goes well, you find courage, develop skills, get support, etc., where do you see yourself?

Do you have a better paid job? Or one that has a positive impact on society? Do you want to spend more time with your family or friends? Or make room for your passion project? Are you employed or do you have your own business? Which skills do you have?

How do you feel? Who accompanies you and who do you spend time with?



This section is really about thinking and dreaming big. There is another exercise in the Playbook where you can break down your vision into concrete and realistic goals that you can work towards over the course of different lengths of time.

### ***What are my biggest challenges or obstacles on the way there?***

So you know where you are now, you have noted your gifts and envisioned your ideal destination. Now it is time to look at the challenges, obstacles, barriers and also limiting beliefs that you are aware of – situations, mindsets, people, limitations, that are holding you back or slowing you down. What is blocking you on your way to your desired destination?

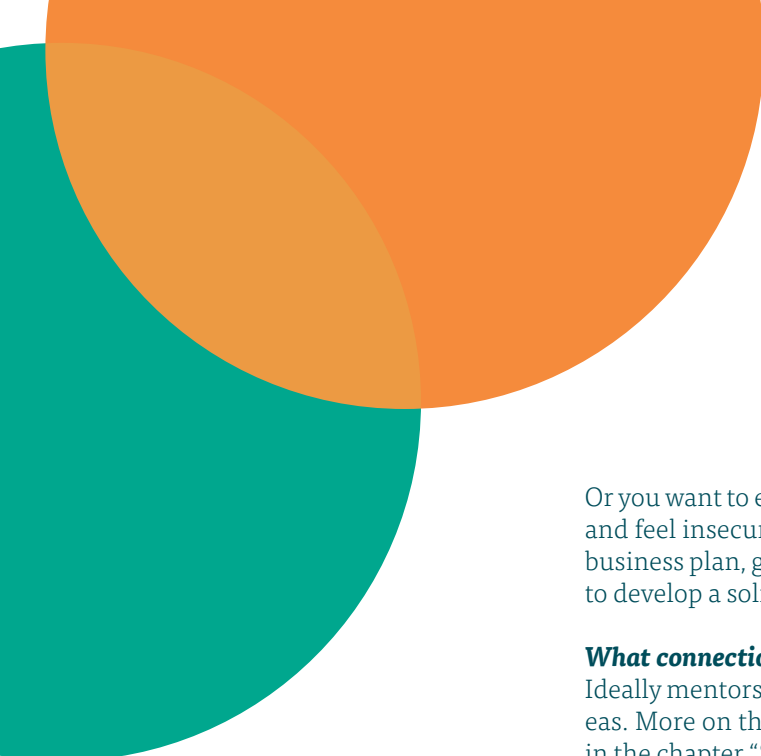
Maybe you lack confidence, or background knowledge, you don't know how to get into the desired field of work and what is required there or don't feel skilled enough for your dream job. Or your limiting belief that it is risky to be an entrepreneur and your own boss, holds you back from starting your own business.

It could also be that you haven't looked for a new job in a long time and have no idea what to expect from an interview for the position you desire.

You can see on the Canvas that the colour changes slightly, as this is the area where your mentor comes in, this is the area where she/he might be able to provide a helping hand, some ideas or advice.

### ***What questions and/or challenges could my mentor help me with?***

Now after getting a picture of your destination and the challenges on the way, break them down and think of concrete areas and questions you can work through with your mentor. Since the mentoring exchange should ideally be driven by the mentee, this section should help you to explore potential topics for your conversations. Maybe you lack confidence to apply for a new job as you haven't done that in years. Your mentor could give you an advice on how to prepare, or simulate a job interview in a role play and coach you through it. She/he can go over your CV, give you honest feedback on your skills or rehearse with you how to present yourself in front of your potential employer.



Or you want to establish a own business for the first time in your life and feel insecure and overwhelmed. Your mentor can go over your business plan, give advice what to consider in the beginning or how to develop a solid, sustainable strategy.

**What connections would help me?**

Ideally mentors can help you to connect with new people, in new areas. More on the importance of this connections and social capital in the chapter “Social Capital”.

Taking the example from the question before, maybe she/he is not the right person to assess your CV and see if it is meeting current standards, but can connect you to a friend or colleague who works in Human Resources and can ask them to go over it with you.

Or you would like to talk with someone who works on the same level and job area than the one you'd like to change into, so you can get a better impression and decide whether the job really would suit you. One of her/his former team mates made the same transition a few years earlier, and can give insights into the daily job life.

So you could write in this section e.g. "Someone to look at my CV and give me advice how to improve it", or, "Someone who works at XX and can openly tell me about the possible positive aspects and challenges of the job".

**What resources would help me?**

This section is a bit of a tricky one because your mentor is not your financial supporter. But sometimes, lacking resources are hindering your progress, resources that your mentor might be easily able to access.

Here are two examples, taken from my own mentoring relationship, to illustrate what can be meant by resources: My mentees are young East African social entrepreneurs who are establishing a social innovation academy. Our connection staled because their phones broke regularly or the operating system couldn't be updated anymore. They told me about this issue in one of our online meetings. As I knew people who always had the latest smart phones and didn't know what to do with their old ones, I was able to send my



mentees a package with fully functioning phones through a person that travelled to Uganda.

Another example was the access to design software that they needed to create advertisements, course materials and train their students on its use. In this case we found several solutions. For some software, you can get a cheaper license through referral programmes, and I was further able to advise them on programmes that are free of charge.

*It is crucial to discuss the last two questions with your mentor. As mentioned before the concept of what mentoring is, can be different in different cultures and professional areas and can vary from person to person. To avoid misunderstandings, expectation being unmet and disappointments the wishes of the mentee and what the mentor can and wants to offer need to get aligned.*

## **The Mentor Canvas – outlining the possible areas of support on the mentoring journey**

### **Where am I now?**

Similar to the mentee, you can write briefly about your current job situation, or your own business and describe in which area you are working in, what your role(s), responsibilities and tasks are.

### **What am I really good at? What are my fields of expertise?**

The answers in the section can aid the matching process and give your mentee later also an idea in which areas you can share your expertise, knowledge and potentially answer her/his questions.

### **What connections and/or resources can I help a mentee to access?**

Before putting your answers in here, consider two things – what do you see as part of the mentoring role and what connections and/or resources are you willing, without a feeling pressure or obligation, to give access to.

Not all mentors help their mentees to connect with people from inside their circle, they might see their role more focussed on helping the mentee to work through her/his challenges and on their goals. Others enjoy introducing their mentees to other people who can be of help in their journey and to observe what emerges from this new connection.

The same applies to resources. Here are some examples what is understood by "resources". Maybe your company has a library with books that are useful for the mentee to achieve her/his (development) goals and you can easily give access to these resources so she/he can dive deeper into topics that are relevant for them. Or you can let the mentee work on your company's computers and use a specific software so they can improve their skills, that are required for the job they aim for. Or your company organises a training, that the mentee can join for free or a reduced fee.

As this section is quite relevant for the aligning of images of mentoring between mentor and mentee, give yourself some time to reflect on the answers. What you add here should feel good for you. The section can be left blank or elements added later after the conversation and alignment with the mentee.

### ***What big challenges or obstacles did I overcome on my way?***

Your notes and answers in this section are relevant in two ways:

- a. They show the mentee that even people they adore or who have "made it", didn't have the way paved out for them, but that they too have faced obstacles, been tested and struggled. These challenges don't mean it is the end of the journey and there are ways to overcome them.
- b. The challenges you have already tackled, might be the ones they currently have to overcome. You can share your experience, point out resources, skills, mindsets or helpful approaches to the mentee. And, with you experience in the background, you can lead her/him with questions that help them to discover their solutions and find their own way out.



***What do I hope to get out of a mentoring relationship?***

As this book promotes a mentoring philosophy that focuses on mutual learning and benefits from the mentoring relationship, consider what you would like to learn, experience, get to know better through your mentee and/or working and sharing with her/him.

A close relationship, like the mentoring relationship you are trying to develop over the next few months, is a great way to learn, broaden horizons and immerse yourself in new areas, also for the mentor. Some examples can be, that you want to learn more about the culture of your mentee or their challenges in navigating in your own one. Or they can teach you something about digital technologies, or the usage of social media. Or you want to understand what drives the generation your mentee belongs to, etc.

***What knowledge, know-how, experience, etc. can I share with a mentee?***

The question differs a bit from the first one on the Canvas, as you sure have know-how and experience that goes beyond the one you draw on in your current occupation.

Maybe you had your own business before and can share insights into the entrepreneurial journey. Or you went back to university after being on a job for some years and can illustrate what motivated you or how you managed the transition from employee to student and once again learner. Or you are a parent and can give insights on how to balance work and family.

## Matching – Aligning the Mentee and Mentor Canvas

The filled Canvases can be used as a part of the matching process and the initiation phase of the mentoring relationship in different ways:

The **mentoring coordinator** in a formal mentoring programme can send the blank Canvases out to interested candidates – potential mentors and mentees – and later match them based on their answers in the respective sections. Possible matching strategies are described on the right and the next page.

An **individual mentee** looking for a mentor can first "map" her-/himself and then either send the mentor version of the Canvas to people she/he would love to have as mentors or use the Canvas as a guide in a personal conversation.

A **potential mentor** who is interested in providing support to people by mentoring them, can fill in the fields on the Canvas and use it as a kind of "offer" page or a summary to share with potential mentee candidates.

A **mentoring pair or dyad** can, after the matching has already taken place, use the Canvas to align their images of mentoring and their expectations, to discuss what both wish to get out of the relationship, to identify potential areas for (mutual) support and as an input to draft a development plan for the mentee.

**The Canvas can be used as starting point** and be adapted and extended in the course of the relationship, once the pair got to know each other better and have build trust among them.

The two Canvas are designed in such a way, that when the mentor and the mentee version are laid out next to each other, in either a horizontal or vertical manner, the adjacent fields/questions give a clue about potential fits. The different shades of orange function as an additional guidance.

The charts on the following two pages illustrate some of the matching possibilities.

<b>Mentoring Canvas Mentee</b> WHERE AM I NOW?	WHAT ARE MY BIGGEST CHALLENGES OR OBSTACLES ON THE WAY THERE?	WHAT QUESTIONS AND/OR CHALLENGES COULD MY MENTOR HELP ME WITH?	<b>Mentoring Canvas Mentor</b> WHERE AM I NOW?	WHAT BIG CHALLENGES OR OBSTACLES DID I OVERCOME ON MY WAY THERE?	WHAT DO I HOPE TO GET OUT OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?
WHAT AM I REALLY GOOD AT?		WHAT CONNECTIONS WOULD HELP ME?	WHAT ARE MY FIELDS OF EXPERTISE? WHAT AM I REALLY GOOD AT?		WHAT KNOWLEDGE, KNOW-HOW, EXPERIENCE, ETC. CAN I SHARE WITH A MENTEE?
WHERE DO I WANT TO BE?		WHAT RESOURCES WOULD HELP ME?	WHAT CONNECTIONS AND/OR RESOURCES CAN I HELP A MENTEE TO ACCESS?		

With the **Mentee Canvas on the left** and the **Mentor Canvas on the right** matches can be found based on the answers to the questions "What questions and/or challenges could my mentor help me with?" (mentee) and "Where am I now?" and "What are my fields of expertise? What am I really good at?" (mentor).

This matching looks more at the current state, bringing mentors and mentees together based on the mentor's current job and experience. With this Canvas arrangement additional matches can be made, looking at possible connections and resources the mentor is willing to share. The mentor's responses to the question

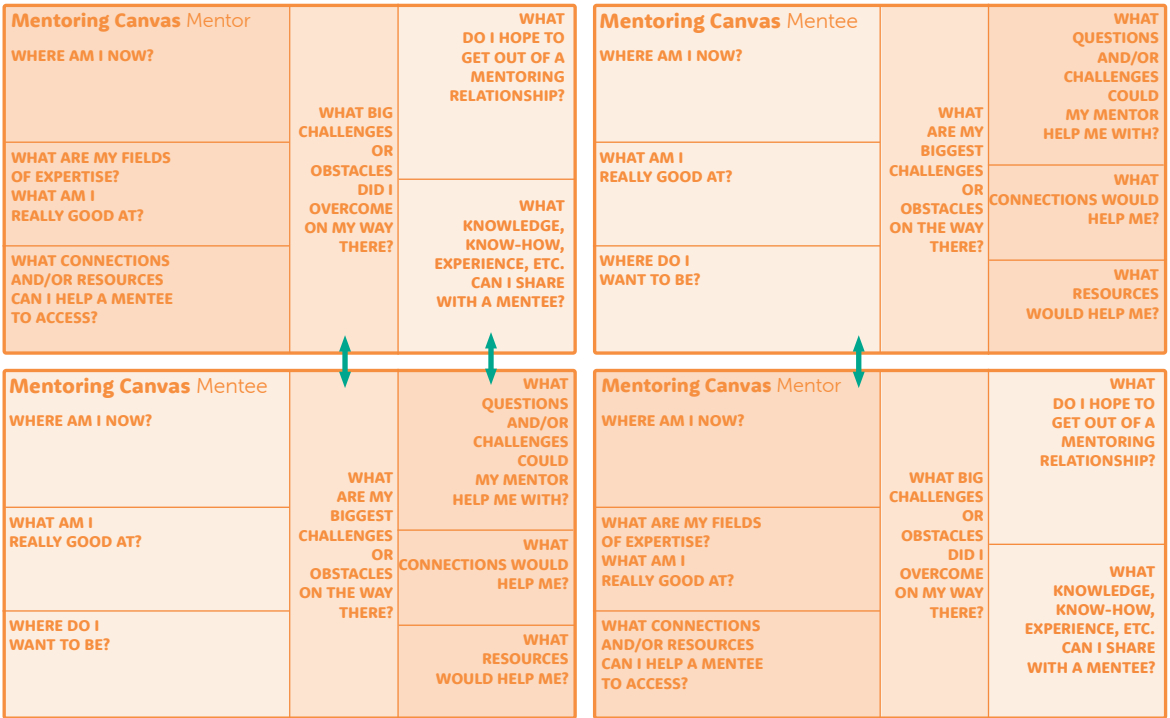
"What connection and/or resources can I help a mentee to access?" can be compared with the ones by the mentee to "What connections would help me?", "What resources would help me?". As mentioned before sponsorship isn't necessary seen as a part of the mentor role and should also not be the main focus of the relationship.

<b>Mentoring Canvas Mentor</b> WHERE AM I NOW?	WHAT BIG CHALLENGES OR OBSTACLES DID I OVERCOME ON MY WAY THERE?	WHAT DO I HOPE TO GET OUT OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?	<b>Mentoring Canvas Mentee</b> WHERE AM I NOW?	WHAT ARE MY BIGGEST CHALLENGES OR OBSTACLES ON THE WAY THERE?	WHAT QUESTIONS AND/OR CHALLENGES COULD MY MENTOR HELP ME WITH?
WHAT ARE MY FIELDS OF EXPERTISE? WHAT AM I REALLY GOOD AT?		WHAT KNOWLEDGE, KNOW-HOW, EXPERIENCE, ETC. CAN I SHARE WITH A MENTEE?	WHAT AM I REALLY GOOD AT?		WHAT CONNECTIONS WOULD HELP ME?
WHAT CONNECTIONS AND/OR RESOURCES CAN I HELP A MENTEE TO ACCESS?			WHERE DO I WANT TO BE?		WHAT RESOURCES WOULD HELP ME?

With the **Mentee Canvas on the right** and the **Mentor Canvas on the left** matches from the mentee's perspective are possible looking at their responses to the questions "Where

do I want to be?" with the ones by the mentor to "What knowledge, know-how, experience, etc. can I share with a mentee?" This pairing can also utilise knowledge and experience from


the past. Matching from the point of view of the mentor, who should also benefit from the relationship, could be based on the current situation and the skills/knowledge of the mentee.



With the Canvases aligned vertically – the Mentor Canvas on the top and the Mentee Canvas at the bottom matches can be made around challenges, the ones that the mentee is currently experiencing with the ones that the mentor has already tackled. In this pairing the mentee can profit from the mentor's experience in deal-

ing with specific challenges and her/his advice. Another match within the same "theme" can be established by looking at the mentor's response to "What knowledge, know-how, experience, etc. can I share with a mentee?" and the mentee's to "What questions and/or challenges could my mentor help me with?"

