

LEADING WITH 'EMOTINAL' INTELLIGENCE – EXISTENTIAL AND MOTIVATIONAL ANALYSIS IN LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

By

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ABSTRACT

This conceptual and practical paper is integrating the work of Viktor Frankl (1985) and Steven Reiss (2000, 2008) into a model of Existential and Motivational Analysis (EMotiAn). This integrated model and approach may provide scholars, educators, consultants and practitioners alike with an innovative and meaningful framework for leadership and leadership development. First, it will be discussed how the two approaches to motivation presented by Frankl and Reiss may serve as a basis for leadership and leadership development. In particular, the paper will show how the Sources of Meaning Profile (SOMP; Reker, 1996), a scientifically developed instrument based on Frankl's work, allows individuals to identify and prioritize areas of meaningful engagement and value actualization. Furthermore, it will demonstrate how the Reiss Motivational Profile (RMP) and the respective strivings and values of an individual may allow for a 'balanced' evaluation and coaching process. Both, the SOMP and the RMP-strivings and values, are integrated into a coherent leadership and (self-) leadership development model based on an Existential and Motivational Analysis (EMotiAn). Finally, the application of the EMotiAn will be described presenting the case of coaching the Client.

Keywords: Leadership, Leadership Development, Coaching, Motivation, Meaning.

INTRODUCTION

Motivation addresses the initiation, intensity, and persistence of human beings. Understanding and being able to influence the factors that initiate, sustain, and change human behavior, are crucial to leadership and leadership development (Mengel, 2008).

While Maslow's (1943) theory of motivation still has a strong influence both on the field of leadership and on leadership development, the importance of Frankl's (1985) research on "Man's search for meaning", has not yet been fully recognized. The human "Will to meaning", the centerpiece of Frankl's (1988) motivational theory, and its application within Frankl's Existential Analysis, can serve as one significant component of leadership and leadership development. Similarly, Reiss' (2000, 2008) model of 16 basic desires is only slowly finding its way into motivational theory in general and into leadership and leadership development in particular. However, given that the resulting Reiss Motivational Profile is a scientifically based profile of human desires and strivings, this

approach can effectively complement Frankl's existential approach and thus serve as the second component of leadership and leadership development.

This paper will first introduce these two approaches to motivation and discuss how they may serve as a basis for meaningful leadership practice and development. In particular, It will show how the Sources of Meaning Profile (SOMP; Reker, 1996), a scientifically developed instrument based on Frankl's work, allows individuals to identify and prioritize areas of meaningful engagement and value actualization. Furthermore, the paper will demonstrate how the Reiss Motivational Profile (RMP) and the respective strivings and values of an individual may allow for a 'balanced' evaluation and coaching process. Both, the SOMP and the RMP-strivings and values, are integrated into a coherent leadership and (self-) leadership development model based on an Existential and Motivational Analysis (EMotiAn). Finally, the application of the EMotiAn will be described presenting the case of the

coaching Client Sam Someone.

1. Motivation: Values (Viktor Frankl) and desires (Steven Reiss)

To overcome the experience of many of an 'existential vacuum' (lack of meaning) Viktor Frankl (1985) has presented three dimensions of discovering meaning and realizing values: creating something meaningful, experiencing something as meaningful, and reframing something in a meaningful context. Furthermore, building on the previous work in the field of motivational psychology Steven Reiss (2000, 2008) has identified a set of 16 basic desires and values that motivate and underlie our actions. The integration of the work of Frankl and Reiss into a model of Existential and Motivational Analysis (EMotiAn) may help raise the practice of leadership as well as leadership development to the next level.

