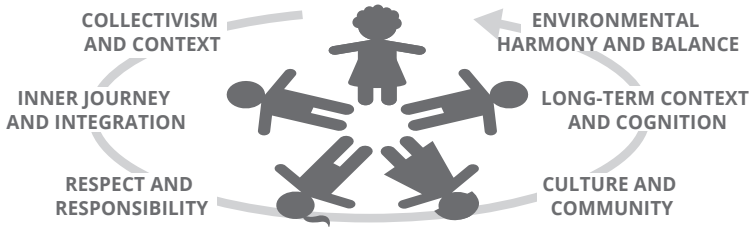


CHAPTER 40 DRAFT BLUEPRINT: CIRCLE CONNECTIONS

It is important to identify and address barriers to embracing **CIRCLE** thinking and gradually integrate these elements into our personal and professional lives. Embracing a more holistic mindset necessitates fostering a deeper understanding of oneself and the connections to the world around us.



As we come to a close, I invite you to enter deeper reflection on several encircling questions. These are questions to ponder, allowing your perspective to develop through the ongoing process of reflection.

COLLECTIVISM AND CONTEXT

Taking initiative requires that an individual step up, build relationships, and communicate. If it seems hard and/or it is uncharacteristic, we need to remind ourselves that we are not doing it for us as individuals – we are doing it for community. That reframing is critical to get over the internal cultural barriers and step into change.

- Where are opportunities for you to take initiative that benefits collective progress?
- What internal barriers limit your development? How can you reframe?
- What group or groups can you form or ally with to take initiative?
- How can you engage more with your community or work collectively on projects?

INNER JOURNEY AND INTEGRATION

Individual voices need to be heard for the sake of collective good. It's not a zero-sum game – we will all win if we can institute changes to bring this diverse thinking into our workplace. All diversity is good diversity.

- How has your cultural upbringing influenced your inner perspective?
- What areas of your career do you find most influenced by this inner perspective?

- Which elements do you identify that could use additional integration into your projects, career, or organization?
- What practices or techniques can help you better connect with your inner self and integrate it with your external world?

RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Many values get woven into the fabric of our being through our upbringing. For instance, the deep sense of community, the integration of deference for the elderly, and the immense focus on children's future are cultural elements imbibed right from childhood for Asian immigrants.

- What do you consider the fundamental aspects of your personal and professional moral frameworks?
- To whom or what do you feel a sense of responsibility?
- How does this sense of responsibility influence your decision-making?
- How can you become more respectful of others' perspectives and take responsibility for your actions?

CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Fostering a sense of community and developing a robust sense of culture provides grounding and anchoring at work and in life. All individuals can take steps to bring a communal mindset and orientation into the day-to-day workings of an organization.

- Consider colleagues you have worked with throughout your career. What assets or contributions may they bring that have been overlooked or discounted?
- How have your contributions been recognized (or not) within the workplace?
- What areas of opportunity exist for you to express cultural values for the benefit of your workplace or community?
- How can you immerse yourself in different cultures and engage more actively with your community?

LONG-TERM CONTEXT AND COGNITION

There is an immense focus on the short term in many attributes of our work and lives. However, there is a recognition of potential downsides of not thinking through the long-term impact of shortsighted decisions and the need to bring together the diversity of holistic and analytic cognition.

- How would you adjust your goals if you could focus on the longer-term?
- How often do you find yourself caught in short-term thinking?
- How often do you think about the downsides of some of the decisions and

think through various scenarios that can play out?

- How can you shift your thinking from short-term to long-term planning and problem-solving?

ENVIRONMENTAL HARMONY AND BALANCE

Ecosystems inherently promote collectivism in our thinking, and many find nature to be a space for introspection and integration with externalities, respect for the past, and responsibility for the future.

- How do you integrate environmental stewardship in your work?
- How often do you feel the desire to take action?
- What steps can you take to live in harmony with the environment and promote ecological balance?

INTEGRATING CIRCLE ELEMENTS

Individualism: Many societies prioritize individualism, which can deter collectivism and community engagement.

Collectivism and Context

- Challenge this mindset by actively participating in community activities, volunteering, and fostering a sense of unity with others.

Identify ways you can collaborate more effectively with your colleagues at work. How can you contribute to building a sense of unity and shared purpose within your team?

.....

.....

.....

Lack of Reflexivity: Some people may not take the time to reflect on their inner journey, limiting personal growth.

Inner Journey and Integration

- Set aside regular moments for introspection, journaling, or meditation. This can promote self-awareness and emotional balance.

Reflect on your personal growth at work. What aspects of your job or

career align with your values and motivations? How can you integrate self-awareness into your professional life?

