

The Link between Personal and National Wellbeing



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Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between personal and national wellbeing. Personal wellbeing is a subjective experience: Wellbeing is the feeling you get when you can get your most important needs met. Your most important needs change depending on the season of your life – at each stage of psychological development we have different needs.

The ability to get your needs met depends to a large extent on your life conditions - the context/ environment in which you live. The conditions you live in either allow or inhibit you in getting your needs met. Some life conditions promote human wellbeing, others do not. Sometimes, even though we live in conditions that allow us to get our needs met, some people have limiting beliefs that prevent them from feeling content.

The context/environment that conditions your ability to get your needs met in your early years is principally your family home. The contexts that condition your ability to get your needs met as an adult are principally the country you live in and the organization where you work. In both these cases – the country and the organization – the conditions that promote human wellbeing are identifiable and measurable. They are directly related to our psychological needs. This paper focuses only on national wellbeing. A separate paper will be prepared that focuses on organizational wellbeing.

Personal Wellbeing

I define wellbeing as the feeling you have when you can satisfy the needs of the stage of psychological development you are at. To master a stage of psychological development you must satisfy specific needs. When you can master those needs, you feel a sense of wellbeing.

For example, babies feel a sense of wellbeing when they have food in their stomachs, when they feel warm, when all their survival needs are met, and they feel loved and cared for. Children feel a sense of wellbeing when they feel safe, protected, a sense of belonging to a family and feel loved. Teenagers feel a sense of wellbeing when they feel recognized for their achievements by their parents or their peers and feel they belong to a group that accepts them for who they are – they feel a sense of self-esteem.

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Young adults in their twenties feel a sense of wellbeing when they have freedom and autonomy and feel accountable for their lives. Mature adults feel a sense of wellbeing when they feel a sense of meaning and purpose to their lives – when they are able fully express their gifts and talents. Older people feel a sense of wellbeing when they can connect with other people in empathic relationships to make a difference in their lives. Elders feel a sense of wellbeing when they can contribute to the wellbeing of others through compassionate interventions. The needs associated with each stage of psychological development are shown in the following Figure 1 and Table 1.

Stages of psychological development	Age range	Motivation	Needs and desires	
			Internal	External
Serving	60+ years	Satisfying your need for self-less service.	Compassion	Contribution
Integrating	50–59 years	Satisfying your need to make a difference.	Empathy	Connection
Self-actualizing	40–49 years	Satisfying your need to find meaning and purpose.	Authenticity	Self-expression
Individuating	25–39 years	Satisfying your need for freedom and autonomy.	Responsibility	Accountability
Differentiating	8–24 years	Satisfying your need for respect and recognition.	Security	Achievement
Conforming	2–7 years	Satisfying your need for love and belonging.	Safety	Harmony
Surviving	Pre-birth to 2 years	Satisfying your need for physiological survival.	Survival	Health

Table 1: Stages of Psychological Development

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Figure 1: The most important values at each Stages of Psychological Development

National Wellbeing

Your level of wellbeing as an adult is strongly influenced by the dominant worldview of your community/nation – the belief systems that govern how your society is managed. Worldviews are comprised of three types of belief systems: a personal belief system, a cultural belief system, and a cosmological belief system. Every worldview is a blend of these three belief systems (See Figure 2).

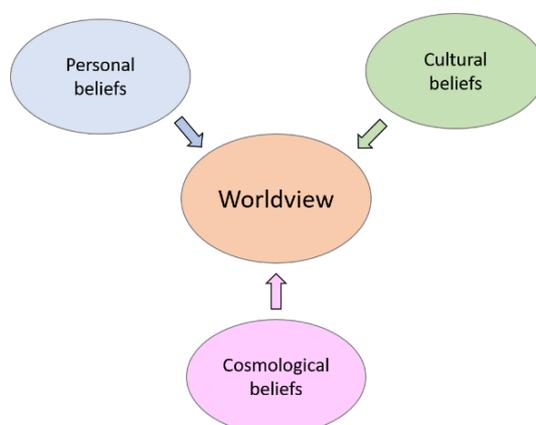


Figure 2: Three belief systems that comprise a worldview.

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Cosmological Belief System: Our cosmological belief system defines our place in the universe: it explains the origin and structure of our material world, our relationship to other dimensions of existence, and, most importantly, how we should conduct and align ourselves with whomever or whatever we consider to be the divine creator/provider so that we can get our needs met in this life and the next. The cosmology of the worldview of Nation Awareness is monotheistic religions. The cosmology of the worldview of Wealth Awareness is science. The cosmology of the worldview of People Awareness is spirituality. The cosmology of the worldview of Humanity Awareness is soul consciousness.

