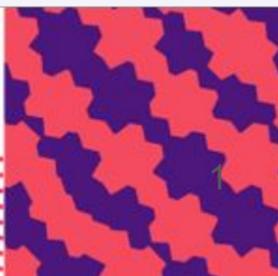
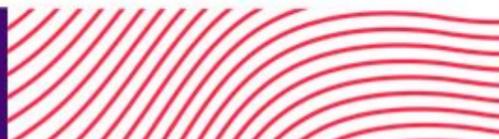




Human Values



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01. Introduction

Behaviour is an action of an individual within the context of their environment. Behaviour is easy to observe and easy to measure. Behaviour sits at the top of the iceberg, and our human needs are at the bottom, driving the behaviour. This is represented visually on the following page (figure 1, page 5). Although a number of general human needs have been represented in a number of psychological models, e.g. Maslow's hierarchy of human needs^[1], it is generally difficult for us to describe our individual needs or map specific needs to our own specific behaviours. We might behave in the same way as other people but have different intentions, motivations or needs.

Research shows that we are generally able to explicitly describe our values^[2]. Values express underlying needs and motivations^[3], which serve as guiding principles for our thoughts and attitudes^[3]. They shape our everyday behaviour and have been demonstrated to affect everything from voting behaviour, consumer decisions to choice of university degree course^{[4][5][6]}. Understanding these enables us to identify the drivers for our actions^[2].

A gateway to understanding needs and motivations is to understand core values.

This project defines *values* by:

- personal judgements about things we consider to be important
- an expression of our needs^[3]
- psychological drivers that shape everyday behaviour^{[4][5][6]}

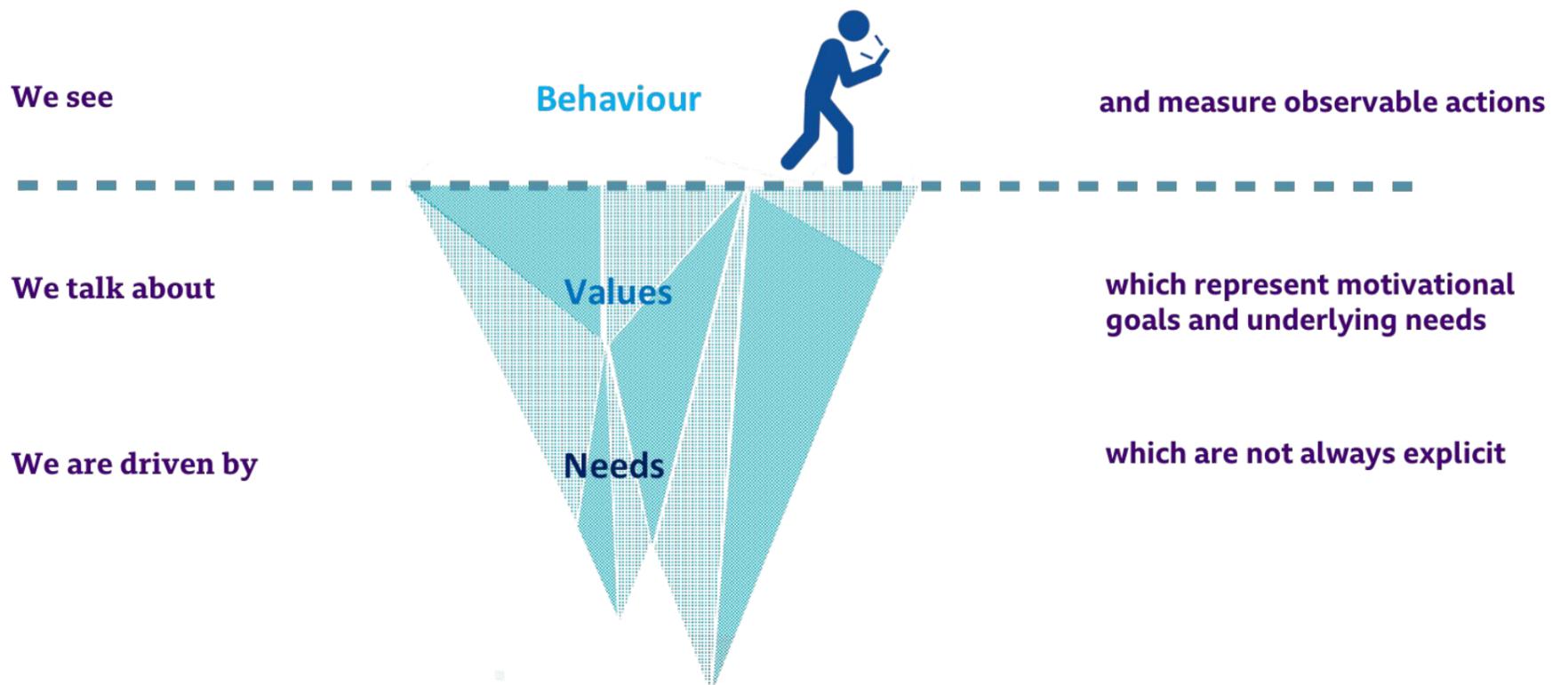
The human values project has stripped it back to the core human level to understand what is fundamentally important to people in life. Using a psychological framework, and being informed by key models of human needs such as Schwartz^[7], Maslow^[1], and Deci and Ryan^[8], we have researched people at their core. In doing so, we provide the understanding of the underlying needs and psychological drivers of the 16-34 year old audience.