.....

.....

.....

Social and Cultural Barriers: Cultural norms and biases may prevent individuals from integrating CIRCLE elements.

Respect and Responsibility

- Advocate for cultural change by discussing the importance of these values with your community. Be a role model and inspire others to embrace these principles.
- Evaluate your interactions with colleagues and supervisors. Are there areas where you can demonstrate more respect for diverse perspectives? How can you take greater responsibility for your decisions and their consequences?

.....

.....

.....

Cultural Stereotypes: Prejudices and stereotypes can hinder respect for diverse perspectives and cultures.

Culture and Community

- Challenge stereotypes and actively seek to learn about and appreciate other cultures. Promote respect by acknowledging and valuing differences.
- Think about how you can embrace diversity in your workplace. Are there cultural events or initiatives you can support? How can you participate in your work community?

.....

.....
.....

Short-Term Thinking: The emphasis on immediate gratification may discourage long-term planning.

Long-Term Context and Cognition

- Develop a vision for the future by setting clear long-term goals and strategies, both in your personal life and career. Consider the consequences of your decisions on a broader timescale.

Analyze your long-term goals and strategies at work. How can you incorporate a more forward-thinking approach into your decision-making? What complex challenges require long-term solutions?

.....
.....
.....

Environmental Neglect: Environmental apathy or a fast-paced lifestyle may lead to disregard for ecological harmony.

Environmental Harmony and Balance

- Make conscious efforts to reduce your environmental footprint. Implement sustainable practices, conserve resources, and promote eco-friendly initiatives.

Assess your environmental impact at work. What steps can you take to reduce waste and promote sustainability in your workplace?

.....
.....
.....

Integrating the CIRCLE elements into both work and home life can lead to personal growth and stronger relationships. However, certain factors like falling into routine and complacency can deter individuals from embracing these elements in their lives.

Breaking free involves a conscious effort to change one’s mindset and take positive actions. It may require challenging societal norms and ingrained habits.

By investing in self-growth through active engagement with the CIRCLE elements, we can promote a more harmonious and responsible way of living.

A more holistic blueprint.

OF INVESTING IN SELF-GROWTH

Meeting the first scholar funded by my book's proceeds in 2021 was a profound moment, emphasizing that personal growth stems from understanding what lies within us – our *fine print*. The past few years have underscored, for me, the significance of delving into our emotions, understanding our evolving sense of self, and aligning with our fundamental human needs and lived experiences to foster personal growth, authentic leadership, and self-realization. This journey, essential for shaping both external perceptions and our own self-image, forms the cornerstone of *The Heart of Science* book series

Self-growth begins with self-understanding. Recognizing and acknowledging our feelings is essential for emotional intelligence, well-being, decision-making, relationships, and navigating life's challenges. Exploring our identities builds self-acceptance and empathy, as our roles and backgrounds shape our worldview. Aligning our actions with our evolving identities fosters personal growth and self-actualization.

Meeting our basic needs – physical, emotional, and intellectual – is fundamental for resilience and growth. Identifying unmet needs allows for proactive changes to improve well-being, while addressing them provides the foundation to pursue higher aspirations. During tough times and rough patches, accepting and adjusting expectations to changing needs is crucial. Reflecting on lived experiences offers valuable lessons and opportunities for self-discovery. By learning from these experiences, we adapt, make informed choices, and build resilience.

My own journey, from a creative kid to an engineer, underscores the importance of aligning actions with evolving identities. The need to create, innovate, advocate, and find purpose has driven me to write books and establish scholarships, shaping my path. My experiences in my formal education and personal growth, as well as societal changes, have provided lessons to navigate challenges and inspire others. My writing has been a reflection of these experiences, encapsulating their wisdom.

Embracing the FINE elements – Feelings, Identities, Needs, and Experiences – has been instrumental in my journey. These interconnected elements contribute to self-awareness, emotional health, and navigating life's complexities. What I have realized is that everything we have talked about in this section, whether it is tapping into your thoughts, your voice, your vibe, your mindset, your story, or your creativity – the intrinsic motivation, the plan and the execution are grounded in your awareness, understanding, and

authenticity of your FINE print.

When personal growth goals, strategies, and visions are anchored in emotions, identities, needs, and experiences, they become meaningful and relevant. Understanding our FINE print provides the emotional, social, and psychological foundation to support any growth plan. Rooting actions in self-awareness, authenticity, and understanding of our core being is essential for successfully navigating change and achieving personal and professional growth along our unique journeys – our footprints, fingerprints, and imprints.

Your blueprint – make it a fine one.