1.1. Viktor Frankl: "Man's Search for Meaning" (1985)

Interestingly, Maslow's (1943) theory of motivation, although based on the often disputed psychodynamics introduced by Freud and Adler, still has a strong influence on leadership (Shriberg, Shriberg, & Kumari, 2005). Maslow's (1943) "hierarchy of basic needs" (physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs) often is presented as a sequential pattern of need satisfaction. However, Maslow states the "pre-potency" especially of the physiological and safety needs (i.e., the urge to first satisfy these needs and to ignore others) to be particularly significant in the state of severe deprivation; in times of relative health and wealth, the pre-potency weakens. Furthermore, Maslow emphasizes the existence of variations, whereby people prioritize the satisfaction of higher level needs in spite of lower level needs not being fully met. Also, any particular human behavior can simultaneously serve the satisfaction of various needs from different levels. Finally, Maslow preferably interprets the sequential character of his hierarchy as stages of psychological development. As previously verified (Reiss and Haverkamp, 2005), young people tend to focus on the lower levels of needs, whereas the need for esteem and self-actualization is prevalent within the group of mature adults. However, as to the most important motive

of human behavior, Maslow did agree with Frankl (1985) that "man's primary concern is his will to meaning" (Maslow, 1966, p. 107).

Surprisingly, the importance of Frankl's (1985) research on "Man's search for meaning", which lead beyond Freud's and Adler's emphasis on pleasure and power, has not yet been fully recognized. Combined with the results of other approaches, the human "Will to meaning", the centerpiece of Frankl's (1988) motivational theory, could help develop a more comprehensive theory of human motivation and leadership. In analysis of the approach of Freud and Adler, Frankl (1985, 1988) has pointed out that focusing on the satisfaction of the will to pleasure or the will to power are the result of the frustration of man's primary "will to meaning" and often lead to an "existential vacuum". While power can be a means to the end of finding meaning, and pleasure and happiness may ensue the discovery of meaning, humans primarily search for individual meaning based on their personal situation.

Frankl suggested that we discover meaning

- In what we do by realizing creative values (e.g., creating something at work or in our learning environment),
- In what we experience by realizing experiential values (e.g., experiencing meaningful relationships in our personal and professional lives), and
- In what we believe and think by realizing attitudinal values (e.g., developing new and healthy attitudes when suffering professional setbacks or personal crises).

Furthermore, he proposes that we discover meaning by answering the questions "why?" and "what for?" based on our personality and on the situational context we find ourselves in; hence, our personal situation needs to guide our discovery. Frankl's motivational theory provides an anthropological basis for the importance of values in leadership processes and for the need to create meaningful work environments (Mengel, 2008).

Based on Frankl's work Gary T. Reker (1996) has developed a scientific instrument – Sources of Meaning Profile (SOMP) – which allows individuals to identify and prioritize the

following areas of meaningful engagement and value actualization.

- Leisure activities
- Meeting basic needs
- Creative activities
- Personal relationships
- Personal achievement
- Personal growth
- Religious activities
- Social causes
- Altruism
- Enduring values/ideals
- Traditions & Culture
- Legacy
- Financial security
- Humanistic concerns
- Hedonistic activities
- Material possessions
- Relationship with nature

Furthermore, Reker's research suggests the significant grouping of individual sources of meaning within the following clusters: Self-transcendence, Collectivism, Self-preoccupation, and Individualism. Finally, the work done by Reker also helps to analyze one's own profile in comparison to others within the same age group (Figure 1).

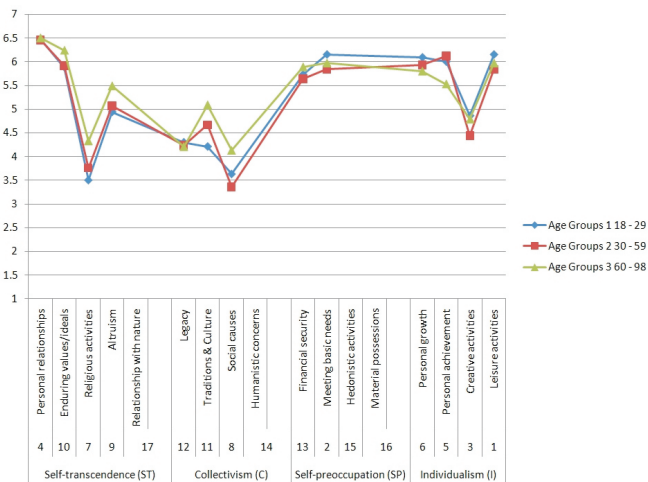


Figure 1. Sources of Meaning Profile (Reker, 1996)

2. Steven Reiss: "Basic desires that make our life meaningful" (2000)

Similar to Frankl's approach, Steven Reiss (2000) discovered that the pleasure principle does not suffice to describe human behavior. Based on his review of various philosophical and psychological traditions from Plato to Maslow and including Frankl, he suspected that pleasure and happiness are rather by-products of experiencing life in general and our behavior in particular as meaningful. "Frankl's experiences teach us that our goals make our lives meaningful. By embracing the 16 basic desires, we experience a general feeling that life has purpose. The more passionately we embrace the 16 desires, the more purposeful our lives become, and the more we desire to live. Desire, purpose, and goals are the main differences between life as a biological mass and life as a human being" (Reiss, 2000, p. 132).