With the Mentee Canvas on the top and the Mentor Canvas at the bottom the mentor's "Where am I now?" can function as an inspiration for the mentee's vision "Where do I want to be?". If the mentor works in a field or role the mentee wants to grow into, she/he can function as a role model and provide current insights.



The described matching possibilities are just a few of many, and follow a more logical approach – one of the involved people is offering something that the other is looking for.

Experienced practitioners, who match dyads often, shared that there is one element involved in the matching process, that is difficult to assess via a normed questionnaire or through the logic of an algorithm – **the selected mentor-mentee-pair also has to feel like a good match**. There needs to be "chemistry" between them and both – mentor and mentee – really have to have the desire to work with each other and support each other on their development journey.

One mentoring coordinator mentioned in the interview after being asked whether they would hand over the matching to an algorithm *"...mentoring is about a relationship... you need to have this information that has this personal touch, this knowledge to help with the relationship. I'm the facilitator of the relationship..."* And another explained, that after reviewing the application forms of the mentors and mentees, and identifying possible matches, she makes the final match based on the feeling of which combination could work well. She knows most of the mentors in person and if she doesn't, she either meets them in person or on the phone to find out more about what their motivation is and the type of mentee the mentor would like to support.

Some of the mentoring programme organisers that I have talked to during the research phase for this Playbook all mentioned that their mentees have the option to swap mentors once, if they feel that the match is not working.

Good matches seem to be made by assessing the matching answers to the Canvas, or a similar questionnaire, by finding out more about a person's motivation to get into a mentoring relationship, by giving the two involved parties – the mentor and the mentee – the opportunity to get to know each other and evaluate if the connection feels right and by their commitment to the relationship, the desire to really want to work with each other.

The answers from the experts in my research seem to match with statements in other studies about the success of mentoring programmes and the respective matchings. The mentoring relationship is more successful, more transformative, more inspiring, if the mentee (and mentor) have the option to choose or at least have a say in their match, or opt out of the relationship if it doesn't feel right. And further it is a prerequisite that both parties get into the relationship on a voluntary basis (even if they are part of a mentoring programme). Forced matches, e.g. through a prescribed mentoring programme, that employees have to participate in don't seem to reach the potential of one that has come about because both parties have chosen it voluntarily and feel comfortable with the constellation.

# Mentoring Canvas Mentee

**WHERE AM I NOW?**

**WHAT AM I REALLY GOOD AT?**

**WHERE DO I WANT TO BE?**





<b>WHAT ARE MY BIGGEST CHALLENGES OR OBSTACLES ON THE WAY THERE?</b>	<b>WHAT QUESTIONS AND/OR CHALLENGES COULD MY MENTOR HELP ME WITH?</b>
	<b>WHAT CONNECTIONS WOULD HELP ME?</b>
	<b>WHAT RESOURCES WOULD HELP ME?</b>

# Mentoring Canvas Mentor

**WHERE AM I NOW?**

**WHAT ARE MY FIELDS OF EXPERTISE?  
WHAT AM I REALLY GOOD AT?**

**WHAT CONNECTIONS AND/OR RESOURCES  
CAN I HELP A MENTEE TO ACCESS?**



**WHAT DO I HOPE TO GET OUT  
OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?**

**WHAT BIG  
CHALLENGES  
OR OBSTACLES  
DID I OVERCOME  
ON MY WAY  
THERE?**

**WHAT KNOWLEDGE, KNOW-HOW,  
EXPERIENCE, ETC. CAN I SHARE  
WITH A MENTEE?**

## Intercultural Aspects

A match between two people coming from different geographical and/or organisational cultures, or from different professional fields can be exciting, provide a unique perspective and, in addition to the development focus, extended learning opportunities. The mentee and mentor can further become cultural mentors for each other, who provide background knowledge, explain traditions, values and customs and translate between the different cultures.

To make the best out of this mentoring relationship, it helps to keep few themes in mind that might have an impact on the collaboration:

**Expectation management and role of the mentor** – as mentioned before the image of what mentoring is and what the role of the mentor includes can differ between countries and professional fields. Therefore, reconciling these images, discussing them, and clarifying how the programme organiser or mentoring pair defines the roles in the relationship is crucial. Another element to consider in relation to the role of the mentor is whether they are seen as an authority figure. In Central and Northern Europe and the US people tend to be used to work with people older than them, in higher positions, or senior to them, like a boss, teacher or mentor, on eye level. People coming from countries (or professional fields) with high power distance and hierarchical leadership style tend to accept authority and might not challenge what the mentor says, or at least not to an extent as a person who is used to work on even foot across hierarchy levels. They also will hesitate to express their own ideas and wishes and wait for and follow instructions from the mentor.

**Sharing personal successes and achievements** – people coming from more collectivist cultures (China, Indonesia, Kenya, some of the Latin American and Eastern European countries, among others) might find it challenging to note down their personal achievements and tend to put their own contribution second to that of the group. (Molinsky calls that culture dimension "Self-promotion"). So the question "What am I really good at?" might not get answered in the beginning. [A26]

**No isn't necessarily expressed as "No"** – high context cultures (Japan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Iran, France, Russia etc.) and/or those who use indirect negative feedback (Japan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, UK, Brazil, etc.) might not say "no" directly but express their disagreement by asking counter questions, blurring the message or using body language or silence.

**Saving the face** – a concept that is also common in high context cultures goes in line with the previous example of saying "no". People coming from these cultures will not express their opinion, criticism or disagreement directly to save the face of the other person, especially one in a hierarchically higher position, and their own one. The concept of "face" is combination of social standing, reputation, influence, dignity, and honour. [see 38, 26]

In the early stages, when negotiating the focus of the mentoring relationship, but also in the later work together, in situations when disagreement, or own considerations that contradict those of the mentor (senior to the mentee) need to be expressed, people coming from previously mentioned cultural backgrounds will be at least hesitant. Some patience and knowledge about how to get the right answers and their answers right, might be needed.



## Further Readings & Resources:

### **[www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries](http://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries)**

An online tool plus explanation of the different cultural dimensions as defined by Geert Hofstede, one of the most famous and often cited researchers on cultural difference.

The tool allows you to compare different country cultures based on Hofstede's six dimensions (Power Distance – Individualism – Masculinity – Uncertainty Avoidance – Long-term Orientation – Indulgence).

### **Meyer, Erin (2014) *The Culture Map – Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business***

A wonderful book, explaining the cultural dimensions that Meyer identified (Communicating – Evaluating – Persuading – Leading – Deciding – Trusting – Disagreeing – Scheduling) and illustrating their impact on the basis of daily job life situations. She is also providing how-tos and good practices to deal with cultural differences.

# Mentoring Itinerary – Your Goals

*After you have worked on the Mentoring Canvas and aligned your images about mentoring, your "offers" and expectations and discussed your bigger, long-term goals, it is time to break them down. The goals provide further orientation and input for the content of your mentoring conversation. Like a travel itinerary they give some guidance what you can "see" or do next.*

## Which materials do you need?

### The Value Worksheets

Either take a copy from the Playbook or download and print them directly from the website.

There are three different worksheets, one for long-term goals that can be incorporated into your development plan, one for medium-term goals that can be achieved e.g. during the set duration of a mentoring programme, and one for short-term goals that help to create a plan for your mentoring conversations.

### The Mentoring Canvas

The filled Mentoring Canvas gives you input and orientation for the development of your goals.

### PC or pens, pencils & markers

Choose the medium that you feel most comfortable with. Transferring the goals to a digital format after creating the first draft, is recommended, as they are then easier to share.

### Post-its or sticky notes

When drafting your goals on paper they let you rearrange goals and move them between the individual sheets.

Although people's perceptions of what goals are, the importance they give to them and their approaches to achieve them, differ a first step towards them can be to make them visible, by writing them down.

They can help to verbalise what you (the mentee) want and give the mentor an idea where she or he can set interventions (through providing input or feedback, introducing and connecting you to certain people, etc.) and support you in the best possible way.

The list of goals can feed into a development plan and vice versa. With the canvas you already started to gather some key elements for it's development.

## Drafting a development plan

Usually development plans consist of at least the elements listed below, some of them you have collected in your canvas:

- a. **Self-assessment** – Canvas: Where am I now? (and most of the left side of the Mentee Canvas, plus additional details about your professional interests, knowledge and skills)
- b. **Goals** – Canvas: Where do I want to be? More and more detailed goals emerge from the work on the Goal Worksheets.
- c. **Strategies** – What are the approaches to achieve your goals? (one of them is having a mentor, but others can be pursuing a further education, joining meet-ups, etc.)
- d. **Resources** – Canvas: most of the right side. Which knowledge, people, tools, institutions, etc. are needed to attain your goals?
- e. **Time lines or -frames** – The different time frames in which you want and can attain your goals.

The development plan and the goals sheets can guide the mentoring conversation, they can provide input on what to cover in it.



### **Breaking down your goals**

You might already have had lists of goals before the beginning of your mentoring relationship, you have aligned your images about the possible support through your mentor, and outlined on the Canvas where you want to be, what your challenges look like and what resources and inputs would help you.

Now you break the big goal(s) down into smaller steps, that can be achieved over the course of a defined period of time.

The first step, that bridges the Mentoring Canvas and the Goals Worksheets is that you take your answers from your "Where do I want to be?" question and translate them into concrete goals or actions that you can or need to take.

For example if you want to change job areas, you might first have to talk to people who work in that area you want to develop yourself into to get a better understanding what is required there. You might have to get additional training or pursue a university (short) course, or you might be able to join a trainee programme within a company that operates in that job area, etc.

As there are always multiple ways to achieve a goal, the first step has more of a brainstorming character, it results in a draft of possible steps and goals.

From that first draft you take all the goals that take one year to achieve (e.g. in the previous example, the further academic education will take usually 1-3 years) and transfer them to the long-term Goals Worksheet. Before you take the next step, ask yourself a few crucial questions:

**"Are these really my goals?"**

**"Why do I want to achieve them?"**

**"What can I realistically accomplish in a given time frame?"**

### **How much time do you need?**

#### **About 1 hour/sheet**

This is a rough estimate, as it very much depends on the amount and type of your goals. It is recommended to take the time and give them a good thought.

### **Who is it for?**

#### **For the mentee**

To get an overview, discover the reasons behind them, to break them down and make them achievable, as a reminder, etc. They provide a long-, mid- and short-time perspective, provide input for your development plan and your mentoring conversation.

#### **For the mentor**

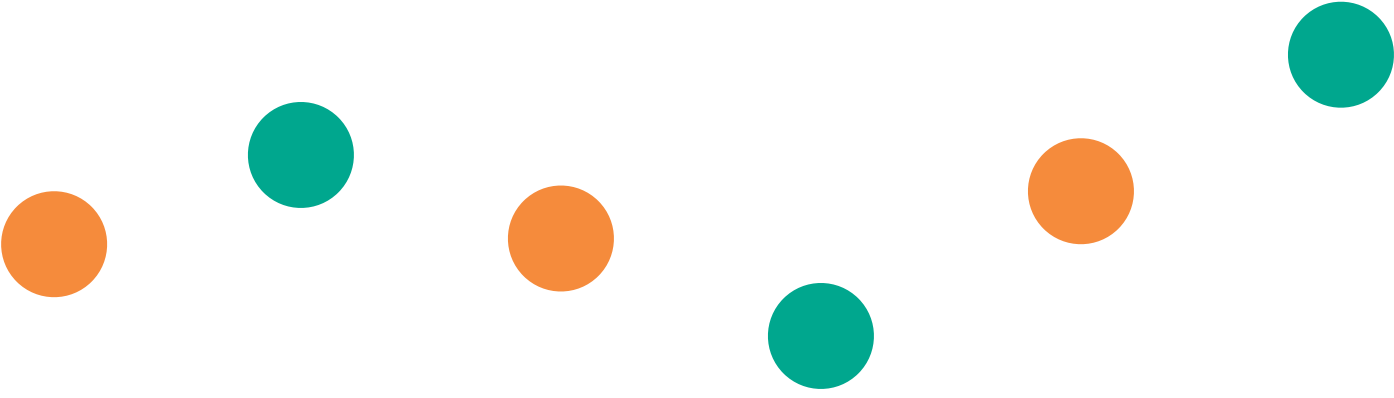
To get an orientation what kind of support is needed and to be able to hold the mentee accountable for her/his own goals.

#### **For both**

To discuss the goals and support need and optionally create an agenda for your conversations.

### **In which part of the mentoring journey are they useful?**

**In the beginning and whenever bigger changes occur (e.g. promotion)**



You might say: "Of course are these MY goals!" Ask yourself again and if the answer is yes, then keep them on the list or cross them out or delete them.

Why do I pose these questions? For example, I have friends and have worked with people, who studied for eight years in a field that they were not passionate about, just because it has been valued in their family, to always finish what you've started. Or somebody had told them that one can only pursue a certain career if you have this or this academic certificate or title.

Your "why" can fuel you on the path to achieving your goals; if you find one that aligns with your values and vision of your best possible life, even more so. For example: I quit my well paid job, to go on a journey around the world. My "Why" back then has been, that I wanted to get new inspiration and inputs that could help to challenge the status quo, what I considered true until then. I hoped to achieve this not only through the mere act of traveling and exploring new countries, and talking to different people, but by learning from them how education and entrepreneurship "work" around the world. I had two guiding questions, that set the course – one was dealing with education and one with entrepreneurship.

Once you have completed your list of long-term goals, divide each of them first into medium-term goals and then into short-term goals. So in the example above, my goal for many years (long term) was to travel, my "why" was to get inspiration and new input, other long term goals that "paid into" the big goal were to save money, prepare for the transition from full time job to full time travel, medium term goals were to find someone to rent my flat, get all the necessary information, visas, vaccinations and the short term goals were to gather information about each country, make phone calls to the companies and educational institutions I wanted to talk to, book the accommodation and flights, etc.





The aim of this whole exercise is to get to a level, size or dimension of a goal that you can manage in a certain time interval.

Personally I learned to appreciate the Japanese "Kaizen" [see 22] approach, one of small-step improvements or developments, that can also be found within agile product development philosophies, even more so in the last 1,5 years of the corona crisis.

So I take small but continuous steps towards a goal. If a step is not possible or the situation changes, I adapt, choose an alternative path and take the next step. This does not mean that I constantly change direction or give up quickly, but if an approach is not possible or does not seem to work or is disproportionately tedious, it is a way of moving towards the goal anyway.

For example: A personal goal could be to reach a certain level of fitness. You had planned to go to yoga classes or the gym, but with the ever-changing regulations, they were first kept open, then closed and then opened again. So achieving this goal became more difficult and led to frustrations, also you had no control over some factors that made the goal difficult to achieve. So a short time goal adjustment could be that instead of going to the fitness club or yoga class, you could go jogging or biking or practice yoga at home. Kaizen applied could mean, doing 15-20 min workouts every day.

Everyone has their own strategies for moving towards their goals. Discuss these with your mentor too, he or she may have some good suggestions to help you improve your strategies. A commonly suggested strategy for developing goals is to make them SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely).

Small, achievable goals help to give energy or keep energy high on a longer "journey". The feeling you get when you have achieved something that was on your list can provide the energy and motivate you need to achieve your big goals.

# Mentoring Itinerary – Your LONG-TERM Goals

*Use the goals templates to draft your long-, medium- and short-term goals, and both professional (which will usually be dealt with in the mentoring relationship) and personal ones (depending on your shared definition of mentoring, your mentor can also provide input on those, and sometimes personal and professional ones are connected). Note down your long-term goals first, answer the questions and then break them down in medium- and short-time ones. The long-term ones have a time horizon of more than one year.*

## **What do I want to accomplish long-term? How and where do I want to be? Which skills, mindsets, strategies, etc. do I want to develop?**

(Add both personal and professional goals and cross-check them with your answer to "Where do I want to be on your Mentoring Canvas.)

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**Is this goal really my own one?**

(Or I am I trying to achieve something, because of, or for someone else?)

**YES**

**NO**

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**Why do I want to achieve that goal? What is my reason behind? Why is it so important for me?**

(Some goals are interlocking, e.g. to pursue a further education, because another long term goal is a better position, or one, that you want to spend more time with like-minded people, etc.)