Our mission:

Enable the BBC to put human values at the heart of delivering public service value

Figure 1: behaviour, values and needs



5 steps to achieving our mission:

Knowledge share

Tools

Processes

Strategy

Culture

Methods and knowledge share

Three phases of user research:

1. A *scoping phase* consisted of:
 - a. Desk research: an academic literature review of research and psychological models in collaboration with university partners at Salford University
 - b. Reviewing existing internal BBC data surveys (Youthsite and Touchpoints) from 2016-18
 - c. Identifying gaps
2. *User research phase* with 16-34 year olds, using a mixed methods approach:
 - a. Qualitative research: in-depth interviews and focus groups about values, lifestyles and life stages
 - b. Card sorting activities mapping value priorities to life stages
 - c. Quantitative research: surveys mapping value priorities at life stages
3. Validation phase of the values with 16-34 year olds:
 - a. Human values validation with university partners at Salford University
 - b. Focus groups to validate the language of the Human Values
 - c. Interviews and card sort: mapping value priorities to current stage of life, previous and future stages
 - d. Surveys: mapping a) value priorities to life-stages, b) reflect on previous life stages and value priorities, and c) anticipate future life stages and value priorities

By sharing everything we've learned throughout this R&D research project, we can help the BBC to put human values at the heart of every decision it makes.

100+

Hours of desk research

100+

Academic papers

50+

BBC data sources analysed

20

In-depth interviews

5

Focus groups

7

Value card deck workshops

500+

Survey submissions

2

Value + life-stage studies

Tools



We have developed tools to put human values at the centre of research, design and innovation. The tools include:

- Values card deck
- Values booklet
- Design guide

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/irptnj2hupx6qbo/AA_DScReBX7iZqTLzIlwMXI9a?dl=0

Process

The toolkit can be used to ideate, to design or to sanity check decisions at every stage of product development:

Card sort



To understand audiences' value priorities

Ideation



Designing for value priorities

Health check



Are original values still prioritised, and can any new ones be met?

More details about each step can be found in **Section 4** (page 68) of this booklet

Strategy

This project forms part of the R&D New forms of Value programme of work. We are providing the scientific support to help shape the vision of a future BBC in 2022.

We are providing the knowledge and support for teams to design, ideate and innovate using human values.

Culture

It is important for public service in the internet age to be responsible and align with audience's values.

To this end, we are researching valid and reliable methods to measure success of delivering the public purposes in the internet age, and use value metrics to support a rich story alongside traditional forms of reporting.

02. Human Values *and their psychological drivers*

Thematic analysis of the data established the following 14 values. These core values were found to play a foundational role in shaping everyday behaviour and are driven by psychological needs.

Values are prioritised differently across different stages of life and become heightened in response to events, situations or stress in the environment. Each value below has a description of its underlying need and motivational goal.



Achieving goals

We have a need to set challenges and demonstrate our abilities.



Feeling impact

We have a need to feel like our contribution is worthwhile.



Being inspired

We seek motivation from observing other people's successes and failures.



Growing myself

We are driven to learn new things and develop our skills.