Starting in 1995, Reiss engaged in a thorough and extensive scientific research project including an original list of 328 individual values, surveys with thousands of participants from various nations, and factor-analyses of the respective responses. The result was a list of 16 significant and distinctive life motives (16 basic desires or strivings) that guide human behavior; a questionnaire of 128 questions analyzes the individual Reiss Motivational Profile (RMP) in regard to these 16 desires. Furthermore, these desires are typically accompanied by certain beliefs; the degree of success or failure to satisfy these desires leads to respective emotions. Finally, all humans are to some extent striving for the satisfaction of all of these desires; yet, for all individuals the degree of satisfaction needed for a corresponding positive feeling is different. For some desires an individual may have a strong need of satisfaction (green areas in the following figures), for others the need may be weak (red areas) or average (yellow). The instrument is calibrated to reflect the following normal distribution (Figure 2)

For each desire an individual will have a threshold value indicating to what extent (s)he will need to satisfy this particular desire (ranging from weak: -2.0 to strong: + 2.0) on a regular basis. However, most of the desires are bipolar: a person with a strong particular desire may value

one thing whereas a person with a low number in this same desire (weak desire) may value another (Figure 3). It is important to note again, that all humans value all of the desires to some extent.

(Table 1) lists the 16 basic desires (strivings) with the

Acceptance	Self - confident	Self - doubting
Curiosity	Practical	Intellectual
Eating	Fussy eater/doesn't care	Overeater/likes variety
Family	Childless or absent parent / laissez-faire	Devoted parent / controlling
Honor	Expedient, opportunistic	Principled, upright
Idealism	Looks other way / justice for self	Humanitarian, idealistic / justice for everyone
Independence	Interdependent, humble / team-oriented	Proud, stubborn / self-reliant
Order	Organized, methodical	Flexible, disorganized
Physical activity	Lackadaisical /	Energetic /
Power	Laid-back, nondirective / service-oriented	Take-charge, wilful /
Romance	Platonic	Romantic
Saving	Extravagant	Collector
Social Contact	Reserved, introverted	Affable, extroverted
Status	Informal	formal
Tranquility	Brave / risk-taking	Timid / risk-avoiding
Vengeance	Peacemaker	Competitor

Table 1. 16 basic desires of Reiss Motivational Profile (Reiss, 2000)

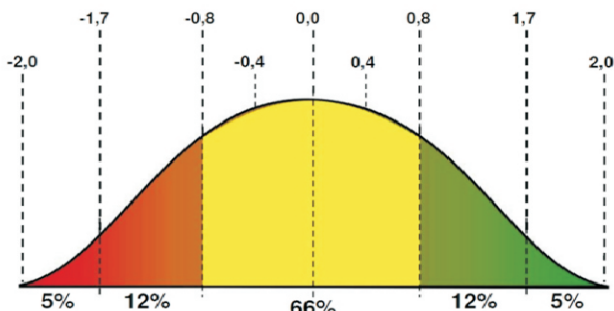


Figure 2. Normal Distribution for Reiss Motivational Profile (Höck, 2010)

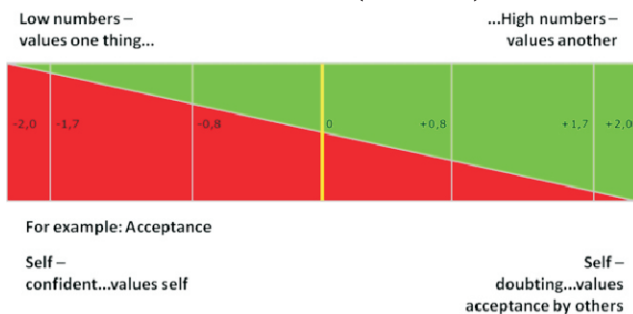


Figure 3. Bipolarity of basic desires in Reiss Motivational Profile (Höck, 2010)

respective values for a weak (red) and strong (green) desire; individual profile numbers within the yellow range indicate an average (and to some extent insignificant) desire and respective value – the individual will sometimes value the one and sometimes the other depending on their individual state of satisfaction regarding this particular desire.