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# Mentoring Itinerary – Your MID-TERM Goals

*The medium-term goals are the building blocks for the long-term ones; achieving them takes you one step further to the big ones. The medium-term ones have a time horizon of about half a year to a year.*

*My approach is to assign time frames or deadlines to this level, which then allows an estimation when the long-term ones can be achieved; I think you first have to know what steps are required, the sub-goals, to be able to estimate how long it will take to work on them, and only then can you add up the respective durations and calculate the time until the long-term goals are achieved. But you can also give the long-term ones a date or a time span first and adjust the medium-term ones accordingly.*

## **Which sub-goals, resources and decisions are necessary to achieve my long-term goals?**

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**Which long-term goal(s) does it belong to or pay into?**

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**Which information, people and/or resources do I need to be able to achieve that goal?**

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**What's the time-frame?**

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## Mentoring Itinerary – Your SHORT-TERM Goals

*The short-term goals are the small steps that, if you achieve them, will propel you along your path. This can be a single phone call, or an evening of online research, or sending your CV to a company you like to work for. You can choose the gradation or size of the goals according to your preferences. For one person a phone call may not be worth mentioning, for another it is an important step and writing it down will help him or her commit to it.*

*You will probably need several copies of this template, depending on the number of long and medium term goals, but also on the step size you choose.*

*You can discuss all three sheets with your mentor, and he or she can help you assess whether your estimation is appropriate for the given time frame or if there are steps missing along the way.*

### **What small steps do I have to and can I take to achieve my mid-term goals in time?**

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**Which mid-term goal(s) does it belong to or pay into?**

**Which information, people, resources, mindset, etc. do I need for this step?**

**Till when will I take this step?**

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## Intercultural Aspects

What is a desirable goal and what is not? Apart from being a philosophical question, it is also one whose corresponding answers vary greatly between people of different (work) cultures, genders, generations, etc.

Cultures with long-term vs. short-term orientation will see and define goals differently, and might apply different time frames, so will monochronic vs. polychronic (also called linear vs. flexible time) ones. People coming from cultures where the "we" is more in focus than the "I" (collectivistic vs. individualistic cultures) will have a different focus and probably other factors to consider on the way towards the goals. There are (organisational) cultures that are more process rather than goals-oriented, etc. [see 15, 16, 19, 22]

The goal sheets on the preceding pages were developed based on input from the expert interviews I conducted during the research phase. A common theme in my conversations with leaders of organisations that run mentoring programmes or offer mentoring as part of a wider range of education and development activities is how to define and deal with goals in the mentoring relationship. Questions such as: "What are the mentee's professional and personal goals? What is the overarching goal? How do the smaller goals fit into the larger or even the overarching vision, and how can the mentee set realistic and achievable goals?" came up in almost every case. Clarity about goals can help with the matching process and finding the right mentor, but it can also provide the mentor with the information needed to give the right input or connect the mentee with the right people. It can also help to set realistic expectations about the mentoring relationship and what can be achieved with the support of a mentor.

Since the development process, the mentoring relationship and the issues addressed in the conversations should be driven by the mentee (she or he should take responsibility for her/his learning), it is crucial to work with goals that are truly their own. Neither should the mentor define the goals, nor should mentees try to achieve goals that are not theirs. It just leads to frustrations and in the worst case to a break up of the relationship.

The goals the mentee sets for her-/himself, should be challenging them enough to grow, but not feel draining and sometimes they need to be adjusted, they shall be seen as framework not binding contract. However, they can act as a supportive tool to keep the mentee accountable for their own learning process.

What I've noticed about myself in my mentoring relationship was that as a Central European coming from a performance-oriented profession and mentoring young East Africans, despite all my intercultural knowledge about different preferences in the background, sometimes I just had to take the pace out and not unconsciously try to impose my attitude towards goals on my mentees as well. The goal and achievement orientation can be almost like second nature and is not always conscious.

What helped me (and hopefully my mentees) was firstly to ask them what is important to them, what they are working towards and what a good goal looks like for them and what impact achieving the goal should and will have on their lives and the way they feel? Then as a second question, how many people they feel responsible for? Is it only themselves they need to plan and care for, or also the family or even the extended family or community? And I often "translate" between the different approaches, e.g. by explaining that in Austria/Germany it is more expected that people stick to goals and even trust building or loss is based on that, but that none of the approaches is more correct, but can simply become an issue in intercultural cooperation.





## Further Readings & Resources:

**Maurer, Robert (2004) One Small Step Can Change Your Life.  
THE KAIZEN WAY**

The book guides you on the way to incorporating the ancient Japanese practice of Kaizen into everyday life and illustrates how small changes can have great consequences and can lead to worthwhile goals. Maurer, a clinical psychologist explains why small steps can help to trick the brain and its strategies, that make achieving goals often so much harder.

**Sinek, Simon (2011) Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire  
Everyone To Take Action**

*"Why are some people and organizations more inventive, pioneering and successful than others? And why are they able to repeat their success again and again?"* Sinek designed a framework, The Golden Circle, with the WHY, the purpose in its centre. The book helps you to discover your own WHY.

**Burnett, Bill & Evans, Dave (2016) Designing Your Life: How to Build  
a Well-Lived, Joyful Life**

Based on the design thinking approach that designers and innovators use to design solutions that solve problems, Burnett and Evans show how you can apply it to your own life. The book is based on their class of the same name at Stanford University.

# Bianca Tschalkner

## **What country were you born in?**

I was born in Austria.

## **What country do you currently live in?**

I currently live between Austria and Spain.

## **Which culture or subculture do you consider belonging to or do you associate yourself with?**

As someone who was born and raised in Austria, I obviously belong to Austrian culture but at the same time, after having stayed abroad a great part of my adult life, I also feel like a world citizen.

## **What does DIVERSITY mean for you, and what impact does it have on you, your work and the society as a whole?**

For me personally, as in how I try to live, diversity means to enjoy the abundance that the world is offering, to have a rich life. It means to play and to experience and to stay curious and to be in awe of what all there is. This approach also applies to my work regarding content, because my work is inspired by lots of different journeys and cultures and stories. But also regarding form, diversity is important for my work, because I'd get bored doing the same thing over and over: I like to work in a lot of different techniques and media – illustration, printmaking, writing, bookmaking, map-making, ceramics...

## **How can DIVERSITY be expressed in images?**

I chose to illustrate the theme with a paper-cut totem. The faces of my totem all look similar, like in the saying "cast from the same mold" or as we say in German "like cut from one piece of wood", but they are very different regarding their features and their adornments. The beauty about diversity, when we're talking about humans or cultures, is also to recognise similarities, things that we have in common – there is always a structure holding us together, otherwise we would not speak about diversity, we would speak about chaos. Totem is a word derived from "ototeman" in Ojibwe, a native Canadian language, which means "siblings", and siblings are a great example for diversity – they are individuals and can be totally different from each other, but still there is something holding them together, something that they all have in common: the family. And the same thing applies for humanity as a whole – even though our cultures are totally different, we all belong to the human family and what makes us humans, our feelings, wishes, sorrows, is always the same.



# A Heroine's or Hero's Journey

*Stories are a powerful tool to connect people, foster empathy, break down barriers and build trust. They can convey values, provide insights into different cultures and help to understand the past and shape the future.*

*You too have been the heroine or hero of several stories.*

## Which materials do you need?

### A copy of the story worksheet, a notebook or your PC

Choose the medium or/and program that lets you think creatively and supports you best in drafting and structuring the story.

You can jot down only keywords and crucial elements or you can put the whole story into written form.

### Pens, pencils & markers

To take notes, make little scribbles or charts and highlight key elements or transition points.

### Pictures and items that play a role in the story

As inspiration during the preparation and later when sharing the story to get the attention of the listener and involve all their senses.

## How much time do you need?

### Preparation time

about 1 hour

To select, reflect on and draft the story.

### Presentation time

max. 15-20min

The stories during your mentoring meetings shouldn't take up too much time of your actual exchange. However, feel free to extend the time frame and allow time for discussion afterwards.

A story, according to the Collins Dictionary, is

... a description of imaginary people and events, which is written or told in order to entertain.

... a description of an event or something that happened to someone, especially a spoken description of it.

The story of something is a description of all the important things that have happened to it since it began. And there seems to be a slight difference between British and American English.

### BE

1. a narration of a chain of events told or written in prose or verse
2. Also called: short story, a piece of fiction, briefer and usually less detailed than a novel
3. Also called: story line, the plot of a book, film, etc.
4. an event that could be the subject of a narrative
5. a report or statement on a matter or event
6. the event or material for such a report
7. Informal, a lie, fib, or untruth
8. See *cut a long story short*
9. See *the same old story*
10. See *the story goes*

### AE

1. the telling of a happening or connected series of happenings, whether true or fictitious; account; narration
2. an anecdote or joke

3. a. a fictitious literary composition in prose or poetry, shorter than a novel; narrative; tale; specif., short story  
b. the form of literature represented by such compositions
4. the plot of a novel, play, film, etc.
5. a. a report or rumor  
b. Informal, a falsehood or fib
6. romantic legend or history
7. a. a news event or a report of it  
b. Informal, the pertinent facts or circumstances relating to a particular person, situation, etc., esp. such facts not widely known or previously revealed. *What's his story?*
8. Informal, the situation with regard to the subject being discussed; the aggregate of facts or circumstances involved. *What's the story on the hostages?* [A2]



## Stories can serve many purposes

Nancy Stein [35] writes, *"Stories are perhaps one of the oldest literary forms known to mankind. Through stories, the history and cultural heritage of many societies has been preserved."*

And shares reasons why stories were told and what their function was: As a form of oral preservation of the culture of a civilisation they were passed on in great detail from generation to generation. The word for "story" in Italian (storia) and German (Geschichte) *"still reflects the historical dimension incorporated into the story form"*. [35]

Later stories were used to instruct, educate, explain natural phenomena, share moral codes and values. *"Indeed, some stories were and still are told to introduce children and adults to new ways of thinking about values, and to present points of view that might initially be contrary to those held by the reader or listener."* [35]

Another function of stories is to resolve personal social problems, and the *"recapitulation and reorganisation of personal experience.(...) children and adults frequently use the story form to recreate a version of their previous experiences, and in doing so often elaborate or change the organizational structure of their experience. By retelling a personal "story", both children and adults frequently impose a more elaborate structure on their personal knowledge of a situation"* [35] Through this process they are connecting the dots and integrate *"previously unconnected segments of information into a more cohesive representation."* [35]

As her explanation shows, there are many ways to tell stories and many reasons, why we do – from pure entertainment, to passing on cultural values, to introducing new ways of thinking, to the personal problem-solving that takes place when telling or writing one's own story.

## Who is it for?

### For both

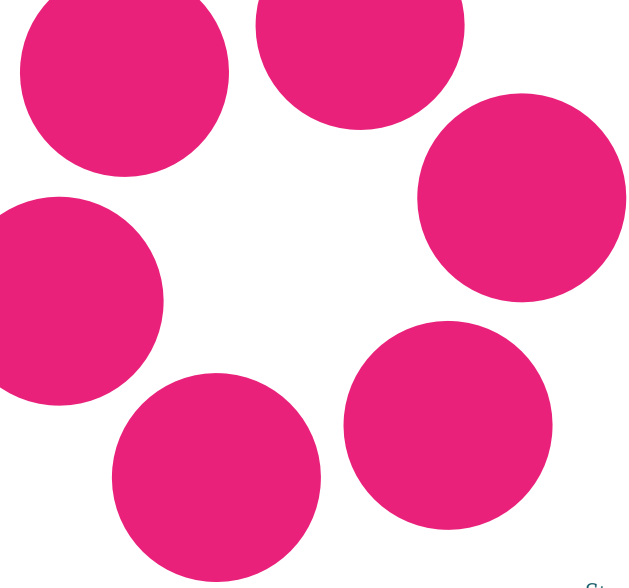
To share more about themselves and their fields of work, about important lessons learned, events on their journey, to convey values that are important to them personally and/or in their culture.

### For the mentee

Sharing stories of their own achievement or of tackling challenges, brings their own internal resources and their support network to their mind.

## In which part of the mentoring journey is it useful?

**Throughout the whole mentoring journey**



Stories stay in our mind – I am pretty sure that you remember at least the outline and main characters of stories and tales that you have read or that were read to you as a child.

Stories can let us dive into other worlds and lifestyles and by doing so, allow us to imagine alternatives to our current one. Who hasn't stepped out of a cinema, or switched off the TV, envisioning how it would be to live in Florence or New York, be an artist, or a cop, possess more charm or more muscles, or follow the heart and move for the love of her/his life to the other side of the world?

And sometimes we even implement changes in our real life, inspired by the characters we admired – from getting a French bob (because even "Amelie" found love with it), to learning a new language and planning a year abroad (because life seems so much more exciting in "LAUBERGE ESPAGNOLE"), to deciding to study medicine (after watching "Emergency Room").

**Above all, stories, unlike the mere presentation of facts, generate an emotional response in the listener.**

### **Stories can connect and change people**

As indicated in the introduction, stories can serve many purposes, in this exercise stories can be used e.g. for the following:

- a. *by the mentor; to share more about her/his experience in an engaging form* Aim: By telling the story, not reciting facts, in a way that stimulates all the senses of the mentee and triggers his/her imagination and reflection, learning is made possible.
- b. *by the mentee; to share their story and including the challenges along the way, the problem-solving strategies applied, support persons and elements that helped to overcome them*

” **Those who do not have power over the story that dominates their lives, power to retell it, to rethink it, deconstruct it, joke about it, and change it as times change, truly are powerless.**

(Salman Rushdi)

Aim: Mentee's stories can allow the mentor to get an insight into the life of the mentee and gain understanding of their applied strategies. For the mentee they can be a powerful tool for sense making, and to reflect on own strategies, skills, talents, personal characteristics, mindsets, etc. that have already helped her/him in the past. So sharing stories can become a way to identify personal resources. Further the supporting people in the story are indicators to possible "nodes" in an already existing support network.

- c. **by the mentor; to share more about values, culture, leadership-philosophies, practices in a field of work the mentee aspires to get into**

Aim: Sharing stories that visualise for example how people are interacting, how they make decision, how they are approaching their tasks, what roles are involved, by voicing their thoughts and consideration, the mentee can get a vivid insight into the reality of the field of work.

- d. **by both; to share stories from their personal life, to give insight into their personal values, their lifestyle, their background**

Aim: These stories can help to bond, to create trust, to see the person behind the professional image.

- e. **by both (especially when their cultural backgrounds differ); similar to all the above, but focussing more on a cultural aspect**

Aim: By weaving values, practices, traditions into the story, by describing the people and their way of interacting with each other, the listener can gain insight and a better understanding of the culture the storyteller belongs to. The same applies if challenges of the minority in the majority culture are outlined in the story.

” I keep six honest serving men (They told me all I knew); Their names are What and Why and When and How and Where and Who?

*(Rudyard Kipling, The Elephant's Child)*

The examples on the previous pages are just a few of the possible stories that can be told over the course of the mentoring relationship. They allow to see the person behind the role – mentee or mentor – more holistically, with unique skills and talents, some flaws, as well as their challenges, dreams and aspirations. Sharing some of those can create learning opportunities, help to build trust, to create an open culture of cooperation within the dyad and foster a better understanding for each other, but also of the different cultures. You sure have a lot more stories to tell!

## Share your own story

Unless you are that friend who entertains everyone at a party with their detailed and hilarious family stories, the family member who can let the kids believe that unicorns are hiding in the closet, or the guy who gets team mates or acquaintances to follow his adventure stories in awe, you might not necessarily think of yourself as great storyteller. You will probably not know where to start and even might not find your stories worth sharing.

Or you might have an incident, an unusual encounter, a turning point in mind, but don't know where to start and how to assemble to pieces into a story (the next page shall give some guidance on that).

### **Warming up**

To get you into a story telling mode, here are some questions that can help you the get started:

*What made you choose your career? Who inspired you? Did you follow a family tradition?*

*What was a moment in your (professional) life, when you felt really happy or proud?*

*Did one person or a new idea change the course of your life or career?*

*When did you follow your heart, gut or intuition against all odds?*



*Was there a moment when you almost gave up? Or one when you completely changed direction? Which big decisions did you (have to) make in your life?*

Pick the question that inspires you the most or choose the one for which the answer can help your mentee the most.

### **Getting all the coordinates**

After you have chosen one story that you'd like to share, recollect and structure the main information and write it down too.