Being safe and well

We are driven to look after our physical and mental wellbeing.



Having autonomy

We have a need for independence and agency over our behaviour.



Belonging to a group

Our need to feel included motivates us to build meaningful relationships.



Having stability

We have a need for certainty and security in life.



Connecting with others

We are driven to interact and seek social closeness.



Pursuing pleasure

We are driven to enhance positive experiences and reduce pain.



Exploring the world

We value exploring the world because we are psychologically driven to seek out novelty and stimulation.



Receiving recognition

Other people provide external validation to boost our self esteem.



Expressing myself

We express our identity through personality, attitudes and behaviour.



Understanding myself

We are driven to gain a clear sense of who we are.

Key life stages

The core values we have shape everyday behaviour, thoughts and attitudes. The importance placed on them at any given point refers to *value priorities*; we prioritise different values at different points in time, according to our personal situation, needs and wider context of life.

Generally speaking, our *value priorities*^[9] fluctuate as we transition through different life stages^[10], to a change in the environment or in response to a specific event^[11]. Lifespan research demonstrates that priorities change in tandem with the change in our psychological needs throughout these times.

Comparing our user research findings with academic literature, we found the following common stages of life for 16-34 year old:





Achieving goals

We have a need to set challenges and demonstrate our abilities.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To learn and develop	Motivation	Learning	Competent
To demonstrate competency	Access to information	Setting goals	Confident
	Education	Practising skills	Accomplished
	Opportunity to apply knowledge	Tracking progress	Feeling a sense of achievement
	Tools to track performance	Self-reflecting	

How might we...

- Drive motivation?
- Enable people to put their learning into practice?
- Empower people to self-reflect and review their progress?

What drives us to achieve goals?

Achieving goals fulfills a need to learn, develop and demonstrate competency in life^[16]. The application of our knowledge enables us to demonstrate our abilities, skills and competencies, which implicitly and explicitly drives our efforts to continuously improve, and thus, setting and reaching towards further goals^[17]. This results in us actively striving to be good at certain tasks and activities^[18], which in itself is beneficial for sustaining our interest, motivating us to higher levels and providing personal satisfaction^[18].

Achieving goals fulfills our need for self-esteem by making us feel good about ourselves^[19] and boosting our confidence about our abilities to succeed and take on harder tasks and challenges. When we apply our skills to challenges we can become focused and free from distraction, which is when we ultimately feel the most effective, in control and able to achieve what psychologists regard as a state of flow^[20]. Developing mastery of skills contributes to psychological growth and is connected with the value of *growing myself*^[17].

The cognitive abilities we develop transition through a series of defined milestones that generally peak around early adulthood^[21]. After the structure of school based learning, the need for learning and developing transforms into our own personal or societal aims and ambitions, which may be based on a number of socially defined milestones or achievements (e.g. passing exams, getting a job, buying a house) or personally defined goals, which vary significantly from person to person (e.g. saving money, winning a gold medal, building expertise in a specific field of study).

Priorities for young people

Young people (16-34 year olds) show desire to learn a number of skills in life and in their career. They seek opportunities and tools for learning new things and developing new skills. Barclays Bank released a 'Life Skills' programme that equips people with essential life and career skills, with actionable techniques to enhance CVs. 71% of its users reported that the app enabled them to feel more confident about applying for a job.

Career development aside, young people also want to gain and improve their general life skills. The most frequently reported skills that 16-24 year olds want to learn are language skills, cooking skills, money management skills, as well as improve their existing social skills and communication skills^{[22][23][24]}. This was supported in our qualitative research, where interviewees regarded learning new things important in life *'to have lots of skills at your disposal'*, with one interviewee missed being at university where *'you are constantly learning new things'*.



Being able to apply learning is essential. Young people are ambitious about their careers and want to explore new avenues and new environments. This also links in with their ambition to try new things, have new experiences and explore (see value: *exploring the world*). For example, in a recent survey conducted by Deloitte, almost half (43%) of millennials plan to leave their current job within two years and are motivated to seek a change in job environment^[22].

Good to know....

