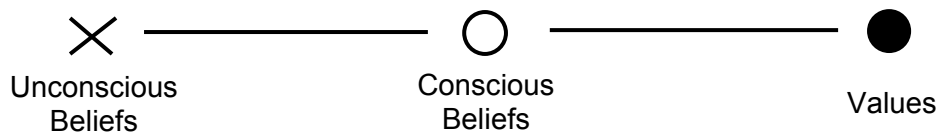


From *Mush* to Ideology: A Values Development Process¹

The following process can undertaken either individually, or as part of a group (e.g. an organisation). This approach is based on the value that says: *How you act (the process of your politics) is just as important as what you conclude about life, the universe and everything ...*

1. The generalisations/truisms/assumptions/beliefs/values that motivate our behaviour can be conscious or unconscious. They can be thoroughly processed or completely hidden. They could be located at any point along the following continuum:



1. View of Human Nature & Higher Power(s)

- Underlying questions about the context of human life (e.g. human nature, superstition, environment, higher being/s, truth, evolution)
- What is essential human nature? Are we inherently *good*? *evil*? something else?
- Importance of human beings - compared with nature/environment? with each other?
- Nature of life (sacred? momentary?)
- Needs, rights and responsibilities of individuals (e.g. safety/violence, participation, choice, freedom, equality/equity, information, learning)

2. Relationship between Individuals and Groups

- The importance of individuals compared with groups – Are humans independent? interdependent? dependent?
- Relationship between individuals and variety of groups - partners (including sexual relationships and reproduction); families, adults and children; and communities (of geography, of identity/background/experience).
- Nature of all the above groups (e.g. what is a *family*? a *community*?)
- The role of culture and tradition.
- How we relate with others (e.g. respect, acceptance, honesty, trust, self-protection).

3. Role of State/Government

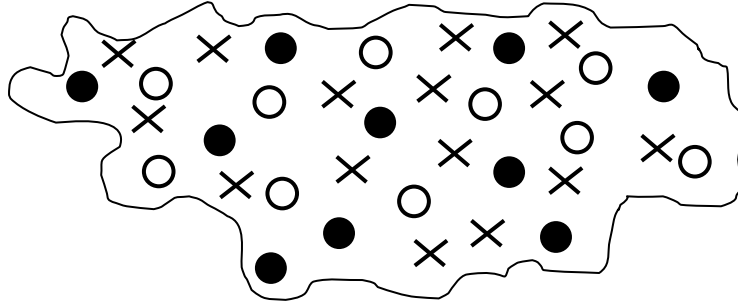
- Overall role - the need for, and meaning of, social organisation
- Structure/model/responsibilities of government (e.g. authority, leadership, participation, law)
- "Winners" and "Losers" (e.g. reward for effort, leaders/individual citizens/competition)
- Social systems required (e.g. financial? medical? religious? academic? educational?)

4. Social Maintenance/Change

- If there is no need for change: What are legitimate strategies for maintaining the existing system/situation? (e.g. dictatorship, law and punishment, political parties)
- If there is a need for social change: Which strategies are legitimate? (e.g. conformity, reform, revolution, passive/assertive/aggressive approaches)

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2. A mixture of these is mushily floating around all over the place in our brain:



3. One way to begin to make sense of these is to list our **Values** (which are consciously worked through) and **Beliefs** (things we have always simply assumed to be true):

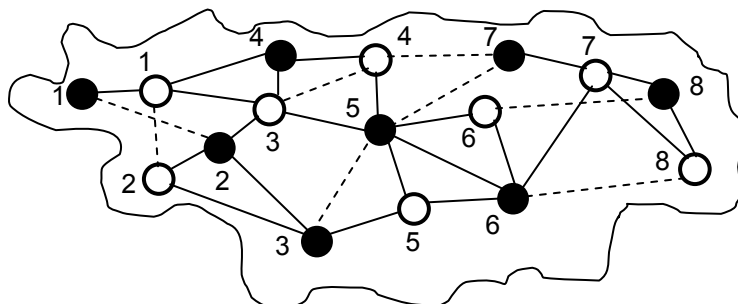
Figured Out ... Sofar!!

1.	●	.....
2.	●	.....
3.	●	.....
4.	●	.....
5.	●	.....
6.	●	.....
7.	●	.....
8.	●	.....

Need More Thinking

1.	○	.....
2.	○	.....
3.	○	.....
4.	○	.....
5.	○	.....
6.	○	.....
7.	○	.....
8.	○	.....

4. One way to begin to look at the relationships (and incongruence) between our beliefs and values is to do a *spatial visual plan*, with a **solid line** indicating congruent values/beliefs, and a **broken line** indicating those interrelationships which are possibly incongruent. (*Incongruent* values/beliefs are ones which are directly contradictory, or, ones that might end up contradictory when applied in different situations.)

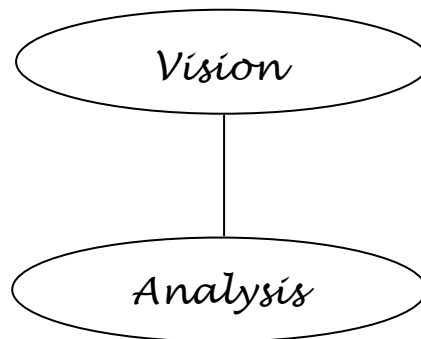


5. It's now time to deal with possible contradictions. Maybe it's time to review your assumptions/beliefs? Maybe some values are more important to you than others, and you can distinguish between **higher order values** and **lower order values**? (ie. A lower order value is a value I hold, except where it's in conflict with another value which is more important.)

6. So ... you've clarified the values you hold that are congruent with each other. What does this say about the kind of world you'd like to live in (your **Vision**)? If that's your vision, what does it say about what's wrong with the present (your **Analysis**)? If you can clearly articulate your vision and analysis, you have identified your **Philosophy**.

Philosophy is **head-focused**, and doesn't automatically indicate **how** change could be achieved. It is primarily concerned with **what** is sought and **why** the current situation is not OK (if, in fact, there's a gap between your vision and current analysis).

Philosophy could be drawn like this:



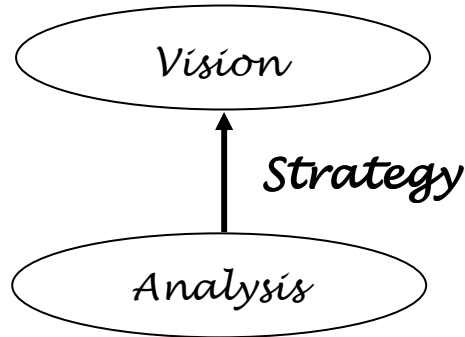
7. In order to be consistent in the **way** we go about achieving a world more akin to our values, we need to have thought about **how** change should occur. **Strategy** describes our view of how change should happen. There are many different paths from any analysis to any vision - which is most compatible with your values? The following formula can be useful:

Ideology = Philosophy + Strategy

Some people with different philosophies are able to work together effectively because they share similar strategies (and their philosophies are not entirely contradictory). Similarly, **some people with a very similar philosophy may not be able to work together toward change**, because the methods they prefer are so different (eg. a gradual/passive approach to change, rather than a revolutionary/violent one).

Ideology focuses equally on **head, heart and hand**, and includes being clear about **how** change could be achieved.

So, **Ideology** would look like this:



8. Once you have defined the strategy/process by which you plan to act on your values, you have a clear basis for developing consistent **Ethics** - the principles for practice which arise from your ideology.
9. ... and your **Standards** will follow from this - the specific behaviours which are acceptable, or unacceptable, according to your ethics.