**What** (happened)? What is the story about?

**Why** (did it happen)? What was the reason behind the incident?

**When** (did it happen)? What was the date or time period?

**How** (did it happen)? What was the course of action?

**Where** (did it happen)? Did it happen on one location or more?

**Who** (was involved)? Who was the main character, who else was involved? Is there a protagonist and an antagonist?

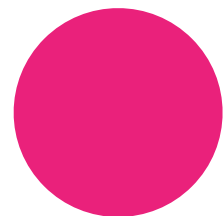
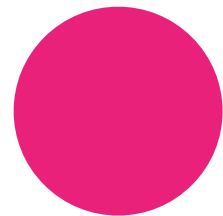
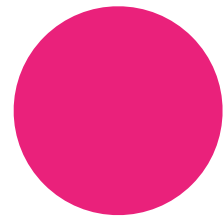
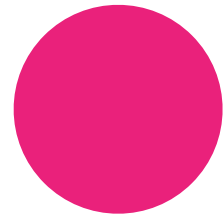
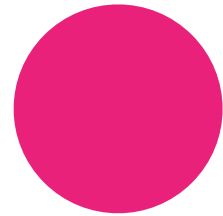
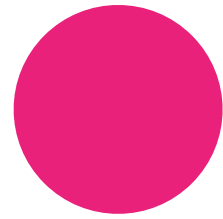
### **Bringing the story to life**

Once you got all the relevant information, dig deeper in your memory, enrich the story and make it more captivating.

Bobette Buster in "How to tell your story so the world listens" [4] shares 10 principles of good storytelling:

Principle #2, says, **use active verbs** (consult the thesaurus for more choice).

Principle #4, **juxtapose, introduce opposing ideas** that make the listener(s) wonder how they will come together till the end of the story. For example, you wanted to become rich, but also to change the world, or live in the wild, or you worked in a business in which a formal dress code was required but had a love for funky colours, haircuts, etc.

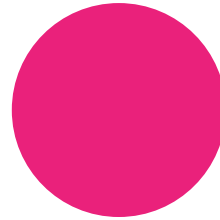




There are beautiful stories out there that follow that principle, of people who in one aspect or another were not fitting in, or missing an important feature or skill, but over the course of the story, their life, they came up with unique way to bridge the gap or opposites.

Principle #8, suggests to **tune into your sense memory**, while reflecting on the story, to pick the strongest, most memorable sense (sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste) and use it to connect with the audience. Here are some examples: If you pick sound, describe the phones ringing, street sounds, or the one of a door opening, the tonality of the peoples voices, the (type of) music playing in the background, use words to describe them and/or imitate the sounds to get the listeners into the sound atmosphere of your story. Or you might remember that the sense most present throughout the story was the visual one. Than you can describe in detail what one could see in the setting of the story, what people were wearing, the colour of the sky, the shades of green and the sparkles of light dancing on the surface of a lake, etc.

Principle #5 **add a gleaming detail**, *"an ordinary moment or object that captures the essence of the story"*.<sup>[4]</sup> One example that illustrates that principle, is taken from one of my own stories, about my learning trip around the world: I wanted to travel alone to all the countries that have always been on my bucket list, but that I never dared to visit. I had planned the trip in such a way that I could learn the most about the reality of the local people, communities and cultures, and get insights into local education and entrepreneurship. The gleaming detail, a Bialetti Moka, an Italian espresso maker that I had carried with me on the whole trip, provided a bit of familiarity and gave me a feeling of "home" during the year abroad, travelling to 12 different countries. In some of the countries making morning coffee became a real challenge, as people there were using an open fire to cook. In most places it brought people together, over a cup of freshly brewed coffee, who started sharing stories, giving insights



into local traditions and discussing concepts of "home". In Uganda, a young social entrepreneur borrowed the coffee machine to make coffee with beans supplied by a local women's collective that had started growing their own coffee not so long ago. She had learned how to roast beans from Youtube videos, but had no way to make coffee from them. The coffee maker enabled her to further adjust and improve the roasting until the coffee finally tasted well. From this "prototyping" of coffee, a small business grew and after traveling almost once around the world, the little Bialetti stayed in Uganda while I moved on.

The coffee maker, one that you'll find in many countries and households, illustrates an essence of my story. An element that helped me to stay grounded when everything around me was changing. The living situation in each of the countries I've visited was very different. I had to find a fire place or stove. Brewing the coffee, often involved having to get creative and to adjust to the cooking facility, but usually got me in touch with the (mostly) women of the house. The warm coffee got more people involved, chatting and getting to know each others. Towards the end of the story the espresso maker lets a young entrepreneur to proceed with building her social business.

### ***Making it personal***

The story is about you, and your connection with people in the audience, so let them relate, empathise with you, and get touched by it. When you share it with your mentor, or any other person you don't know too well yet, imagine that you are sharing it with a friend; reflect on your choices, your inner struggles, your intentions, and don't be afraid to show emotion.

This is another beauty of storytelling – you can let the audience hear your thoughts (and also feelings). You can get into the role of a narrator and the main character at the same time, the first can share and translate what is going on in the second's head and emotional world. Alternatively you can use an altered voice and let your emotions, inner struggles or thoughts "speak" for themselves. [see 4]

# Story Worksheet

You can use the template to draft any kind of story that you'd like to share during your mentoring conversations. Noting it down, helps to sort ideas, discover patterns, reorganise it's structure and find the golden thread that runs through the story. Noting keywords ensures that you include all the relevant information – what, who, when, where,... – which then helps your listener(s) to follow it till the end, without getting lost along the way.

The more confident and experienced you'll get in telling stories, the less you'll need any template.

What's the title of the story?

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What's the story about in 2 sentences?

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**What**

(happened)?

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**Where**

(did it happen)?

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**Who**

(was involved)?

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**When**

(did it happen)?

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**How**

(did it happen)?

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**Why**

(did it happen)?

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Which item or element catches the essence of the story?

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Which opposing ideas can you include?

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Which sense was most stimulated in the story?

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How can you evoke this sensual experience in your listener(s)?

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What were emotional moments in the story?

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What do you want the listener(s) to leave with in the end?

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(an image, a feeling, word, question or the desire to want to hear more)

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**Stories bring  
us together,  
untold stories  
keep us apart.**

*Shafak, Elif (2020), How to Stay Sane in an Age of Division: The powerful, pocket-sized manifesto*



**” We are made of stories – those that have happened, those that are still happening at this moment in time and those that are shaped purely in our imagination through words, images, dreams and an endless sense of wonder about the world around us and how it works. Unvarnished truths, innermost reflections, fragments of memory, wounds unhealed. Not to be able to tell your story, to be silenced and shut out, therefore, is to be dehumanized. It strikes at your very existence; it makes you question your sanity, the validity of your version of events. It creates a profound, an existential anxiety in us.**

*Shafak, Elif (2020), How to Stay Sane in an Age of Division: The powerful, pocket-sized manifesto*

# Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey

A wide range of tales and stories we grew up with and several blockbusters are based on the hero archetype's journey. Although he was not the first one, who analysed and compared myths and legends of many cultures, Joseph Campbell and his *Hero's Journey* are probably one of the most famous ones. As a result of this analysis, he came up with a story template that maps the journey of a hero who goes on an adventure.

The hero may be called by a message, foreign lands, mountain tops, the endless sky, or the arrival of the villain, but often initially refuses the call. A sense of duty, fear, insecurity, or other reasons keep him in his, what we would call today "comfort zone", but once he is ready a mentor figure appears and the story takes its course. The hero crosses the border to the unknown, gets tested, fights "battles", overcomes challenges and is victorious in a decisive crisis. He has to fight more "demons" before he can finally return home – changed or transformed, often bringing with him an element, a magic "elixir or knowledge to change the world that he has initially left behind.



In 1949 Campbell described in his book "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" 17 stages of the so called monomyth.

In the departure part of the narrative (that spans till about the "Belly of the Whale" stage), the hero lives in the ordinary world. There he receives a call for adventure; *"The adventure may begin as a mere blunder... or still, again, one may be only casually strolling when some passing phenomenon catches the wandering eye and lures one away from the frequented paths of man."* [8]

The hero is reluctant to follow the call, in the beginning, or refuses it, held back by his familiar life and duties. *"Refusal of the summons converts the adventure into its negative. Walled in boredom, hard work, or "culture," the subject loses the power of significant affirmative action and becomes a victim to be saved. His flowering world becomes a wasteland of dry stones and his life feels meaningless."* [8] But once the hero has made the decision, overcome whatever held him back, he is supported by a mentor figure, who often hands him a magic gift or talisman, that shall later help him on the journey. Once he crosses the threshold to the unknown and enters the initiation section, he faces tasks or trials. He encounters allies, fights enemies and learns the rules of the "Special World".

The story progresses and the hero eventually reaches "the innermost cave", the central life-or-death crisis of his adventure. It may be the hero himself who gets close to death, or witnesses a friend, partner or mentor dying (also in a figurative sense). Depending on the story type this central point of the journey can also mean the break-up in a relationship.

When he has overcome his greatest fear, killed the "dragon", or bounced back from a defeat, he gains his reward – a treasure or magic "elixir", greater knowledge or insight, the reconciliation with a lover.

Then the hero must return to the ordinary world with his reward. And again he might be hesitant after he has had success in the special world. He might have to follow an inner or outer call or be pursued by the guardians of the "Special World".

In the last section, the hero again crosses the threshold between the two worlds, returning to the ordinary world with the treasure, elixir or new knowledge which he now may use for the benefit of his fellow humans. The hero is transformed by the adventure and gained wisdom or spiritual power over both worlds. [see 8]

” **A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.**

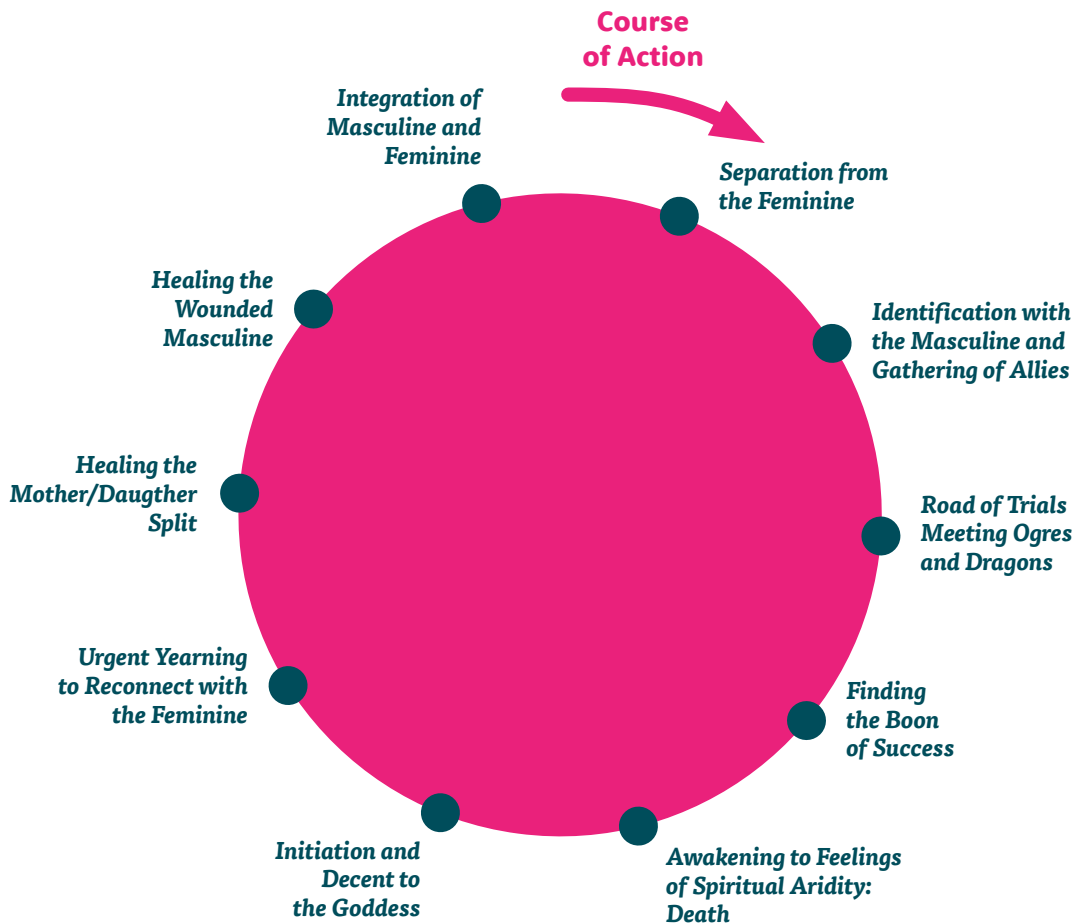
*Joseph Campbell*

# Maureen Murdock's Heroine's Journey

The heroine's journey focuses on the development and embodiment of wholeness. A wholeness that integrates seemingly opposing sides, such as the masculine and the feminine, success and failure, happiness and despair, and so on. "It is about healing the wounded feminine that exists deep within her and in the whole culture".

The need for integration of one's feminine and masculine side and the realisation, that success and recognition in the outer world at the expense of one's inner world, often do not lead to the personal well-being and happiness, one has been looking for, are not just feminine "themes".

That makes the Heroine's Journey story model applicable to every human being's story.



Maureen Murdock, a Jungian psychotherapist and student of Joseph Campbell developed the Heroine's Journey as an alternative to the Hero's Journey narrative model. She believed that the Hero's Journey model did not adequately address the psycho-spiritual journey of women. [see A10]

The separation from the "feminine" is the first step on the journey, "feminine" is often a mother/mentor figure or a societally prescribed feminine/marginalized/outsider role. The heroine rejects the feminine in favour of the masculine and sets out to seek recognition and success in a patriarchal culture.

The heroine moves on towards a new way of life, and identifies with external masculine values. She is often choosing a path that is different than the prescribed societal role, and is rebelling against organisations/roles or groups that are limiting her life options. She might also enter some masculine/dominant-identity defined sphere. Murdoch notes: *"This stage involves an Identification with the Masculine, but not one's inner personal masculinity. Rather, it is the outer patriarchal masculine whose driving force is power."* [A10]

In the third step the heroine faces obstacles, similar to the hero on his journey, that lead to character development. She is gaining success, empowerment, a higher self-esteem, but in contrast to the hero, also struggles with inner conflict.

In step four and five, the heroine is overcoming the obstacles, succeeding also against forces that want to stop her from following the chosen path. But while experiencing success, she also realises that she has betrayed her own values. Murdock: *"Her river of creativity has dried up and she begins to ask, 'What have I lost in this heroic quest?' She has achieved everything she set out to do, but it has come at great sacrifice to her soul. Her relationship with her inner world is estranged. She feels oppressed but doesn't understand the source of her victimization."* [A10] This is a moment of crisis in the heroine's journey. The heroine feels empty and senses that there must be more to life, but might also hear her inner voice again, after ignoring it for a long time.

In step six and seven the heroine meets with a goddess figure, a personification of the positive values of femininity, that she has left behind. After this meeting, she is inspired to return to femininity, but is unable to do so, or at least within her initial limited state/position.

In the last phase of the journey the heroine reclaims some of her initial values/skills/attributes, but views them from a new perspective. Before she can return though, she must look inward, understand and integrate the masculine part of her identity and finally make peace with it. She understands that both "feminine" and "masculine" are parts of her true nature.

Murdock writes, *"The first part of the heroine's journey is propelled by the mind and the second part is in response to the heart."* [A10]

Victoria Lynn Schmidt developed the heroine's journey template further to suit a wider range of topics and experiences.

## Further Readings & Resources:

### [youtu.be/Nj-hdQMaz3uA](https://youtu.be/Nj-hdQMaz3uA)

A TED talk by David JP Phillips who shares important neurological findings about storytelling. He uses some of his own stories to illustrate how they can induce neurotransmitters that almost instantly trigger feelings within the audience.

### [youtu.be/Ez5yS4Q5ASA](https://youtu.be/Ez5yS4Q5ASA)

Karen Eber is on a mission to help people understand that their companies/groups will perform better and be more empathetic, if their leaders learn to use storytelling. In her TED talk she shares what makes a story powerful and transformational.

### [youtu.be/KxDwieKpawg](https://youtu.be/KxDwieKpawg)

Andrew Stanton, the maker behind "Toy Story" and "WALL-E" gives clues to a great story.

### [ideas.ted.com/how-stories-are-told-around-the-world](https://ideas.ted.com/how-stories-are-told-around-the-world)

A collection of different story telling traditions around the world.

### [heroinejourneys.com/heroine-journeys](https://heroinejourneys.com/heroine-journeys)

*"The Heroine Journeys Project is dedicated to gathering, discussing, and analyzing literature, film, and life experiences that follow a different path than the conventional story arc referred to as the "Hero's Journey." Our goal is to help people of all ages and backgrounds to explore, understand, and give voice to personal experiences and stories that cannot be adequately expressed within the traditional "Hero's Journey" narrative arc."*

### **Buster, Bobette (2013) DO/STORY How to tell your story so the world listens**

Buster provides practical tips and exercises that allow you to tell your own story in an compelling way. She explains how to source, structure and shape your story and why emotional connection is key.