Some common stages of life that are driven by goals

- ★ Job hunting, getting a job and making a career change
- ★ Moving house or somewhere new
- ★ Exams, assessments as well as embarking on further education

Your Notes

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Being inspired

We seek motivation from observing other people's successes and failures.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To learn through observing and imitating others	Access to people/groups of perceived similarity	Following or having an interest in people (e.g. on social media, offline, friendship groups)	Inspired to take action
Seek role models for inspiration and guidance	Sources of inspiration (offline, online) Accredited sources of information	Consuming user generated content Joining groups or clubs Watching sports Going to galleries	Guided on how to achieve goals Secure in our identity

How might we...

- Provide authentic sources of inspiration?
- Offer a diverse range of narratives?
- Provide verification of information?

What drives being inspired by others?

We are driven to observe, imitate and compare to other people, because it enables us to learn how to behave^[26]. From birth, we copy the behaviour of people that we see being rewarded because we desire receiving the same positive reinforcement^[26]. We seek motivation from observing their successes and failures, learning from their mistakes and being inspired by their wins^[27].

As we become increasingly socially aware and gain a better understanding of who we are (*value: understanding myself*), we become more considered in who we select as role models^[27]. Accordingly, we tend to imitate those who have a position in society that we find inspiring or aspirational^[27], or people who are similar to us (or that we perceive as similar) because it feels personally achievable^[28].

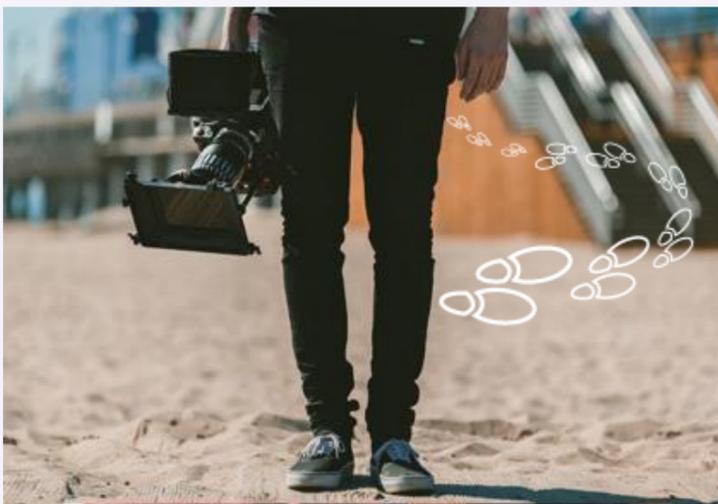
In times of uncertainty, we look to other people for guidance, inspiration or motivation for our own behaviour,^[27] and as such other people become our role models^[27]. They provide an important behavioural template for reaching our goals^[27], and further inspire us with new ideas, goals or possibilities which may challenge us^[29]. This can influence our ambitions, choices, and achievements^[26].

Feeling inspired is beneficial on a number of levels. It motivates us to act on our ideas and inspires us to bring our visions to life^[26]. Research demonstrates links to increased creativity^[30], boosting performance^{[31][32]}, and greater life satisfaction^[30]. Being open to experiences and being inspired tend to go hand in hand; people who are particularly open to new experiences tend to feel inspired more frequently, and feeling inspired increases the feeling of openness^[33].

Priorities for young people

When looking for inspiration or role models, young people often turn to their peers^[26], which in the digital age can include celebrities or social media ‘influencers’. With our natural instinct being to look for similar people^[28], peer groups inspire and influence young people. The perception of similarity and relatability is key because it instills a sense of possibility for achieving the same outcomes^[28]. User generated content is successful because people feel they can relate to others who are similar. This is seen in campaigns where “real people” are sought. For example, Whistle Sports, a YouTube channel, launched a campaign for people to upload their own basketball videos and saw a huge engagement, attracting more than 2,500 videos and 94 million views^[34].

Social media is their main platform for inspiration. They frequently turn to social media to make consumer decisions, for instance, 51% of young people said they rely solely on social media when choosing a holiday^[35].



A key driver for social media being a source of inspiration for young people is the perceived authenticity of people on the platforms, with people feeling especially inspired by “relatable” others or the “everyday person”. Our interviewees talked about “*admiring other people’s lifestyles on social media,*” and followed accounts “*that promote feeling good about yourself and being authentically yourself.*” Reality TV stars rise in fame because they initially represent ‘real people’^[36], seen in the rise of shows such as Love Island. The latter became the most popular show of 2018 because the contestants are also young, and it enables people to see ‘real’ people developing ‘real’ love lives^[36].