3. Leading with 'Emotion' – Values-Oriented Leadership (Development)

Frankl discovered through his clinical work that humans are first and foremost motivated by doing something that is meaningful (creative values), by experiencing something or someone that is meaningful (experiential values), and by developing a meaningful attitude towards circumstances in life (attitudinal values); 'meaningful' to be interpreted as being of value to an individual in a certain situation. As a consequence, humans are oriented towards realizing personal values in those situations and along the aforementioned three dimensions. The degree to which they actualize those values will also determine the degree to which they perceive their life to be meaningful at any given moment. As depicted in the following diagram (Figure 4), humans strive for creative, experiential, and attitudinal values.

Reiss developed his Motivational Profile based on the discovery of 16 basic desires (life motifs) and their impact on our behaviour in the context of values, beliefs, emotions, goals, skills, and behaviour as depicted in the following onion model (Figure 5)

The RMP of any person will suggest the significance of particular values for that person within the categories of the 16 basic desires (for example, a +1.7 score on the desire of 'power' will suggest that this person values fairly highly 'achievement' and / or the exercise of 'control');

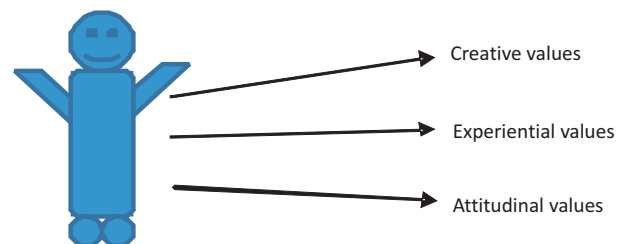


Figure 4. Categories of human values (Frankl, 1988)

these values are accompanied by certain beliefs and the satisfaction (or lack thereof) of these beliefs leads to positive (or negative) emotions. Our individual RMP will influence our choice of personal and professional goals which in turn – depending on our respective skill level – influences our demonstrated behaviour.

Integrating both concepts that are fairly complementary indicate that values (creative, experiential, and attitudinal) are at the core of and strongly influence human behaviour and at the same time human behaviour is oriented towards those values (Figure 6).

While there is no agreement in the literature on one particular definition of leadership, many approaches lean towards leadership being a process of influencing oneself (self leadership) or others to actualize particular values and/or to demonstrate certain behavior (Figure 7).

Consequently, our leadership capability can be described as being comprised of the abilities

- To effectively analyze and evaluate a given situation and context and
- To make decisions accordingly;
- To interact with and/or influence oneself or others;

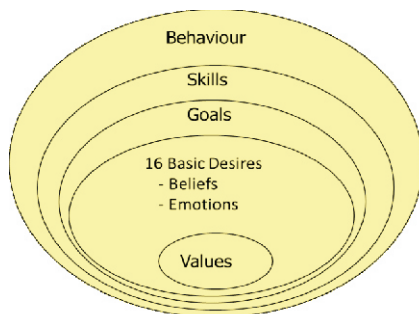


Figure 5. Onion Model of human behaviour (Ion & Brand, 2009)