## Intercultural Aspects

Different cultures have different story telling traditions, the structure of the stories might differ, but also timing or representation of time (poly-chromic/flexible or mono-chromic/linear time cultures) as well as "the way how stories are told". Further, as the Hero's and Heroine's journey already show, what is considered a success, challenge or battle – both an internal and external one. So all the examples and template on the previous pages should, in any, but especially in an intercultural mentoring relationship just be taken as inspiration, not as strict guideline. They are an invitation, to start sharing stories and to include them in the mentoring conversation. I hope they can trigger also a discussion and exchange about stories – our own ones, the ones we tell ourselves, the ones we tell about others, the ones that are engrained in our respective cultures, the ones that need to be told – and about the way the stories, their course and their ending can be changed. "The power to tell and to change one's own story" can be regained through a supporting mentor, who encourages and listens. No matter the mix of people and cultures in the mentoring pair or circle, I strongly believe and have experienced it myself numerous times in my own very diverse mentoring relationships that stories connect, more than a regular exchange can do. Listening to a story recited with emotion, getting to know the details about the protagonist(s) and the story setting, hearing about their inner conflicts, fears and emotional highs and lows creates a bond between the people involved. Being allowed to listen to one of these stories, is a sign of deep trust. Sharing a story, especially when it is not a heroic one requires loads of courage. By telling stories, by exposing some of their inner world, people show their vulnerability. But this opening-up, if handled with care and appreciation, can help to turn the mentoring relationship into a really transformative one.

What I have found in many encounters between people of different cultural backgrounds, both in my own ones and in observing others, is that once they start sharing their stories, the stereotypes they previously held dissolve. Words can be weapons, words and stories can also be bridges.

Social penetration theory gives some explanation to the observations mentioned above; as people get to know each other, *"they engage in a reciprocal process of self-disclosure that changes in breadth and depth and affects how a relationship develops. Depth refers to how personal or sensitive the information is, and breadth refers to the range of topics discussed."* [12] With the development of the relationship, conversations develop from non-intimate levels to deeper, more personal ones.

Some notes on cultural aspects that might play a role:

**Personal/Self-disclosure** – is influenced by personality type, length and depth of the relationship, the situation, communication medium, whether the person is part of the in-group or seen as out-group, and many other factors, but is also a culture dimension and indicates how much of one personal self is revealed in a (professional) relationship in different countries (e.g. Japan, most Asian and collectivist countries, low value, US high). Self disclosure moves through four stages – orientation, exploratory affective exchange, affective exchange, and stable exchange. The reciprocity norm can help to move forward in relationships. It tells, that if we share something about ourselves, people will, across cultures, reciprocate and share similar things about themselves, though the topics that are appropriate to share vary. [see 12, 13]

# Your Personal Navigation System

*You are looking for adventure or relaxation, want to enjoy the beauty of local art, savour the small pleasures or spend as much time as possible with the locals – your values influence your travel planning and the course of your trip. The same goes for personal values and those you hold in high regard in a (work) relationship. Values are your compass, helping you to decide and plan in line with what is important to you.*

## Which materials do you need?

### The Values Worksheet

Either make a copy of it from the Playbook or download and print it directly from the website. There are two templates; as their names "Value Worksheet Personal" and "Value Worksheet Mentoring Dyad or Circle" suggest, one is to discover the personal values, the other to find the ones for the mentoring pair or group.

### The List of Values (Optional)

Again either make a copy of it from the Playbook or download and print it directly from the website.

### Pens, pencils & markers

To take notes, highlight values and/or phrases and structure the values into different categories

## How much time do you need?

### Individual values

About 45min to 1 hour  
To reflect on previous experiences, discover your values and select a set of core values.

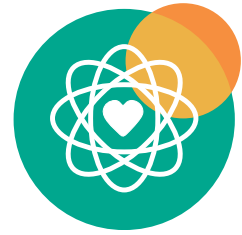
### Dyad or group values

Depending on the size of the group.

We all have values, you might not always be fully aware of them but in one way or the other live by them. You "inherited" some of your values from your family, you learned and adopted some while growing up, through your education, role models, clubs or organisation you have been part of, or hobbies you pursued. Some are engrained in your culture (in the Heroine's and Hero's Journey chapter I've mentioned that values were passed down from generation to generation, e.g. by sharing stories and I will later share insights from the World Values Survey, that indicate how these values were shaped and what impacts them), some are linked to your profession, and some you might have even discovered for and by yourself.

Knowing your personal values can help you in many ways. They can be a great tool for decision-making, your personal navigation system. They point you in a direction, but also offer alternative routes. Let's say one of your core values is "family", you love spending time with your parents, siblings and extended family and like to have them around you. You get a job offer for a position that would require you to move to another city, several hundred kilometres away from them. If you are aware of your values and want to live by them, one option would be to turn down this offer, even if the job sounds exciting. Another could be that you really feel you would be a perfect fit for the job and the company, its culture, its work focus, etc. are exactly what you were looking for. Living by your values might then mean negotiating with your potential employer that you can work from your current home at least half of the week, or that you work two weeks in the office and two in your home office so that you can see the family during the day, evenings and weekends. Or another example: One of your core values is creativity, the other one financial security. Your (permanent) job requires organisational rather than creative skills. It gives you the regular income that you





value, but not the creative expression that you desire. Quitting your job is not an option for you (at least with your current mindset), as this would conflict with the value of financial stability. Again, you have several possible "ways" to live an authentic life that is in line with your values.

You can apply your creativity at work, find original solutions to become an even better organiser or spice up your work life. You can stay in your job and find an outlet for your creativity at home or rent a studio and use weekends and evenings to work on a project. You can start a side project that allows you to live your value of "creativity" and meet other creatives. Or you can free yourself from your limiting belief that tells you that a job that requires creativity means you will not have a stable income.

Being aware of your values can also help you to create a life that you love, that you feel content with. When you know who or what you value, you can integrate more of that into your life.

Knowing your values can also help you to resolve conflicts. Values that are not lived lead to inner conflicts, values that are violated by another person (intentionally or unintentionally) lead to outer conflicts.[see 4]

In the first case, a solution can be to reintegrate this value and find ways to live it in your everyday life. In the second case, speaking out about which value has been compromised can already bring some relief. (Non-violent communication by Marshall Rosenberg, is an excellent way to resolve value conflicts between two or more people).

### **Who is it for?**

#### **For the mentee**

Values, together with the Mentoring Canvas, can help you make decisions, develop goals, create a development plan. They can guide you on your path and, if you share them with your mentor, allow him/her to support you best towards a life that is congruent with what you really value.

#### **For the mentor**

If you haven't discovered your values before, this is a great opportunity to do it alongside with your mentee.

#### **For both**

The "Value Worksheet Mentoring Dyad or Circle" gives some guidance on how to define the values for your mentoring relationship. Collaboratively exploring shared values and discussing how they are applied helps to define and establish a collaboration culture. The values can provide direction, function as basis for core collaboration principles and help to make the encounter a really pleasant one. The suggestion is to work first on the personal ones than on the values for the dyad. In a diverse pair/group this exercise is especially useful.

### **In which part of the mentoring journey is it useful?**

**Towards the beginning of the mentoring journey**

# Value Worksheet Personal

*Get yourself a tea or coffee, stretch or go for short walk, or do anything else that helps you to get into a relaxed state of mind. Then imagine yourself sitting in a cinema, watching the movie about your life. You are the heroine or hero on her/his journey through life. Allow yourself to get touched by what you see, dive into the story, focus on the details, make mental notes and then try to answer the questions on the worksheet.*

## STEP P1

**Pick one moment, when you felt really happy, content, fulfilled or in flow. Remember the questions from the Story Template (when, where, why, who, what, how?). Try to answer those for that specific moment.**

**When was it?**

**Where was it? What was the setting?** (at work/in school, indoors/outdoor, city/nature, your home or a foreign country,...)

**Who was with you?** (friends, family, colleagues, strangers,...)

**What did you and the other people in that scene do?** (talk, work, travel, enjoy leisure time, work for a charity,...)

**Why were you/they there?** (to celebrate something, to work on a project, to meet new people,...)

**How did this scene come about?** (you were employed there or sent on a project to a new place, you decided to go on a journey, you were invited by friends...)

**Then describe what else you remember, what stood out or particularly resonated with you about that moment.**

**What was the strongest, most present feeling?**

**What beings, elements or conditions were relevant?**

**What was different about you compared to now?**

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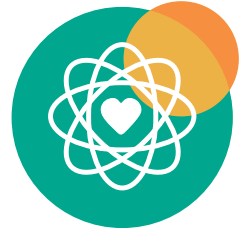
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## STEP P2

Now take a marker and highlight all the elements, phrases or words that stand for something you value (e.g. friends, nature, achieving a goal, exchange, personal development, etc.).

## STEP P3 (Optional)

Repeat Step 1 and 2 with another happy moment. See if a pattern emerges. Elements that keep repeatedly showing up can be indicators to core values.

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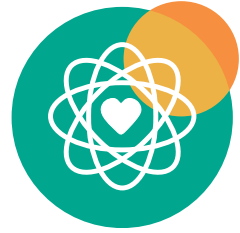
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## STEP P5

Transfer the values that you've discovered during the last exercises to the section below. Then take markers in different colours and highlight all those values that belong together in the same colour. For each of the groups find one value or category that encompasses the values in this group. In the end there should be 5-7 values left.

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## STEP P6

List the 5-7 core values below. You can then add one that was missing up until now, but that you'd like to include or express more from now on. For each one of the values add a few keyword or short sentences, that tell how living or applying this value looks like for you.

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# Value Worksheet Alternative Approach

*An alternative way to find your values is to discover them guided by your intuition. If you have found it challenging to identify them with the exercises on the previous pages, you might find this approach more appealing.*

## STEP A1

**Relax your mind and tune into your body. Go through the list of values on the following pages, mark those that resonate most with you and transfer them to the section below.**

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## STEP A2

**Use markers in different colours to highlight all those values that belong together in the same colour. For each of the groups find one value or category that encompasses the values in this group. In the end there should be 5-7 values left, write them below. Add a few keyword or short sentences, that express how living or applying this value looks like for you.**

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# Value Worksheet Mentoring Dyad or Circle

*A mentoring pair and even more a mentoring circle or group, that consist of more than two people, can profit from shared values. Collaboratively identified values provide guidance to heterogeneous groups with different individual approaches, personal values and working styles; they can act as guiding principles for the partnership without compromising what each of the individuals values. Use one of your mentoring sessions at the beginning of your work to define the values of your mentoring relationship together.*

## STEP M1

**First, reflect individually on what is really important to you in a collaboration or developmental relationship and create a list of statements that illustrate those values. (It might be something like being on time, creating space for conversations that go beyond the mere exchange about the tasks at hand, mutual support, open communication and honest feedback etc.)**

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## STEP M2

**Share your lists with each other (or with the whole group, if you are part of a mentoring circle or group) and compare your statements. Find any overlapping or similar statements and write them down below. Find an overarching value or short statement that summarises the individual statements. Check with the members, if the values/categories are in tune with them. Then discuss the ones that remain on your individual lists; those that resonate with both/all of you also go on the list below. If there are any statements left that have high meaning for either of you, discuss them again. Try to understand what is behind them, why they are so relevant to the other person, and look for a value that includes this, but is also well coherent for the rest of the group. In the end, there should be a maximum of 7 values or value statements left.**

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# Value Worksheet Mentoring Pair or Circle

*When values should function as orientation for a pair or group, the last step, expressing what is meant by each of the values and how they are implemented or lived among and beyond the group is especially important. In an intercultural group, using expressions and statements that are understood by every member of it, avoids misunderstanding or misapplication of the values. Even if people speak the same or a common language, the words alone can be interpreted very differently.*

## STEP M3

**Transfer your values from M2 and find for each one a few keywords or short sentences, that express why it is important and how applying this value looks like for the pair/group. Share a photo or digital copy of the list and explanation with each of the members of the group.**

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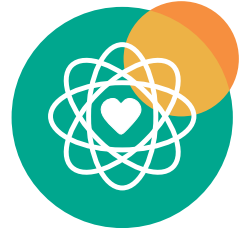
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# List of Values from A-Z

*An incomplete list of values*



**A** Acceptance  
Accomplishment  
Accountability  
Accuracy  
Achievement  
Adaptability  
Admiration  
Advancement  
Adventure  
Affection  
Altruism  
Ambition  
Amusement  
Assertive(ness)  
Attentiveness  
Authenticity  
Authority  
Autonomy  
Aware(ness)

**B** Balance  
Beauty  
Becoming  
Belonging  
Benevolence  
Bliss  
Boldness  
Bountiful(ness)  
Bravery  
Brilliance

**C** Calm(ness)  
Candor  
Capability  
Care/Caring  
Casual(ness)  
Celebration  
Centered(ness)  
Certainty  
Challenge

Charisma  
Charity  
Charm  
Cheerful(ness)  
Citizenship  
Clarity  
Clean(liness)  
Cohesive(ness)  
Comfort  
Commitment  
Communication  
Community  
Compassion  
Compelling  
Competency  
Complete  
Concentration  
Confidence  
Congruency  
Connection  
Conscious(ness)  
Consideration  
Consistency  
Contentment  
Contribution  
Control  
Convenience  
Conviction  
Cooperation  
Cosmopolitanism  
Courage  
Creativity  
Credibility  
Curiosity

**D** Daring(ness)  
Decisive(ness)  
Dedication  
Delight  
Dependability

Determination  
Development  
Devotion  
Dignity  
Diplomacy  
Direct(ness)  
Discipline  
Discovery  
Dominance  
Down-to-earth  
Drive

**E** Ease  
Easygoing(ness)  
Effective(ness)  
Efficiency  
Empathy  
Empowerment  
Encouragement  
Endurance  
Energy  
Enjoyment  
Entertainment  
Enthusiasm  
Equality  
Excellence  
Excitement  
Experience  
Exploration  
Expressive(ness)  
Exuberance

**F** Fabulous(ness)  
Factuality  
Fairness  
Faith  
Fame  
Family  
Fantasy  
Fascination

- F** Fearless(ness)  
 Fidelity  
 Fitness  
 Flamboyance  
 Flexibility  
 Focus  
 Foresight  
 Fortitude  
 Freedom  
 Free Spirited(ness)  
 Freethinking  
 Friendship  
 Fun
- G** Generosity  
 Giving  
 Goodness  
 Grace  
 Graceful(ness)  
 Gratitude  
 Greatness  
 Growth
- H** Happiness  
 Hard Work  
 Harmony  
 Health  
 Honesty  
 Honour  
 Hope  
 Humility  
 Humour
- I** Idealism  
 Imagination  
 Impact  
 Importance  
 Improvement  
 Inclusion  
 Independence  
 Individuality  
 Indulgence  
 Influence
- J** Joviality  
 Joy  
 Justice
- K** Kind(ness)  
 Knowledge
- L** Lawful(ness)  
 Leadership  
 Learning  
 Liberty  
 Light(ness)  
 Light-heartedness  
 Liveliness  
 Logic  
 Love  
 Loyalty
- M** Mastery  
 Maturity  
 Meaningful Work  
 Meaning  
 Mindful(ness)  
 Moderation  
 Modesty  
 Motivation
- N** Neutrality  
 Nice(ness)  
 Nourishment  
 Nurture/Nurturing
- O** Objective(ness)  
 Open(ness)  
 Open Minded(ness)  
 Open Hearted(ness)  
 Optimism  
 Order  
 Organisation  
 Originality
- P** Passion  
 Patience  
 Playful(ness)  
 Patience  
 Peace  
 Performance  
 Perfection  
 Perseverance  
 Persistence  
 Personality  
 Planning  
 Pleasure  
 Poise  
 Popularity  
 Potential  
 Power  
 Presence  
 Pride  
 Productivity  
 Professionalism  
 Proficiency  
 Prosperity  
 Punctuality  
 Purity  
 Purpose
- Q** Quality
- R** Realism  
 Reason  
 Recognition  
 Recreation  
 Reflection  
 Relationships

**S**

- Relaxation
- Reliability
- Religion
- Renewal
- Reputation
- Resilience
- Resourceful(ness)
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Rest
- Restraint
- Reward
- Risk
- Safety
- Satisfaction
- Security
- Self-Compassion
- Self-Control
- Self-Confidence
- Self-Expression
- Selflessness
- Self-Respect
- Sensitivity
- Sensuality
- Serenity
- Serious(ness)
- Service
- Sharing
- Significance
- Silence
- Simplicity
- Sincerity
- Skill/Skillful(ness)
- Solitude
- Sophistication
- Spirit
- Spirituality
- Spontaneity
- Stability
- Strength
- Success
- Support

- Surprise
- Sustainability
- Stability
- Status
- Strength
- Structure
- Sympathy
- Synergy

**T**

- Talent
- Teamwork
- Temperance
- Thoughtful(ness)
- Tidiness
- Tolerance
- Together(ness)
- Toughness
- Tradition
- Transformation
- Transparency
- Thriving
- Travel
- Truth
- Trust
- Trustworthiness

**U**

- Understanding
- Unique(ness)
- Unity
- Unselfish(ness)
- Uplifting(ness)

**V**

- Valour
- Value(d)
- Variety
- Victory
- Vigilance
- Vigour
- Virtue
- Vision
- Vitality
- Vulnerability

**W**

- Warm(th)
- Wealth
- Well-being
- Welcoming
- Winning
- Wisdom
- Wonder

**Y**

- Youthful(ness)

**Z**

- Zeal





John Jones

# Fabiana Morals

## **What country were you born in?**

Colombia.