Social media can become problematic when authenticity is uncertain. Extreme use of filters and alterations of image puts unnecessary pressure to “look a certain way”. Advertising can put unrealistic expectations on life, with what interviewees spoke about being a ‘*warped view of reality*’. This is seen in the rise of young people becoming professional “influencers” and brands using celebrities as the face of their products^[37].

Good to know....

Role models become especially influential for making decisions, such as:

- ★ University, academic and education choices
- ★ Career choices
- ★ Travelling

Your Notes

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Being safe and well

We are driven to look after our physical and mental wellbeing.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To be safe from harm	Education around personal data	Ownership over personal data	Safe
To be physically and mentally healthy	Access to trusted information	Making informed decisions about data use	Balanced
	Education about excessive digital behaviour	Activities for self-care	Active
	Ethically designed services	Taking adequate rest and technology free time	Nourished
	Digital stopping cues to stop mindless binge behaviour	Physical activities, exercise or movement	Stress free
	Methods to achieve balance and reduce stress	Maintaining calm and reducing stress	Relaxed

How might we ...

- Promote and design for wellbeing over attention?
- Enable people to maintain their mental wellbeing ?
- Instil trust when using people's personal data?



Why do we value being safe and healthy?

Once our essential physiological needs for food, water and shelter are met, our need for physical safety and mental wellbeing takes priority^[38].

Whilst we may not always feel that we are making a conscious effort to maintain physical and mental health, we quickly notice when these needs are out of balance. For instance, when we think our health or safety might be compromised, the adrenal glands release cortisol, evoking a 'fight or flight' response (stress), and we become highly motivated to reduce it^[39]. This effective coping mechanism evolved in our ancestors to deal with serious survival threats in their environment and has been passed down the generations to us today. However, where our ancestors used this to fight off life or death situations, the triggers of today are perceived and felt on a prolonged basis, resulting in a constant and persistent feeling of stress. Prolonged stress has been associated with anxiety, depression, and post traumatic stress^[39], and so being healthy and safe is crucial to our core human functioning and underpins our ability to fulfil other important needs^[38].

How does society impact on our health and safety?

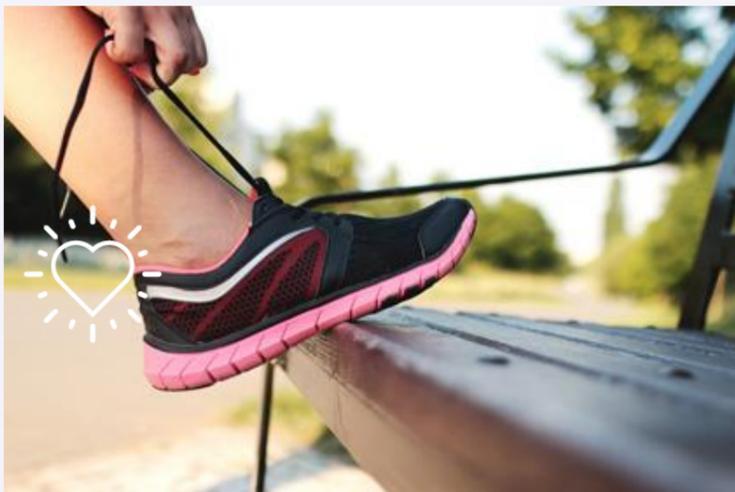
Emerging research highlights the number of negative effects that excessive use of digital technologies has on health and mental wellbeing^[40]. Since our brain has a tendency to operate on immediate gratification, we are highly susceptible to being distracted by new information. The distraction and information overload culture is linked to negative repercussions on mental health, wellbeing and sleep^[41]. Digital platforms need to be used in moderation to avoid these negative effects. Consumption becomes excessive when it becomes compulsive and interferes with normal day-to-day activities. For example, late night technology use has been linked to reduced sleep quality^[41] partly due to the effects of light exposure on our circadian rhythms and nocturnal melatonin secretion^[42]; and increased time spent on social media platforms, such as Facebook, has been linked to higher self-reported depression, body dissatisfaction, stress, and lower self-esteem^{[43][44][45]}.