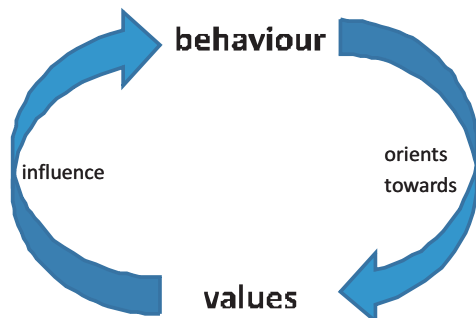


Figure 6. Relationship between values and behaviour

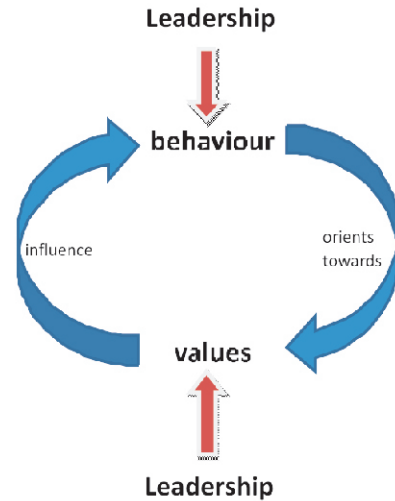


Figure 7. Leadership as process of influencing values and behaviour

- To analyze, understand and demonstrate different behaviours;
- To assess and consider existing or needed skills;
- To identify, set, and achieve goals (including evaluating goal achievement);
- To identify, assess and cater to personal desires, beliefs, and emotions;
- To identify and cater to personal and / or joint values (including the ability to assess the degree of value actualization); and
- To facilitate the integration of personal, organizational, and other contextual values in a way that is meaningful to all stakeholders (process and results).

Finally, leadership development (including counseling, coaching, mentoring, and training) ought to be defined twofold based on the aforementioned model. First, leadership development aims at analyzing, evaluating, and harvesting a person's existential sources of meaning and their profile of basic desires in the context of their current situation (personal as well as professional). Oftentimes a person's professional and / or personal context is not conducive to appropriately accessing one's major sources of meaning or to sufficiently satisfying one's basic desires. In any case, tensions and potentials need to be identified and addressed in terms of developing scenarios for and roadmaps towards a better match of

existential values and basic desires on one side and the contextual situation on the other. Sometimes increasing awareness and reframing the situation may be sufficient; in other cases more actively embracing existing potentials or even working on changing situational or contextual factors may be warranted. In a second step, leadership development in a more traditional sense is aiming at improving our leadership capability by growing our respective abilities. Based on the results of the first step and in support thereof the current level of our leadership abilities needs to be assessed, the intended or needed level of respective abilities needs to be identified, and a plan for growth of the respective abilities needs to be developed, implemented, and continuously evaluated.

Since the emphasis of this paper is on existential and motivational analysis, the focus will be on further discussing the respective first step of leadership development and only including the elements of the second step that pertain to harvesting the results of the existential and motivational analysis. This will be done through introducing and discussing the case of the client

4. Existential and Motivational Analysis (EMotiAn) – The Case of the Client

The application of the EMotiAn based on Frankl's and Reiss' approach will be described using the fictive case of the Client. The client came into a self leadership seminar trying to better understand his current frustrations about life and leadership and to identify what to do about them. He is a 35 year old manager of a sales-team in major

insurance company. He is married and has two children at the age of 5 and 7. He has a degree in social work and a teacher certificate. Because he could not find work in his trained profession he started selling insurances and worked his way up into his current position. While he is quite successful and earmarked by his superiors as a high potential, he does not feel to be 'at the right spot'. He completed the Reiss Motivational Profile which resulted in the following graphical representation of desires and corresponding values (Figure 8).

His main motivators (outside of the circle delineated by the green line or valued at more than 0.8) are curiosity, power, family, idealism and social contact; correspondingly, he may particularly value thinking/intellect, service/non-directiveness, children/siblings, altruism/humanitarianism, and extroversion/fun. He has no motivators in the very strong range of 1.7+. As a consequence, there appear to be no strivings that tend to dominate client behavior; to the degree he is able to satisfy his main desires, he is rather flexible in balancing his life around various values.

The results of his Sources of Meaning Profile in comparison to his age group show as follows (Figure 9).

Consistent with his RMP the SOMP indicates that Sam draws meaning mainly and above average from personal relationships, religious activities, altruism, social causes, humanistic concerns, meeting basic needs, and