## **What country do you currently live in?**

Colombia.

## **Which culture or subculture do you consider belonging to or do you associate yourself with?**

I don't consider myself from any specific subculture..

## **What does DIVERSITY mean for you, and what impact does it have on you, your work and the society as a whole?**

As a Latin graphic designer, I see the diversity latent in every scene in my country. As well as many everyday circumstances, we can see diversity in people, in thoughts, in languages, in fauna / flora, in landscapes, sexual orientation and many characteristics of life, which enriches us. Personally, diversity has an important role in my profession, it is a great source of inspiration.

## **How can DIVERSITY be expressed in images?**

As I mentioned before, we can see diversity in our daily lives, we can even represent it metaphorically with the vast diversity of flowers that my country has. Each flower is exquisite, different and unique. None detract from another species; they are simply all necessary and perfect.

## **How can CULTURE be visualised in images?**

Highlighting the physical differences that represent us. Traits and customs show our culture and training. A clear example is when anyone in the world is asked: "What do you imagine when you think of Rio Carnival, Brazil?" It can be said, that most of them are going to think and imagine dancing, joy, women, heat and other characteristics that represent it, even though they were never there on a trip.

## **How can LEARNING be captured in images?**

Although learning is intangible, the wonder of art allows us to represent it, from the brain capacity that human beings have. An exploration of knowledge. As we see our memories, thoughts and imagination.

## **Why would you like to be part of this project?**

Colombians say that there is always a Colombian somewhere in the world and for my part, I feel grateful to show my work and represent my country, from a good perspective ... that of Colombian art. Evidencing our collective thinking of diversity, an issue that should still be more visible.

# The World Value Survey

*The World Values Survey (WVS) was launched in 1981 by its Founder Professor Ronald Inglehart from the University of Michigan (USA) and his team. It studies the social, political, economic, religious and cultural values of people in almost 100 countries around the world and the impacting factors that change them over time. The survey is the largest non-commercial, cross-national, empirical investigation of human beliefs and values ever executed.*

*Some of the related analyses not only provide further insights into values and their geographical and cultural distribution, but also allow conclusions to be drawn about how these values have developed and what is changing them, on an individual and societal level.*

The representative, comparative, social survey is conducted worldwide every 5 years. The questionnaire used in the survey, is further developed from "wave" (each survey cycle) to wave and is structured along 14 thematic sub-sections:

1. social values, attitudes & stereotypes (45 items);
2. societal well-being (11 items);
3. social capital, trust and organizational membership (49 items);
4. economic values (6 items);
5. corruption (9 items);
6. migration (10 items);
7. post-materialist index (6 items);
8. science & technology (6 items);
9. religious values (12 items);
10. security (21 items);
11. ethical values & norms (23 items);
12. political interest and political participation (36 items);
13. political culture and political regimes (25 items);
14. demography (31 items). [A13]

The minimum sample size – the number of completed interviews which are included into the national data-set – in most of the countries is 1200 and the interviews are conducted in person, recorded on paper or on a digital recording device. The WVS builds on an international network of social scientists and researchers from 120 countries and societies around the world, who are involved in conducting the survey.

The aggregated results from the national surveys are mapped on two axes. The axis labels correspond with the dimensions identified as the main dimensions of intercultural variation. *"The location of each society on the global cultural map is objective, determined by a factor analysis of survey data from each country. The boundaries drawn around these societies are subjective, using Huntington's (1996) division of the world into several cultural zones."* [A10]

## **Traditional Values vs. Secular Values**

*"Traditional values emphasise the importance of religion, parent-child ties, deference to authority and traditional family values.(...) These societies have high levels of national pride and a nationalistic outlook."* [A10]



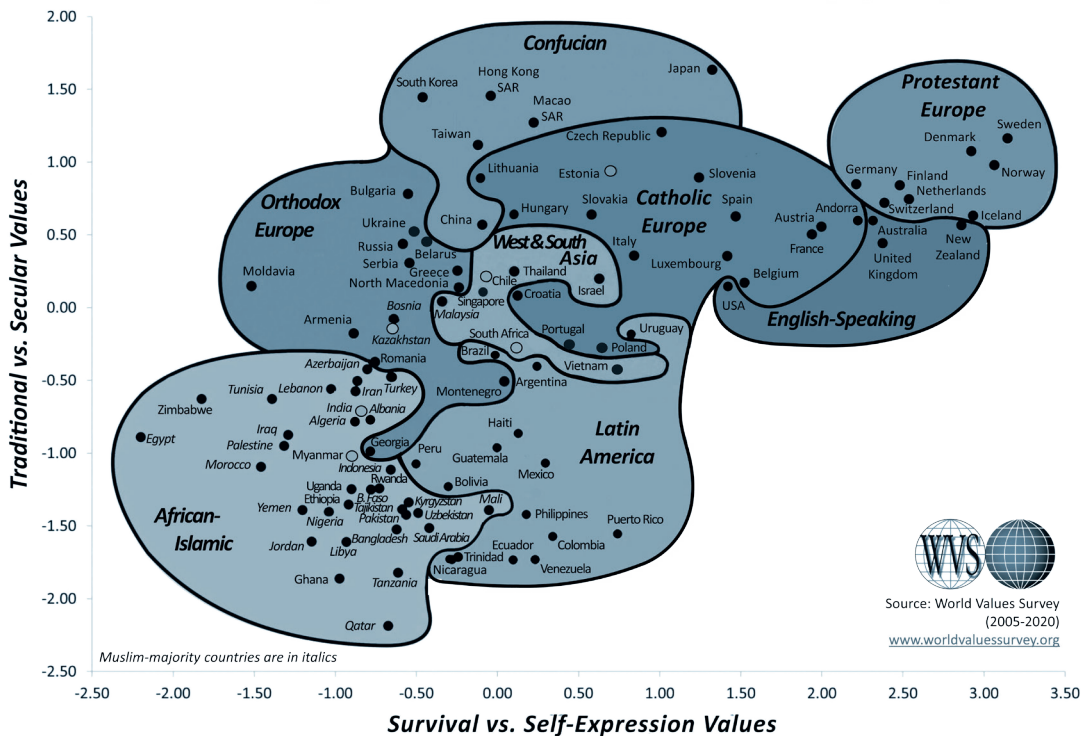
"Secular-rational values have the opposite preferences to the traditional values. These societies place less emphasis on religion, traditional family values and authority." [A10]

**Survival Values vs. Self-Expression Values**

"Survival values place emphasis on economic and physical security. It is linked with a relatively ethnocentric outlook and low levels of trust and tolerance."

"Self-expression values give high priority to environmental protection, growing tolerance of foreigners, gays and lesbians and gender equality, and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life. (...) Self-expression values reflect an emancipative and humanistic ethos, emphasizing human autonomy and choice." [A10]

**The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map (2020)**



### **Collectivistic vs. individualistic tendencies**

One of the interpretation of the findings of the survey that can be found on the WVS website is, that in traditional values oriented societies, a main goal in most people's lives is to make parents proud. "One must always love and respect one's parents regardless of how they behave". [A10] Parents on the other hand "must do their best for their children, even at the cost of their own well-being". [A10] People in these societies tend to idealize large families and also have them.

*"Although the people of traditional societies have high levels of national pride, favour more respect for authority, take protectionist attitudes toward foreign trade, and feel that environmental problems can be solved without international agreements, they accept national authority passively: they rarely discuss politics."* [A10] Social conformity is favoured rather than individualistic striving (one would expect that these countries rank low on Hofstede's "individualism" dimension, most do, but e.g. the Asian countries in the upper "Confucian" bubble who have secular-rational values, also rank low).

There is deference to authority, which correlates also with the culture dimension "high power distance" in Hofstede's model, most of the countries have high levels there. Societies that live according to secular-rational values have the opposite preferences.

In postindustrial societies where people have existential security and individual autonomy, tolerance, trust, emphasis on subjective well-being, civic activism, and self-expression emerge. On the other side of the spectrum, people in "societies shaped by existential insecurity and rigid intellectual and social constraints on human autonomy tend to emphasize economic and physical security above all; they feel threatened by foreigners, ethnic diversity, and cultural change – which leads to intolerance of gays and other outgroups, insistence on traditional gender roles, and an authoritarian political outlook." [A10]

### **Generational shifts**

An interesting finding though, that can be well experienced when interacting with people who are born in and after the early to mid 1990s is, that an intergenerational shift is happening from a focus on economic and physical security, towards one on self-expression, subjective well-being, and higher quality of life. The cultural shift emerges among whole birth cohorts that have grown up under conditions in which one can take survival for granted. "These (self-expression) values are linked with the emergence of growing emphasis on environmental protection, the women's movement, and rising demands for participation in decision making in economic and political life. During the past thirty years, these values have become increasingly widespread in almost all postindustrial societies." [A10]





### **Valuing diversity**

Another interesting explanation of the findings can be found on the WSV site in regard to the appreciation of diversity, although I would not completely agree on that, because I have experienced communities within countries that rank low on the "survival values" scale, but cherish diversity and those that rank high and are very reserved towards foreigners. Although the researchers interviewed a rather big group of people in each society, the results are "only" an abstract model, looking at societies as a whole. A model of course can reflect only a portion of the reality in the respective society.

*"When survival is uncertain, cultural diversity seems threatening. When there isn't enough to go around, foreigners are perceived as dangerous outsiders who may take away one's sustenance. People cling to traditional gender roles and sexual norms, emphasizing absolute rules and old familiar norms, in an attempt to maximize predictability in an uncertain world. Conversely, when survival begins to be taken for granted, ethnic and cultural diversity become increasingly acceptable – indeed, beyond a certain point, diversity is not only tolerated but becomes positively valued because it is interesting and stimulating." [A10]*

To my own observation about the connection between survival values and the perception of foreigners, the findings offer an explanation: *"Values also differ within societies along such cleavage lines as gender, generation, ethnicity, religious denomination, education, income and so forth. Generally speaking, groups whose living conditions provide people with a stronger sense of existential security and individual agency nurture a stronger emphasis on secular-rational values and self-expression values." [A10]*

This could mean that by increasing a person's/group's/community's income possibilities, their existential stability and individual autonomy, and by reducing physical threats, the acceptance of and appreciation for diversity would increase too. It would mean, that if people feel safe and that their basic needs are met, they are more open to diverse people, value their participation in society and see their contribution as *"interesting and stimulating."* [A10]

That may be overly simplistic and idealistic, and there is an interconnectedness of several factors, but also matches some findings on mentoring in companies, that say in brief, that recruiting or promoting one person (or more) with cultural, ethnic or gender background that differs from the majority helps others with such backgrounds to also enter the company/or field (one person's existential stability improved). And that gender and culturally diverse teams can lead to higher revenue, because the diverse members tend to understand diverse clients better, make better, more informed decisions and are more adaptable and resilient in times of crisis (the whole group is thus on a more stable ground).

However, this reasoning does not stand up to some arguments. Diversity doesn't necessarily create more predictability and certainty though, also on the individual basis, because new ideas, things, situations emerge through the interaction between the diverse parties.

It takes time to establish a (cooperation) culture that provides the space for diverse contributions and the stable basis to endure the frictions that arise from the clash of different ideas, opinions, needs, values and world views. Only then is a couple/group/community able to use these zones of friction positively, for example, to develop something new and innovative.

Moreover, simply belonging to a group, organisation or company to which one did not belong before does not necessarily mean that one's voice will be taken into account. But ...

*"Self-expression values emphasize tolerance of diversity and rising demands for participation in decision making in economic and political life. The shift from survival values to self-expression values is linked with a rising sense of existential security and human autonomy, which produces a humanistic culture of tolerance and trust, where people place a relatively high value on individual freedom and self-expression and have activist political orientations." [A10]*

The statement seems to suggest that in societies that made the shift towards high self-expression values people seem to have learned to deal with diversity (and uncertainty), value it, but also demand to be able to participate in decision making.

### **Value transitions**

The researchers behind the WVS explain how the values shifts in societies happen, as follows:

The shift in societies from traditional to secular-rational values and from survival to self-expression values *"reflect industrialization and the rise of postindustrial society, respectively. (...) As more people move from agricultural sectors into industrial ones, a "society's belief system tends to shift from traditional to secular-rational values."*

But these transitions impacts less the self-expression values:

*"This is one reason why industrialization brought universal suffrage but did not necessarily bring democracy. The mass values that emphasize individual autonomy and emancipation are not yet widespread in most early industrial societies, which historically were almost as likely to adopt fascist or communist systems as they were to adopt democratic institutions. The value systems of industrial societies emphasize the rationalization of authority, rather than emancipation from authority." [A10]*

An increase of self-expression values can be linked to more people moving from the industrial to the service sector.

*"In the second phase of modernization, the service sector grows at the expense of the industrial sector. This postindustrial economic transformation is linked with another change of authority orientations, the emancipation from authority, reflected in rising self-expression values. As the percentage of the work force in the service sector grows and the size of the industrial sector shrinks, a society's belief system tends to shift from survival to self-expression values." [A10]* In a later finding the societies that made the transition are called "knowledge societies."

And the WVS researchers note that this transition can even be observed on an individual level: *"Within any given society, those with higher incomes, higher education, and jobs in the service sector tend to emphasize self-expression values more strongly than the rest of their compatriots, falling higher and to the right of them on this map."* [A10]

### **Human empowerment advances on three levels**

What might this mean or how could these findings be interpreted? One (of many) possible interpretation is, that the more people interact with other/diverse people (through working in service industries, but also education), the more different opinions, options and possible choices are introduced to them through these encounters, the more they seem to learn to stand up for themselves and express themselves, while allowing others the same right and demanding it even? The less an authority figure is seen as the one who decides for others, the more emancipation from them happens, the more the values of self-expression rise and the higher the appreciation for diversity? This probably works both ways, the more diversity is valued, the more different contributions start to count and the less one person or group is the only source of knowledge making the decisions.

*"If set in motion, human empowerment advances on three levels. On the socio-economic level, human empowerment advances as growing action resources increase people's capabilities to exercise freedoms. On the socio-cultural level, human empowerment advances as rising emancipative values increase people's aspirations to exercise freedoms. On the legal-institutional level, human empowerment advances as widened democratic rights increase people's entitlements to exercise freedoms."* [A10]

A subset of self-expression values, called "emancipative values", as the name suggests, combines an emphasis on freedom of choice and equality of opportunities.

*"...emancipative values are highly consequential in manifold ways. For one, emancipative values establish a civic form of modern individualism that favours out-group trust and cosmopolitan orientations towards others. Emancipative values encourage nonviolent protest, even against the risk of repression. Thus, emancipative values provide social capital that activates societies, makes publics more self-expressive, and vitalizes civil society. Emancipative values advance entire societies' civic agency."* [A10]

And they are *"the most single important factor in advancing the empowerment of women. Economic, religious, and institutional factors that have been found to advance women's empowerment, do so for the most part because they nurture emancipative values. Emancipative values change people's life strategy from an emphasis on securing a decent subsistence level to enhancing human agency."* [A10]

Albert Bandura's definition of "human agency" is as follows:  
*"Agency refers to the human capability to influence one's functioning and the course of events by one's actions."* [1]

And there are four different functions through which human agency is exercised:

1. **intentionality:** *"People form intentions that include action plans and strategies for realizing them."* [1]
2. **forethought:** *"People set themselves goals and foresee likely outcomes of prospective actions to guide and motivate their efforts anticipatorily."* [1]
3. **self-reactiveness:** *"Agents are not only planners and forethinkers. They are also self-regulators."* [1]
4. **self-reflectiveness:** *"People are not only agents, they are self-examiners of their own functioning. Through functional self-awareness, they reflect on their personal efficacy, the soundness of their thoughts and actions, the meaning of their pursuits, and make corrective adjustments if necessary."* [1]

Ideally through great mentoring relationships human agency is further fostered, as the mentee (and mentor) further develops the four different functions.