Our safety needs extend online, particularly in line with the rise of data driven services. The topic of digital rights is at the forefront of public concern, especially in light of recent privacy breaches (e.g. the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandal). The protection of personal information online is paramount, given the wealth of data that is being collected and used.



Priorities for young people

Young people have grown into a world of endless digital options. Spending a large amount of time on social media platforms, companies compete to win attention, which is potentially harmful to their wellbeing. With a range of evidence demonstrating the potential harmful effects of excessive screen time on sleep, health and mental wellbeing, research on young people is demonstrating early warning signs. For example, a recent report by state of the youth nation highlighted that over 40% of the most digitally prolific group, Gen Z (16-24 year olds), reported feeling *always anxious* and 50% feeling *quite worried about themselves*^[46]. Radio 4 also reported that this group collectively self-reported the highest level of loneliness^[47].



People are attempting to combat these negative effects by reducing excessive screen time. For example, there has been an increase in the number of people taking a digital detox, and 51% of 16-24 year olds permanently deactivating a social media account^[48]. There has also been a rise in apps that enable people to see the amount of screen time they have spent on apps. The qualitative data from the research we collected supports this, with interviewees highlighting the importance of self-care and maintaining balance between technology and non-tech activities.

Screen time aside, technology has been used to generate mental health awareness, e.g. through social media movements and information being made available. It can be used as a utility for maintaining health and wellbeing. For example, interviewees use apps to gain personal insight into the connection between their physical and mental health by using apps to track aspects of their health, such as diet, weight, and exercise, which help to “remain conscious about how I’m treating my body”, “monitor progress”, and ensure they are “staying as healthy as possible.”



Good to know....

Being safe and well lays the foundation to everyday behaviour. If compromised, it becomes prioritised until restored. For example, it is important for:

- ★ Starting a family, to provide a secure base
- ★ Being in a relationship, for emotional security
- ★ Starting a job, to feel secure

Your Notes

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Belonging to a group

Our need to feel included motivates us to build meaningful relationships.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To belong	Group affiliations	Maintaining communication with others	Supported
To feel appreciated	Beliefs aligned to a group	Searching for new people or groups	Appreciated
To feel supported	Social identities	Engaging in offline and online groups or communities	Part of a group or community
	Social and group norms that give rise to informal code of conduct	Physical contact with groups, events, communities	Empowered to engage
		Sharing, supporting and planning with others	

How might we...

- Provide opportunities to find groups or communities of interest?
- Empower meaningful participation?
- Ensure groups are fully accessible?



What makes us value belonging to a group?

As social animals we have an innate need to belong^[49], which drives an essential part of human behaviour and motivates us to build meaningful relationships. Evolutionarily speaking, being part of a group increased survival chances^[49], and the same applies today, with strong social bonds boosting our survival odds by up to 50%^[50]. Groups provide support and acceptance, as well as help us to understand ourselves in relation to the wider world; we identify with groups and then follow their norms, attitudes and behaviours (see *understanding myself*), thus taking on their identity^[51]. On a societal level they instil important social norms and acceptable standards of behaviour. Groups might look or act differently across cultures, but the principle of members sharing mutual concern and/or love for one another is universal^[49].

Groups also serve a function for categorising and understanding others. The categories or labels we impose, either implicitly or explicitly, enables us to adapt our behaviour across various situations accordingly. Generally speaking, we perceive our groups positively against other groups. Sometimes we even sometimes cast negative judgements to others to ensure our group is perceived as superior ^{[52][49]}, boosting our self-esteem and confidence in our group identity.

The absence of belonging to a group has a wealth of negative consequences. Lack of group affiliation makes it difficult to relate to the social environment; people that are isolated or lonely experience poor mental and physical health as well as higher rates of early death^[53]. Being excluded can also drive people to engage in socially deviant behaviours^[54] or engage in corrupt groups in order to be accepted by others^[55].

Belonging becomes especially prioritised during challenging life events where we look to others for extra support^[56]; it helps our emotional health during difficult life transitions^[57] and provides us a sense of purpose as we contribute towards the welfare of others (see *having impact*).



What group behaviour do young people engage in?