Cultural Belief System: A cultural belief system defines how we relate to other members of our (ethnic) community, and how we should conduct ourselves in that community to get our needs met on a day-to-day basis. This belief system is based on the collective history of the group. It is very closely linked to our sense of identity. As we expand our sense of identity, our cultural belief system becomes less important.

Personal Belief System: A personal belief system defines how we believe we should react or respond to what is happening to us moment to moment so we can get our personal needs met. This belief system will always reflect the priorities of the stage of psychological development we have reached and the unmet needs we still have from previous stages of psychological development that we have not yet mastered.

Over the past 200,000 years Homo sapiens has developed six worldviews. Each worldview was triggered by changes in human living conditions that led to the evolution of a new stage or substage of human psychological development. Table 2 shows the key features of each worldview and Figure 3 shows the link between the stages of psychological development and the emergence of new worldviews.

Clan Awareness	Tribe Awareness	State Awareness	Nation Awareness	Wealth Awareness	People Awareness	Humanity Awareness
						
Survival through sharing and reciprocity	Safety through belonging and loyalty	Security through power and strength	Security through authority/education	Security through status and influence	Freedom through equality and accountability	Self-expression through creativity

Table 2: The Seven Worldviews

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Figure 3: The link between Worldviews and the Seven stages of Psychological Development.

The emergence of a new worldview and concomitant stage of psychological development can be traced back several decades or centuries to an event or series of events that threw into relief the limitations of the dominant worldview, thereby precipitating the birth of a new stage of psychological development that led to the emergence of a new worldview. The worldview of Humanity Awareness, which is now emerging, represents the seventh worldview - a collective shift from the Individuating Stage of Human Development to the Self-Actualizing Stage of Human Development. The key triggers and historical timing of the emergence of each worldview are shown in Table 3.

Clan Awareness	Tribe Awareness	State Awareness	Nation Awareness	Wealth Awareness	People Awareness	Humanity Awareness
Survival through sharing and reciprocity	Safety through belonging and loyalty	Security through power and strength	Security through authority/education	Security through status and influence	Freedom through equality and accountability	Self-expression through creativity
The emergence of Homo Sapiens as hunter gatherers 200,000 years ago.	The emergence of agricultural and pastoral forming in the Levant 10,000 years ago.	Climate change in Africa and Asia caused by the retreat of glacier 10,000 years ago. ¹	The emergence of monotheistic religious institutions in the 4 th and 7 th centuries.	The emergence of secularism in the 16 th century and the demise of organized religions.	The French Revolution, the empowerment of women and their voting rights, the abolition of slavery.	The climate crisis, mass extinction of species, COVID 19, Occupy Wall Street, and gender freedom.

Table 3: Historical triggers of the seven worldviews.

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Wellbeing scores for nations

In 2020 there were seven nations operating from the worldview of People Awareness (see Table 4). These are the nations which currently have the highest levels of wellbeing. There were eight nations operating from the worldview of Wealth Awareness, 18 operating from the worldview of Nation Awareness, 18 operating from the first level of State Awareness, 43 operating from the worldview of State Awareness 2, and more than 51 operating from the worldview of State Awareness 3.^[1]

Some of the nation's operating from each worldview and their wellbeing score, together with the average wellbeing score for each worldview, are shown in Table 4. Details of the methodology used to calculate Wellbeing scores for nations can be found in Annex 1.^[2]

Clan Awareness	Tribe Awareness	State Awareness	Nation Awareness	Wealth Awareness	People Awareness	Humanity Awareness
						
Survival through sharing and reciprocity	Safety through belonging and loyalty	Security through power and strength	Security through authority/education	Security through status and influence	Freedom through equality and accountability	Self-expression through creativity
		Poland 487 UAE 445 Argentina 442 Brazil 469 China 376 Russia 361 India 339	Japan 536 Belgium 536 Singapore 531 France 530 Portugal 525 Spain 522 USA 511	Austria 570 Canada 569 Holland 569 Ireland 566 Australia 564 Germany 564 UK 549	Denmark 598 Norway 594 Finland 593 Switzerland 588 Sweden 597 N. Zealand 583 Iceland 582	See the HAI website for a vision of this worldview.
Note 1	Note 2	Average SA1 = 460 SA2 = 393 SA3 = 305	Average NA = 515	Average WA = 565	Average PA = 589	Note 3

Note 1: There are no nations operating from this worldview, only a few very isolated communities. Note 2: There are no nations operating from this worldview, but there are many communities that embrace this worldview.