**” People exercise their influence through three forms of agency: individual, proxy and collective. In agency exercised individually, people bring their influence to bear on what they can control. In proxy agency, they influence others who have the resources, knowledge, and means to act on their behalf to secure the outcomes they desire. In the exercise of collective agency, people pool their knowledge, skills, and resources and act in concert to shape their future. [1]**

*Albert Bandura*

## Intercultural Aspects

The previous pages offered a look on values and how they are shaped and develop over time around the world. The WVS (World Value Survey), which is conducted every five years, provides extensive data sets that give a picture of the values held in a society/country. The results are then mapped per country along two axis – traditional/secular values and survival/self-representation values – resulting in the Inglehard-Welzel Cultural Map. The naming of the resulting country clusters is subjective, the position of the countries a result of the research.

According to the research team, some impacting factors are financial stability, physical security, religion (or dominant political and religious philosophies), education; shifts in values that have been observed in recent decades are a result of people's transition from agriculture to manufacturing and later to the service sector as their sense of individual agency and existential stability increases with those changes. Common heritage is also an influencing factor on a society's values:

*"Religious traditions have an enduring impact on the contemporary value systems of these societies (...) But a society's culture reflects its entire historical heritage. A central historical event of the twentieth century was the rise and fall of a communist empire that once ruled a third of the world's population. Communism has left a clear imprint on the value systems of those who lived under it." [A10]*

*"The influence of colonial ties is apparent in the existence of a Latin American cultural zone. The Philippines could also be placed in this zone, reflecting the fact that despite their geographical remoteness, the Philippines and Latin America share the imprint of Hispanic colonial rule and the Roman Catholic Church." [A10]*

Values can differ even within societies between people of different gender, generation, ethnicity, religious denomination, education, income, etc.

As already mentioned, the survey is extensive, but only offers one view of the values of a country. Such models and maps can provide a first orientation and input for the discussion about values between mentee and mentor (or within the group). However, a question to ask oneself during or after working on the values exercise is: Are these truly my values and beliefs or am I "reenacting" them, as a result of my upbringing, education, cultural heritage, etc.? The exercise hopefully helps to discover and define one's own values and those of the group, which can influence the further development and cooperation. My hope is that the exercise, done individually and as a group, and the resulting values and statements can offer guidance towards a (working) life that feels congruent with the own beliefs and a cooperation culture that feels energizing and fosters mutual learning.

### Further Readings & Resources:

#### [worldvaluessurvey.org](http://worldvaluessurvey.org)

Website of the World Value Survey with detailed findings and current results, as well as further research based on it.

#### [nonviolentcommunication.com/resources/handouts-and-learning-materials/](http://nonviolentcommunication.com/resources/handouts-and-learning-materials/)

Learning material and information on Nonviolent Communication.

# Upward Mobility, Social Capital & the Role of Mentors

*Social Capital (simply put the amount of connections in your "account") is next to Economic, Cultural, Symbolic Capital one of the forms of capital the French sociologist, anthropologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu described to explain "the structure and functioning of the social world". This chapter is a little more critical than the others and yet hopeful in the end, because it shows some of the greatest potentials of mentoring.*

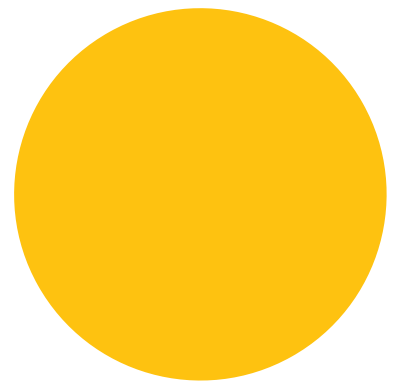
The last chapter looked at values, human empowerment and how it can lead to an increase in self-expression values and appreciation of diversity.

An increase in self-expression, human agency, the possibility to "stand up and speak up" for oneself, could mean the reduction or even loss of impact and power for some, or at least it can be perceived as such and it can feel unsettling, even scary.

As seen in the previous chapter, an increase of physical safety and existential security and the change from industrial to service economies led to a change in self-expression values. It showed that these factors led to an increased appreciation of diversity. But I also pointed out, that apparently societies must (have) first learn(ed) to deal with diversity in order to later be able to truly appreciate it and see it as a source of inspiration.

It takes time, because it requires transformation and adaptation – of sometimes deeply engrained values, of mindsets, of practices, etc. Some of these values, beliefs, assumptions, attributions might run deeply in your family's or culture's history and they might have been rooted in a time when they ensured the survival of a group. People belonging to the own group, the family, tribe or community shared same values, cared for each other, where the "safe zone", people one could trust. People in this group felt a sense of belonging and identified themselves with the group. Trust was based on sharing similar values and by the fact that people knew each other, so if one member "messed up", he could be held accountable by the others. The same didn't necessarily apply for out-groups, other families or communities, one had to be suspicious at first, to protect the in-group, the people one felt close and connected with, and their resources.

In German there is a saying that my grandmother and many of her generation used to repeat, which goes something like this: "What the peasant doesn't know, he doesn't eat", which means that you don't eat anything you don't know, and the same goes for meeting people. You don't interact with people you don't know, because they could potentially be dangerous. The farmer eats what he knows, because he knows the seeds, the soil, the nutrients that made the grain, the vegetables, the fruit, etc. grow and end up on his plate. He is aware of the care that went into them. He doesn't eat the products that were grown by another farmer, or that he can't classify based on their appearance. Transferred to the human being, that translated into: They might not come from familiar seeds (One doesn't know what is inside them, their values, beliefs, world-view, etc.), were not grown in the same soil, their roots are different, they might not have gotten the same nutrients to flourish (upbringing, education, morals, values, etc.), potentially were not treated with the same care (the care of a family or community for the individual that helped the individual to become "human").



A look into social capital theories and current research on upward mobility and enabling factors can give an additional perspective.

Bourdieu in his work about class, social capital and habitus, describes how leading groups and classes "protect their circles" and make entering for newcomers, people who don't belong, difficult (they can do it intentionally in a sense of distinguishing themselves from other groups, and sometimes they might not even be aware of it).

According to his perception upward mobility is difficult to impossible. He himself though, the son of a farmer, became one of the better known social scientists of the 20th century.

### **Types of Distinction – Habitus**

Habitus is "(...) a system of dispositions, that is of permanent manners of being, seeing, acting and thinking, or a system of long-lasting (rather than permanent) schemes or schemata or structures of perception, conception and action" [7b]

Habitus, the way of seeing the world, thinking and (inter-)acting in it, that he sees as long lasting, is "inherited" through the family background and education system. People are socialised into a certain world-view and behaviour that seems appropriate for a certain class (and time).

### **Types of Distinction – Taste**

Further Bourdieu's concept of "taste" suggests that cultural practices and preferences, are closely linked to educational level and to social origin. People e.g. learn to appreciate certain art forms, dressing styles and cuisine, their "taste" is not necessary a (biological) predisposition.

Taste, argues Bourdieu, "is what brings together things and people that go together" [5]

and that "expressions of taste are expressions of social power or powerlessness and that social inequalities are reinforced and perpetuated on the basis of cultural distinction." [36]

### **Types of Distinction – Capital**

Bourdieu distinguished between different types of capital, whereas capital is a form of "social energy".

**Cultural capital** which can exist in three forms [6]

**in the embodied state** "in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body" (e.g. different kinds knowledge, but also abilities, they are all "bond to the body" and play an important role in the formation of the habitus)

**in the objectified state** "in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.)"

**in the institutionalized state** "a form of objectification" (e.g. diplomas)



### **Social Capital**

is consisting of network(s) of relationships and mutual recognition and it *"is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word."* [6]

The Social Capital that a person possess is based on her/his network size and all the forms of capital that each member owns:

*"The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected."* [6]

Social Capital needs attendance, care, investments, e.g. of time and mutual recognition, but belonging to a group can secure profits/benefits for the individual and the group.

*"The existence of a network of connections is not a natural given, or even a social given, constituted once and for all by an initial act of institution, represented, in the case of the family group (...) It is the product of an endless effort at institution, of which institution rites—often wrongly described as rites of passage—mark the essential moments and which is necessary in order to produce and reproduce lasting, useful relationships that can secure material or symbolic profits.*

*In other words, the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term, i.e., at transforming contingent relations, such as those of neighborhood, the work-place, or even kinship, into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.) or institutionally guaranteed (rights)."*

*"Exchange transforms the things exchanged into signs of recognition and, through the mutual recognition and the recognition of group membership which it implies, reproduces the group."* [6]



” **In the usual imperfect market situations, social ties located in certain strategic locations and/or hierarchical positions (and thus better informed on market needs and demands) can provide an individual with useful information about opportunities and choices otherwise not available.**

Nan Lin [24]

And members of a group secure who can enter the group or not:

*“Each member of the group is thus instituted as a custodian of the limits of the group: because the definition of the criteria of entry is at stake in each new entry, he can modify the group by modifying the limits of legitimate exchange through some form of misalliance.”* [6]

### **Symbolic Capital**

*“can be referred to as the resources available to an individual on the basis of honor, prestige or recognition, and serves as value that one holds within a culture.”* [6] It is usually the result of other forms of capital, e.g. a person who has been recognized within a group for her/his contribution or a scientist or athlete who has been recognized based on her/his intellectual or physical abilities.

*“Where symbolic capital is earned on an individual basis and may fluctuate widely between members in a community, social capital is the overarching sense of trust and cooperation that actors in an environment possess in between one another. An actor may possess a great degree of symbolic capital while isolating themselves from the community, resulting in a low level of social capital, or vice versa.”* [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbolic\_capital]

Reading Bourdieu, as interesting as it is, can leave one feeling frustrated, especially if one does not belong to a higher class, or hasn't been taught the appropriate habitus and given the right education from an early age, or hasn't exceptional intellectual or physical abilities, or a large, well-off network. It can seem as if one's path is mapped out.

But there is hope coming from many direction and mentors/sponsors and support networks can play a significant role in many areas and mentees can do their share.

### **Individuals engage in interactions and networking in order to produce profits**

Lin, who has researched social capital and social networks explains: *“Individuals engage in interactions and networking in order to produce profits.”* [24] And gives three explanations *“why embedded resources in social networks will enhance the outcomes of actions.”*

**facilitation of information flow:** *“In the usual imperfect market situations, social ties located in certain strategic locations and/or hierarchical positions (and thus better informed on market needs and demands) can provide an individual with useful information about opportunities and choices otherwise not available.”* [24]

**Mentors and sponsors can give useful information to the mentee and visa versa.**

She further notes that individuals in a network "may alert an organization (be it in the production or consumption market) and its agents, or even a community, about the availability and interest of an otherwise unrecognized individual. Such information would reduce the transaction cost for the organization to recruit "better" (be it skill, or technical or cultural knowledge) individuals and for individuals to find "better" organizations which can use their capital and provide appropriate rewards." [24]

Mentors or sponsors can "alert" mentees, for example about job openings.

**Exert influence, "Putting in a word"** "Nodes" (people in a network) may "exert influence on the agents (e.g.,recruiters or supervisors of the organizations) who play a critical role in decisions (e.g.,hiring or promotion) involving the actor. Some social ties, due to their strategic locations (e.g.,structural holes) and positions (e.g.,authority or supervisory capacities), also carry more valued resources and exercise greater power (e.g.,greater asymmetry in dependence by these agents), in organizational agents' decision-making. Thus, "putting in a word" carries a certain weight in the decision-making process regarding an individual." [24]

Mentors and sponsors can put in a word for their mentee.

**Increase social credentials, "Standing behind"** "acknowledged relationships to the individual, may be conceived by the organization or its agents as certifications of the individual's social credentials, some of which reflect the individual's accessibility to resources through social networks and relations--his/her social capital. "Standing behind" the individual by these ties reassures the organization (and its agents) that the individual can provide "added" resources beyond the individual's personal capital, some of which may be useful to the organization." [24]

And just their relationship to the mentee can give her/him backup and "rate" the mentee up.

**"Finally, social relations are expected to reinforce identity and recognition."** [24]

And she give additional hope, by a comment that can be found in the footnotes of her paper:

” **Bourdieu does not assume perfect correspondence between the accumulation of economic capital and cultural capital. Some economic capitalists do not possess cultural capital and some cultural capitalists are not economically endowed. This less than perfect correspondence would seem to open the possible path for some of the laborers, using their cultural habitus, to gain a foothold in the dominant class. It is conceivable that they become part of the educational institutions and gain returns in the labor market, due to their cultural capital. Bourdieu did not carry his analysis this far, but seems to leave open the process of social mobility and the possibility of agency.** Nan Lin [24]

Crul, Schneider, Keskiner & Lelie share their finding from the ELITES study which examined the differences between the conditions for steep upward mobility in four countries – France, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands. They interviewed professionals whose parents had come from Turkey as low-skilled labour migrants, so the family didn't transfer habitus, cultural capital and very likely also not social capital or influential networks in their new home country.

They coined the term "multiplier effect" [32] (an accumulation of cultural and social capital) that makes "new social mobility" [32] possible. They identified a few critical factors:

**The families are committed to the education of their children:** "In the families of the ELITES respondents, the narrative on the value of education is very consistent over time," even though they may not have been able to practically support their children in their education, they taught them "drive". [32]


**New socio-economic circles offer new opportunities; resilience, social skills, social support and the use of ethnic capital are crucial**

"The multiplier effect becomes visible in two ways: (1) successful children of immigrants take more advantage of opportunities in education and on the labour market than their peers of native descent, and (2) there is an exponential effect on successful children of immigrants because moving into new socio-economic circles offers them opportunities that were previously unavailable. To set the multiplier effect in motion and keep its propeller going, resilience, social skills, social support and the use of ethnic capital are crucial." [32]

**Acquire social capital and learn cultural capital to move up the social ladder**

And refer to Bourdieu: "Steep social mobility for this group is on the one hand the result of the alternative, often longer routes and extra investments they need to make. These extra efforts often lead to a self-propelled dynamic that creates new opportunities and access to resources that were previously unavailable to members of their group, enabling them to rush forward exponentially in relation to other age peers of immigrant descent. Whereas Bourdieu (1990) mainly uses the concepts of habitus and social and cultural capital to explain the reproduction of social classes, we show how it is possible to appropriate social capital and learn cultural capital over time while moving up the social ladder, thus breaking the perpetual cycle of the habitus inherited through class position." [32]





There are a few other findings that are interesting both for mentees and mentors/sponsors but also so for the society as a whole. They found that the immigrant children were **happily using opportunities**, that were given to them and call it "accumulation of chances". *Initially small chances and opportunities became doors to other possibilities and the starting point for further gains. Some of these favourable factors seem rather coincidental and individual – for example, a supportive teacher or neighbour – but others are more structural.* [32]

The interviewed showed **high resilience**: *"they learned to overcome problems at a very young age, often by themselves. They did this by learning to work harder, trying again whenever they failed, and by taking an alternative, albeit longer, route if the direct route was closed to them. This learned resilience often turned into a strong advantage: they are not easily thrown off balance if an obstacle suddenly appears."* [32]

Most of them had **extensive social skills because they had learned to adapt to different social environments and diverse groups of people**:

*They had "increasing exposure to socio-economic and cultural environments that are very different to the ones they came from. (...) They "learned the skills required to cope with different environments from a very early age. This adaptation often started at kindergarten or primary school where they learned that many things, such as language, food, celebrations and typical attitudes and customs, were very different here than in their home environment. In secondary school they were often the exception to the rule, perhaps the only student from an immigrant background in their class in an academic stream leading up to university. Here they learned the cultural codes of their middle-class peers of native parentage. Because they had grown up in a different environment, they were extremely aware of these differences and became capable of switching between different cultural codes quite easily. Rather than living between two worlds, the respondents became equipped with the necessary skills for navigating them both successfully (...)"* [32]

Bourdieu's book was based on research done between 1963 – 1968, the young adult years of my parents, linking this to the transformation that took place in our family and the change of preferences for food, but also people, there is even more hope.