Interviewees discussed feeling comfort and support by having long-lasting relationships and being involved in groups and communities. Strong and long-lasting relationships were seen as especially important but increasingly difficult to maintain whilst progressing through stages of life. For example, friendship groups post-university were maintained digitally as people moved around, started new jobs and families, e.g. *'I'm part of a Whatsapp group with my old uni friends. I can stay included and just dip in and dip out'*.

There are many transitional points where young people experience a move, whether this is through starting or leaving university, moving house, city, starting a new job or through travelling. At these points young people prioritise finding new people, new groups and growing their connections to enable social contact and instil the sense of belonging. Finding new groups is especially important as interests change over time, pointed out by an interviewee *'your interests change over time so it's important to make new connections overtime'*.

Young people invest a lot of time on social media and online groups. Some groups are extensions of offline ones, have active communities or clear goals, or are based around passions. For example, young people engage in social movements such as climate change or environmental groups. Consumption of interest based group content has also grown, for example sports channels are popular amongst young males (32% of 16-24 males are subscribed to a sports channel)^[58]

Some groups are purely passive social media consumption, where young people follow others such as 'influencers', Youtube channels, celebrities. Passive consumption of reality TV contestants has grown, for example, Love Island as a brand became hugely successful in 2018 as people followed celebrity lives on social media after the show^[59]. The problem arises when the passive consumption becomes excessive or has repercussions on mental health. For example, making people feel *'depressed at seeing the picture perfect lives of others'* ^[60]. Encouraging people to actively engage in groups could help to bolster meaningful engagements, cooperation and contribution in groups and potentially empower a sense of belonging.



Good to know....

The need to be included is prioritised at life stages such as:

- ★ School, college, university, to fit in and find like minded others
- ★ Moving to a new place, to find new people
- ★ Starting a new job

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Connecting with others

We are driven to interact and seek social closeness.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To interact	Meaningful relationships	Making friends and contacts	Interested in other people
To feel social closeness	The means to communicate	Communicating with people	Secure and healthy
	Healthy attachments	Connecting emotionally	
		Sharing experiences and togetherness	
		Maintaining bonds	

How might we...

- Enable contact both off and online?
- Champion authentic connections?
- Foster a shared understanding?



Why do we value connecting with other people?

We value connecting with others because we are driven to interact and seek social closeness^[61]. Early in development, we form attachments to our primary caregivers who satisfy basic needs for hunger, warmth, and protection, and then we continue to develop a number of social relationships with family, friends and partners^[62]. Socialising evokes emotional rewards in the brain which makes us feel good and helps us to develop strong emotional bonds. For example, a hug releases the feel good hormones serotonin and dopamine, as well as oxytocin, important for developing bonds^[63]. Connections play an important role in social learning; other people provide reference points for our own actions and behaviour^[64].

The benefits of social connections are far-reaching, not only are they important on our emotional health and wellbeing, they have benefits to our physical health too. e.g. research has shown that healthy social connections have reduced blood pressure, lowered stress levels and a boosted the immune system^[65]. An inability to fulfill social needs can result in feelings of loneliness, isolation, and sometimes depression^[66]. Loneliness is noticeable in older people when their social networks have narrowed and meeting new people is difficult^[67].

In a digital age we spend a lot of time connecting with others online, with over three quarters of adults using online platforms to help maintain relationships^[68]. Active social media users now represent 31% of the global population^[69]. In lieu of the physical intimacy that is lost online, people can still experience some emotional benefits if using online platforms to connect to others. For example, research demonstrated that interacting on social networking sites can trigger similar hormones that are produced whilst interacting in face-to-face^[70]. The key is active communication.



How do young people connect?

The interviewees discussed the importance of maintaining contact with friends and family, which was seen as more difficult as lives change. For example, after university *“it becomes so easy to let connections fall away,”* and requires more effort to *“stay in contact with those people who were once such a substantial part of your life.”*

Gen Z (16-25 year olds) have been referred to as ‘the most digitally connected generation ever’, sending an average of more than 128 texts per day^[71], consuming a plethora of content and social media playing a pivotal role in everyday life. Despite being the most digitally connected, they have also worryingly being regarded as the loneliest generation^[47]. With increased content consumption and time spent on social media, it is not clear how much of their digital behaviour is replacing the physical. It is therefore essential to promote both on and offline activity, ensuring that young people have a sense of balance.