Note 3: There are no nations operating from this worldview, but some of the nation's operating from this worldview have policies which align with this worldview. There are growing number of people all over the world that are beginning to embrace this worldview.

Table 4: Wellbeing scores and nations operating from each worldview.

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The difference between State Awareness 1, 2 and 3 relates to the influence of Tribe Awareness (the second stage of psychological development). There is very little influence of the worldview of Tribe Awareness in the countries operating from the worldview of State Awareness 1 (SA1), and a significant influence of the worldview of Tribe Awareness in the countries operating from State Awareness 3 (SA3). There are no modern nations operating from pure Tribe Awareness but there are indigenous groups that embrace this worldview, particularly in Africa and North America. Consequently, there are a significant number of African nations operating from State Awareness 3. There are also some indigenous groups that embrace Clan Awareness, particularly in Australia and Brazil.

Key factors that lead to the emergence of a new worldview

Based on the Global Wellbeing data we have collected over the five-year period from 2016 to 2020 for 145 nations, we have identified the key factors that promote a positive vertical shift in worldview (a shift to a higher average stage of psychological development). These key factors are shown in Table 5.

From	To	Key Factors that lead to a shift in worldview
Wealth Awareness 	People Awareness 	Increase in social capital – internal cohesion, decrease in corruption and improvement in gender equality.
Nation Awareness 	Wealth Awareness 	Increase in social capital, decrease in corruption, improvement in the strength and stability of the State, improvement in individual freedom and level of democracy.
State Awareness 1 	Nation Awareness 	Increase in press freedom, improvement in individual freedom and a decrease in corruption.
State Awareness 2 	State Awareness 1 	Increase in the strength and stability of the State, increase in press freedom, and a decrease in the level of violence and corruption.
State Awareness 3 	State Awareness 2 	Increase in the strength and stability of the State, education, press freedom, social progress, level of democracy, health infrastructure, environmental protection and a decrease in violence.

Table 5: Key factors that promote a positive shift in worldview.

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Conclusion

To improve the level of people's wellbeing in a nation, there must be a shift in the dominant worldview – a shift to a more inclusive and more caring mindset. A set of policies that focuses not just on social welfare, but also on psychological welfare. To achieve this objective will require education and training in the inner curriculum. The inner curriculum consists of three core principles. These three core principles lie at the heart of the Humanity Awareness Initiative.

Becoming Conscious: Developing conscious awareness is a three-stage process:

1. Becoming aware of how your actions and behaviours impact your relationships and the natural world.
2. Becoming aware of how your thoughts, beliefs and values impact your mental and physical health.
3. Caring about the impact your actions and behaviours have on others and the natural world and caring about the impact your thoughts and beliefs have on your mental and physical health.

The skills required for becoming conscious can be learned at any age. However, they become vitally important at the individuating stage of development. Unless you have developed these skills you cannot master this stage of development.

If you are not taught these skills, then the process of becoming conscious is usually triggered by repeated emotional upsets, or bouts of depression or mental stress. The pain you are feeling gets your attention. As you become more aware of how your actions and thoughts impact your relationships and the reality you experience, your life conditions improve.

Internal Alignment: At one level, we are all the alike; we all have the same human needs and desires. At another level, we are all different; we all have unique gifts and talents. To find fulfilment and wellbeing in the later stages of development you must do three things to promote your internal alignment:

1. Embrace your self-expression: Discover, access, and develop your natural gifts and talents so you can find meaning and purpose in life.
2. Connect with others in empathic relationships: Use your gifts and talents to make a difference in the world.
3. Contribute to the wellbeing of humanity - Improve the lives of others and future generations through compassionate acts of service.

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Self-expression becomes vitally important for our wellbeing at the self-actualizing stage of development. Connection becomes vitally important for our wellbeing at the integrating stage of development; Contribution becomes vitally important for our wellbeing at the serving stage of development.

Only when we find internal alignment can we live in “right” relationship with ourselves, with others and with our environment.

Values-based Decision-making: As we grow and develop, we naturally include and transcend six modes of decision-making – instincts, subconscious beliefs, conscious beliefs, values, intuition, and inspiration. During the first three stages of development, we mostly use our instincts, subconscious beliefs, and conscious beliefs to make meaning and decisions.

During the later stages of psychological development, we shift into values-based decision-making and compassion-based decision-making increasingly prioritizing the needs and wellbeing of others and the natural world. One of the best ways to facilitate this transition is to teach people, and especially children, how to explore their values and make values-based decisions.