And there is even hope in Bourdieu's finding, even he shares, that different forms of capital can be converted and transmitted.

### **Different Forms of Capital can be transmitted and converted**

*Capital "can present itself in three fundamental guises: as economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as cultural capital, which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility."*[6]

The last exercise of this book, will help to identify, increase and diversify Social Capital. I have mentioned in the beginning of the book that Social Capital got a bit of a bad wrap, because it was overused or misused by people in power to get (not the right or not qualified) people from their networks into influential positions. I think there is also often another misunderstanding related to Social Capital and Bourdieu explains it on several occasions "*Capital is accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its "incorporated," embodied form)*" [6], that applies also to Social Capital. Relationships need time and "work" invested in them. Just because a mentor or other supportive person, introduces a mentee to one of his network nodes (a friend, a colleague, a potential employer, etc.), doesn't mean that this connection can immediately be turned into a new opportunity or gain.

Before I jump to the networking exercise and let you enjoy and experience the power of human connection, I will quickly rewind and summarise the essence of the book and weave all the different concepts together:

- From the peasant who doesn't eat what he doesn't know and the fear of the unknown, the "others" who didn't come from the same "soil", which made a lot of sense in a time "when there wasn't enough to go around", and the various forms of capital accumulated in closed groups
- to the values passed on through family and educational and religious institutions, which can change as existential security increases and we come into contact with new people, ideas and opportunities
- to the stories we have been told or have been read , deeply embedded in our communities and cultures, and what is considered a hero, a struggle and an 'elixir' that improves the "Ordinary World" and the alternative version of the journey, the one towards inner balance and integration of seemingly opposites
- to the goals one wants to achieve and the different perception of goals, strategies to achieve them and the "why" behind them, the purpose that connects and fuels the goals
- to the mentoring relationship, the different models, phases, and explanations about what mentoring is and what its purpose can be and how to find a common ground to embark on the journey together and the tasks and functions a mentor can assume
- to the different models and dimensions of culture and the ways researchers tried to map and explain cultures and cultural differences
- to my attempt to make an culturally inclusive Playbook and express concepts and ideas with colours and shapes
- to starting point for this project a quote from a researcher who assessed companies in Germany and how they implemented and lived mentoring and her finding that intercultural mentoring is often used as an adaptation instrument
- to my own starting point, my own story, the role of my mentors and their impact on my way, the people I met that have impacted my journey and my own "WHY".

My own starting point was, that I have benefited from mentors in many ways. Because of all the different forms of education I have experienced (learning from the more experienced, in school and academic settings, through my own experiences and explorations, both intellectual and craft education, etc.), I have always enjoyed learning and exploring new concepts and ideas.

My mentors were door openers, cheerleaders, bridge builders and sometimes my biggest and most encouraging supporters. They supported me in following my dreams and pursuing a career in a professional field that seemed quite difficult to enter at the time "for people like me" because "I wasn't like them". Some of them became protectors when things got rough by speaking up and encouraging me to stand up for myself. They guided me to find my own voice (voice as the ability to communicate an opinion or idea, but also as a designer). Most of them became role models or an inspiration in certain areas. They triggered a desire to explore new interests and career directions, or challenged me to step out of my comfort zone by giving me new projects and assignments. Some helped build and stabilise or strengthen my confidence and belief that I could "make it". Most confirmed to me on many occasions that my contribution counted, and ensured that it was recognised. A lot of them "held the space" for me to grow, reflect, but also to be able to integrate all aspects of my being and all my skills. Some became sponsors who helped me get a better position and some coached me so I could negotiate a great salary, which provided me with the resources to follow even more dreams.

And in one way or the other they all contributed to a journey that allowed me not just to discover new countries, myself and different approaches to entrepreneurship and education but to meet people in all corners (although curves would be more suitable considering it's shape) of the world.

Strangers who opened more doors, shared their food and their home. People who shared their stories and gave insight into their "culture". Kids and adults who excitedly approached, asking loads of questions, eager to learn more about my "culture" and what I thought about theirs. People who I barely knew, came to help when things went wrong. People who, after a brief exchange via email, showed me their companies, organisations and shared their approaches and experiences. People who connected me with others, who welcomed me at their places. People who inspired me with their vision and dedication. People who let me be part of their dream, their "why", and allowed me to contribute and become a mentor too. My mentees, who trusted from the moment we met and made me part of their team, and later even part of their families. My mentees who took me to their homes, somehow trusting that I will not judge them based on their upbringing or current situation. My mentees who believed that by seeing and experiencing how they were brought up, the "soil" they came from, would help me to understand their experience. My mentees who shared their (hi-)stories and challenges, helped me not only to understand but also to take action. My mentees, who often leave me in awe of their strength, their unique skills and approach, and their seemingly unbreakable will to change the world and make it an even better place. My mentees who remind me on many occasions that tomorrow will be better than yesterday, and all that it needs sometimes is "a good laugh".

And in one way or another, they contributed to one of the most transformative journeys. They all put a small "gift" in my backpack, which I carried back to a small country in the middle of Europe. And after a year "on the road", touched by so many people and their stories, I needed time and space to (re-)integrate all the experiences. And like in the story with the coffee machine, I was looking for familiarity, rituals, moments of silence. A bit of peace after all the "dances" with people from such different backgrounds and a place to just be. My place, my home, has changed though, you can see traces of all these encounters – in the pictures of their smiling faces and their artworks, that reflect part of their (life) story on the walls of my flat, the books on my bookshelf, in which the stories of their heroes are written down, in their music, which for them captures the soul, the essence of their culture, in their food, which they taught me to cook and its flavour, which seems to be so unique in each of the places I have been to, and last but not least in the colours and fabrics I have brought home.



Not only has my place changed, but so have I. We have both "embodied" some of the experiences, the stories, some of the rhythms and "taste", some of their approaches....

And then a friend who works at the local university, told me that I would be such a good match for their team and opened another door. My new colleagues there allowed me to get to know different design approaches and scientific discourses. My boss, mentioned during a brief chat that the master programme would be a perfect option to integrate my diverse interests and do design research on a topic I am passionate about. And my master supervisor, well travelled and experienced in intercultural communication and research believed in the design aspect of my research question. That became the starting point of my work. She encouraged me on my way, shared findings and current studies. And I could base some of my work on the one done by researchers and mentoring practitioners who came before me. People who collected and analysed data, developed models, in an attempt to make "culture" more accessible. I could do my work because others shared their findings. I was able to bounce ideas off some of my fellow students. People who run mentoring programmes gifted me over an hour of their time to share their experiences, approaches and challenges. Hundreds of people answered the questionnaires that I had set up to gather more information about their perception of mentoring and the impact of culture. My mentees and our relationship became an area for experimentation and to gain new insights and as a result develop tools to support mentoring relationships. And during the time of the lock-down and constant changes, people I've met on the trip, reached out to check if I am alright. Friends that live across the world made use of the digital connections to revive our personal one. People I've met for just a few days called to have a good laugh together. People sent me encouraging messages to keep me going during my studies, in one of the strangest times of my generation. And people who cared about my personal and professional well-being, made sure that I have a job (and many other things to ensure my "existential security"). Friends connected me with their friends, knowing that I was looking for contributors for the book. Artists and designers followed my call for entry and brought their image of diversity into pictures and illustrations. Their skills and experience and unique perspective brings diversity not only onto the pages of the book but also to life.

And even if you haven't read the whole text, you will get an idea that many different people made this Playbook possible. Because of their stories, their trust, their encouragement, their knowledge, their work, their abilities, because they inspired me with their dedication, their visions, their approaches and because they connected me to their networks, I was able to use my skills, and together with some of them create something new.

And if you look at the pages from a bit of a distance, you might notice that they resemble a woven fabric. The social fabric, that became at times like a jumping sheet, a warm blanket, or the table cloth that created the space so we could share our food, stories and happy moments.

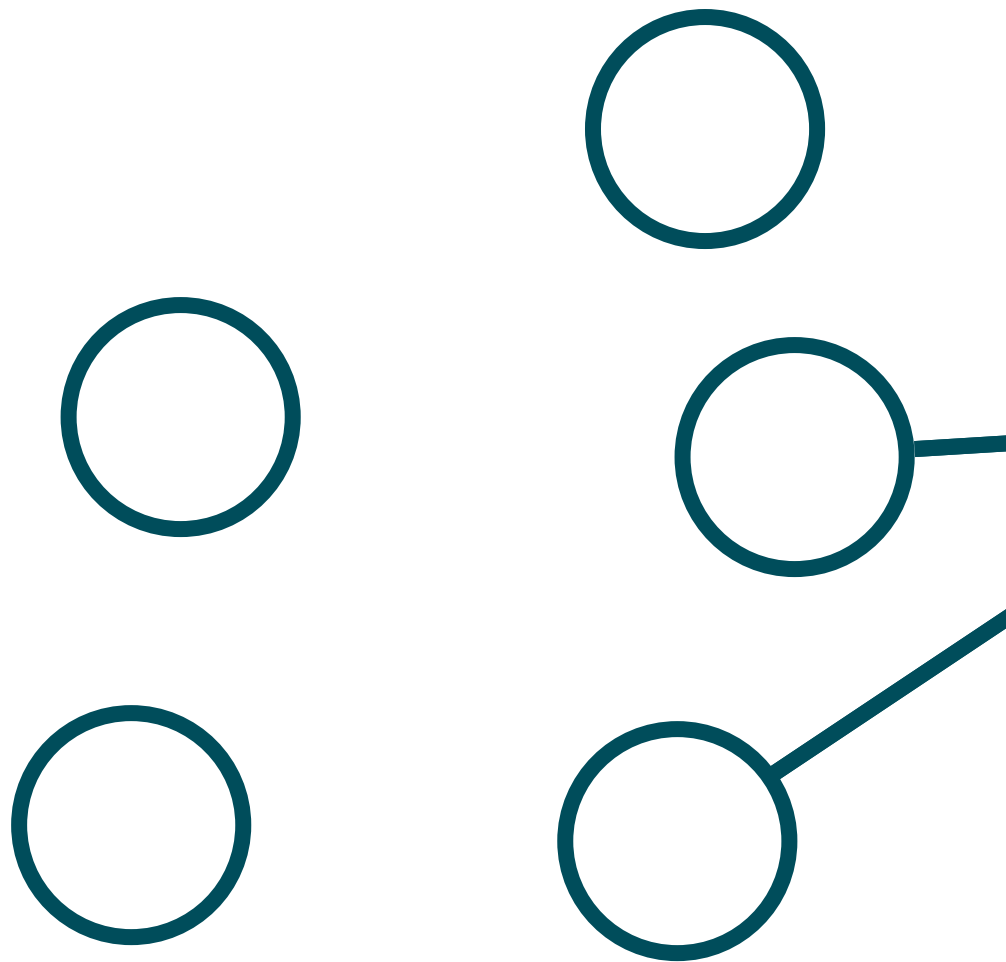
**I hope you have enjoyed the book, found it useful and that you take the very last exercise as an opportunity to start weaving your own unique social fabric. And maybe one day you will say, "I am a social capitalist – I invest in people and relationships". Mio by the way, means beautiful thread or connection.**

And because books written at universities always have footnotes, I'll tell you a story that I didn't tell you before. As a young child, although I was so curious about new people, I was afraid of men with black moustaches and people with black skin. And this despite the fact that I didn't have a single negative encounter. I can only guess (not scientifically proof) where it came from, for me it shows how deep stories and collective fear can reach. This memory came to mind when I walked past men with moustaches waiting for their taxi in the streets of Tehran. I thought about it while working with my mentees who are all black. I started my journey in 2017 with the aim to see countries and have experiences that would challenge myself and my status quo. The footnote is too brief share all the stories with you, what I can tell though is that I actually only had pleasant encounters, some of these have contributed to the book. What I've discovered during that year is, that the kindness of strangers is real, stories connect us and sometimes it needs leaps of faith.

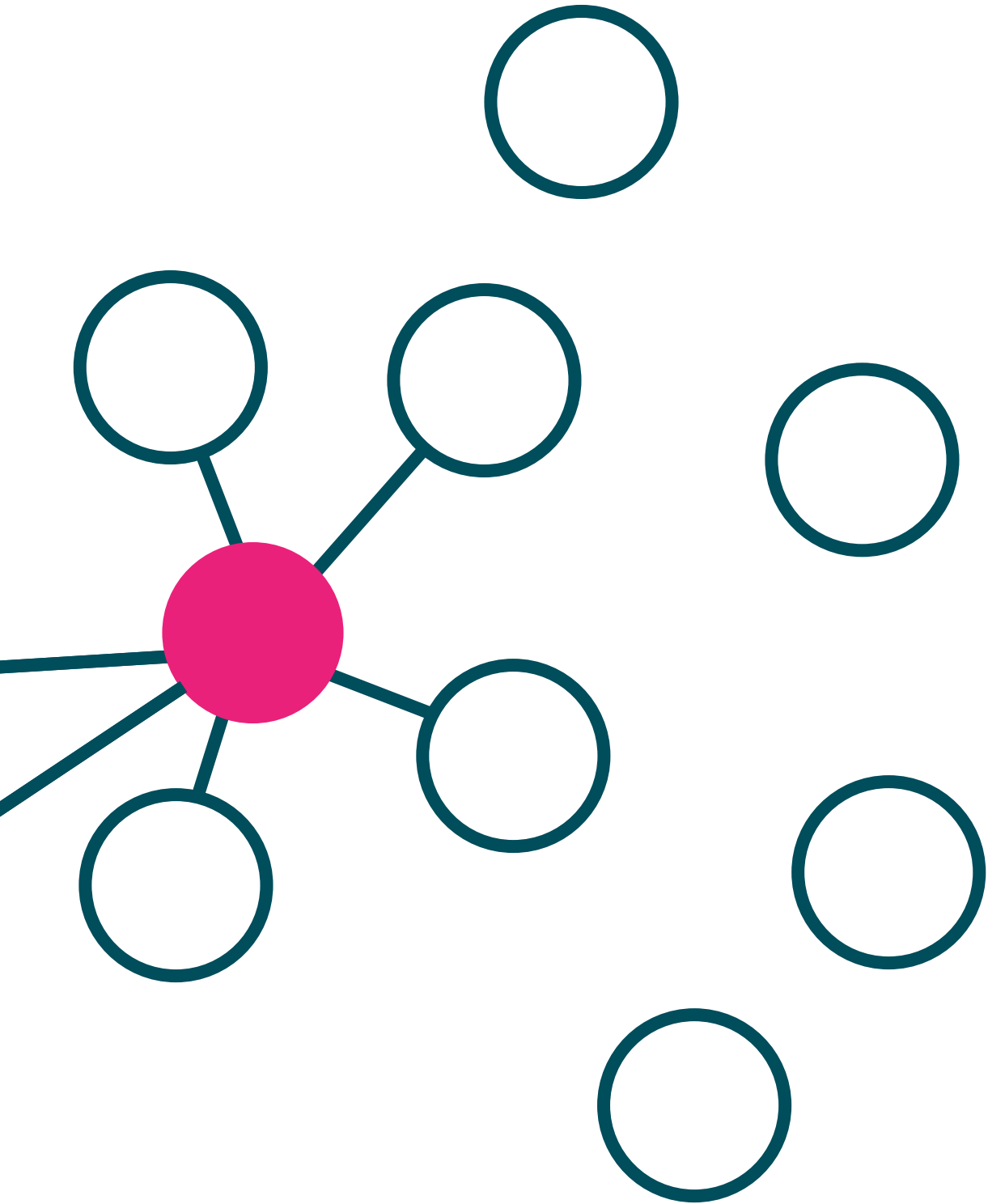
## Network Worksheet

The sheet can be used in manifold ways, it allows the mentee to map her/his supportive network, people that show an interest in their personal and/or professional development. It can in addition help you to identify "nodes" in your network, that are either bonding or bridging social capital but also missing nodes, that you might want to include. Bonding social capital is within a group or community. Bridging social capital is between social groups, social class, race, religion or other important socio-demographic or socio-economic characteristics. The exercise is useful for the mentor/sponsor too. And both can discuss their maps at a later stage, to see how they can increase, enrich and diversify each others Social Capital.

Write the names and details to each of your nodes and feel free to add more nodes, and connections and apply your own colour system or symbols.











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## Additional Resources

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