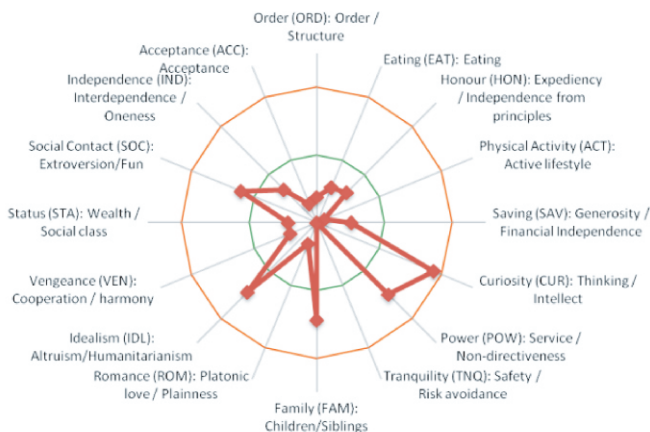


Figure 8. Strivings and values of Sam Someone (Based on Reiss, 2000)

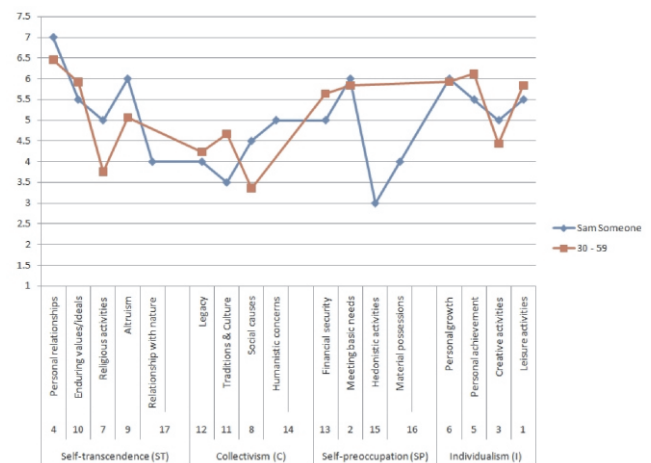


Figure 9. Sources of Meaning Profile of Sam Someone (Based on Reker, 1996)

creative activities. Relationship with nature, traditions and culture, financial needs, hedonistic activities, and material possessions are of comparably little importance to him. The other potential sources of meaning are only of average significance to client.

When analyzing the requirements of his professional context as perceived by the Client and comparing it to his profiles the following areas of potential tensions were identified by him (Table 2).

However, he also realized that his professional context was conducive to satisfying the following desires and living the respective values.

- Enjoying meaningful relationships with colleagues and customers
- Helping customers and team members to achieve financial security
- Figuring out innovative solutions for customers and his sales team members
- Securing a livelihood for himself and his family

He started to better understand what his personal values and desires were and how they might interact with the requirements and expectations in his current personal and professional roles. He realized that the trajectory of his current career path might not be the best choice given his personal values and strivings. The subsequent dialogue focused on two main options of self and leadership development.

- Transitioning into a corporate training department
- Exploring leadership opportunities in community based non-profit organizations

The resulting short-term path chosen by the client was to discuss opportunities of transitioning into a training role

client's desires, values, sources of meaning	Requirements of client's professional context
Thinking, theory, learning about many things	Practical knowledge, focused on financial management
Service orientation, participative leadership	Directive leadership, goal and achievement orientation
Time for family, work-life balance	Long hours, extensive travelling, career orientation
Engagement in community projects (church and village)	Long hours, extensive travelling, career orientation

Table 2. Areas of potential tension for Client Someone

within the insurance company with his superior and with human resource personnel. Depending on how this approach might play out, he intended to delay exploring other opportunities in the non-profit sector until later.

Conclusion

This paper has first presented two approaches to motivation that may serve as a basis for meaningful leadership and leadership development: Viktor Frankl's Existential Analysis and his approach to motivation may help develop a personal understanding of one's individual sources of meaning and a conceptual understanding of 'meaningful learning' particularly in the context of leadership; furthermore, Steven Reiss' Motivational Analysis in more detail identifies an individual's motivational structure and allows develop an approach to leadership which is based on values-orientation. Leaders and followers alike want to do something meaningful, they want to make meaningful experiences with something or someone, and finally they want to be able to gain meaningful perspectives on what they encounter, particularly if they experience it as personally difficult and challenging. The resulting comprehensive and integrative model of meaningful and values-oriented leadership and leadership development may help leadership scholars, leadership developers and educators, and leadership practitioners alike to conceptualize leadership, leadership development and education, and leadership practice (their own as well as others'). Finally, the presented case of the Client may help to understand how this approach can be applied in a coaching or leadership development practice.

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