The main difference between belief and values is that beliefs tend to separate people, whereas values tend to unite people. It is much easier for groups of people from different ethnic backgrounds or religions to agree on a common set of values than to agree on their beliefs. This is because we are all human beings; we all have the same needs. Whatever we need is what we value. Values are our natural inner guidance system. Beliefs are the guidance system imposed on us by our parental and cultural conditioning.

In a volatile, rapidly changing world, you cannot rely on information from the past (beliefs) to make decisions about your future. You need a decision-making mechanism that anchors you to what is important in your heart. Living according to your values, enables you to live with integrity and authenticity.

Monitoring your Nation's Wellbeing

The improvement of a nation's wellbeing requires clear metrics and measurements such as those provided by the National and Global Wellbeing Indicators (See Annex 1).

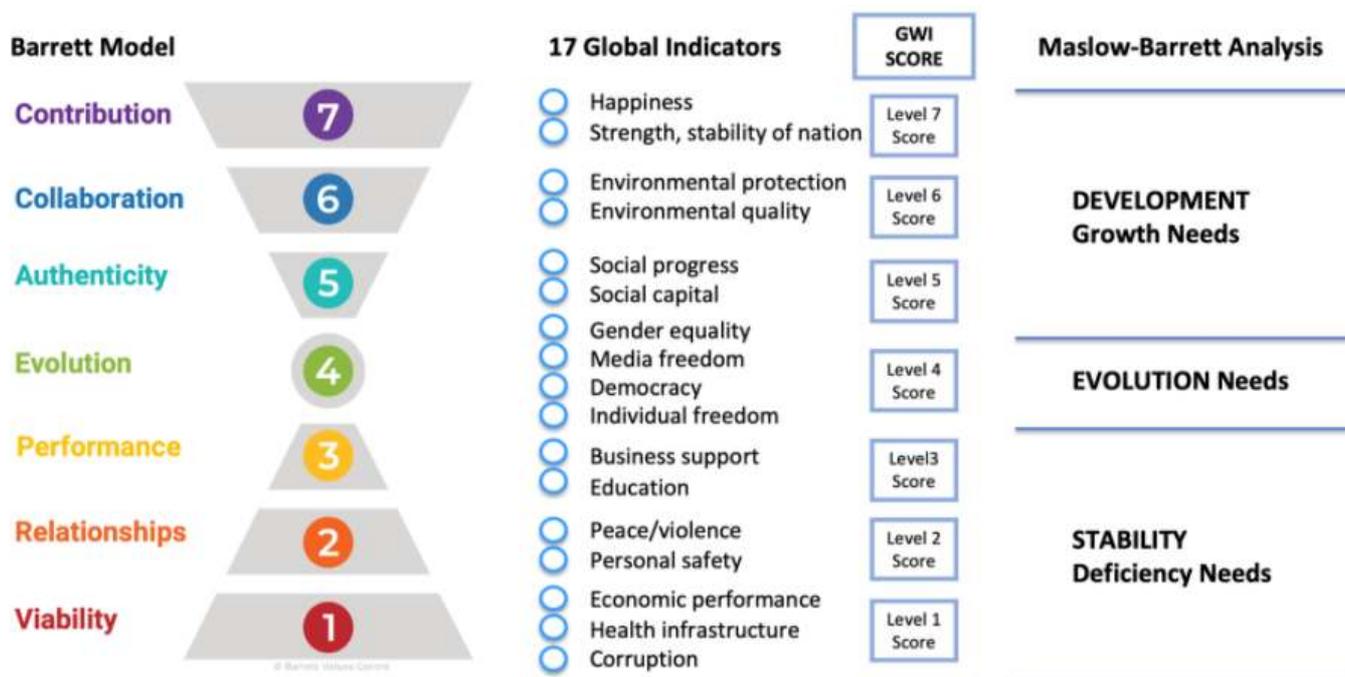
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Annex 1: Global Wellbeing Indicators

The GWI is a holistic measure of national wellbeing developed by the Barrett Academy based on the Barrett Model.

Two, three or four indicators are allocated to each level of consciousness to obtain a GWI score for each level and an overall GWI score for the nation. The indicator scores are normalized, and an average score is taken for each level (out of 100). The scores for each level are added to obtain the GWI score for a nation (out of 700).

The allocation of the 17 indicators to the Seven Levels of Consciousness are shown in the following diagram.



More information on the Global Wellbeing Indicators can be found at www.globalwellbeingindicators.com.

The 17 indicators are globally recognized measures of performance which are updated annually by various agencies.

1. See www.humanityawarenessinitiative.org for a detailed description of the seven worldviews. ↑

2. See also www.globalwellbeingindicators.org for more information. ↑