Exploring the world

Curiosity drives us to new information, experiences and environments.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To learn and discover	Opportunities	Researching	Interested
To seek novelty	Interests	Discovering new things	Curious
	Access to media	Having new experiences	Immersed
	Experiences	Travelling	Challenged
		Learning	

How might we...

- Inspire discovery and exploratory behaviour?
- Broaden perspectives?
- Encourage learning and development?



Why do we value exploring the world?

Curiosity drives us to seek stimulation, find new information, experiences and environments^[72], but serves a broader purpose in building our knowledge and skills (see *achieving my goals*). It evolved from our ancestors who were curious and explored their surroundings; by gathering information they enabled survival, and the “seeking” behaviour was passed down generations and reinforced in the brain^[73]. Upon coming across new, complex and surprising stimuli, the brain creates new neural connections in the hippocampus, which helps with learning and memory^[74]. As well as serving a purpose for learning, the brain releases a surge of the feel good hormone dopamine, and so the connection between exploring and learning is reinforced and rewarding^[74].

Curiosity helps us to learn and discover, which motivates us to explore, travel, try new activities, meet new people and immerse ourselves in new experiences^[75]. Seeking new and novel things not only provides variety in life^[76], it contributes to overall well-being, and has been linked to a range of positive effects such as increased in life satisfaction, participation in personal growth activities and better performance and innovation in the workplace^{[77][78]}.

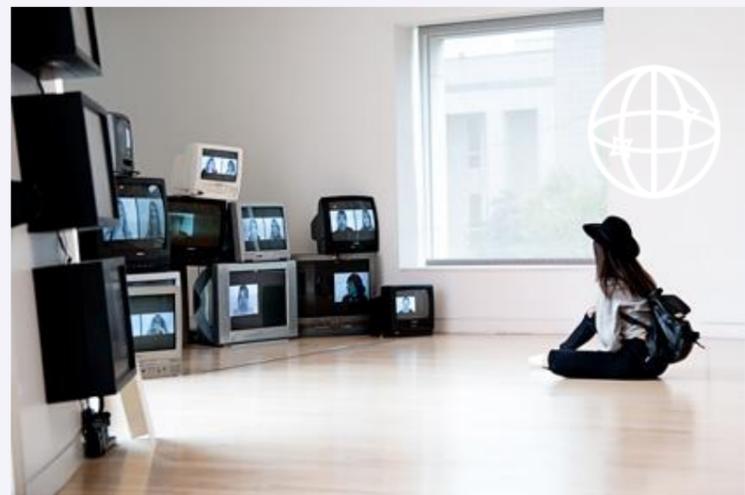
Discovering new information or problems can lead us to challenging situations, which enables us to use skills, strengths and understand competencies^[79]; all of which contribute to our personal growth and self-development^[80].



Priorities for young people

Generally, young people prioritise exploration and stimulation (e.g. see pursuing pleasure)^[81] more than older people, which has been linked to the decline in memory, cognition and physical strength as we age (see *having stability*).

In a digital age, people have increased access to information and endless opportunities. Young people show huge interest in having new experiences, sharing experiences and making memories. Travel is regarded as being a high priority for young people^[82], summarised by one interviewee who wished to '*jump on a train with no destination in mind*' so she could discover new things and see new places. Recent statistics showed that a huge proportion of 16-24 year olds are say they are always looking for new experiences^[83] and/or would happily choose an experience over a physical present^[83].



On an everyday level, young people enjoy exploring and discovering new media and new activities, such as films, social media accounts, and TV shows^[84]. Interviewees discussed the importance of continuous exploration, highlighted by one interviewee '*every single day I want to explore*' proposing that '*... it's important to keep trying things you haven't tried before*'.



Good to know....

Exploring is prioritised during stages of life when people:

- ★ Visit a new place, e.g. travelling, holiday
- ★ University
- ★ School, college and university, as well as general learning

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Expressing myself

We express our identity through our personality, attitudes and behaviour.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To reflect our identity	A clear self-understanding	Speaking about thoughts and beliefs	Authentic
To be positively perceived by others	Self-confidence The freedom to express Opportunities and ways for self-expression	Expressing through self-image	Confident Self-aware Secure

How might we...

- Empower authenticity?
- Cultivate confidence?
- Support self-expression?



What drives self-expressive behaviour?

We are driven to express our identity (see value: *understanding myself*)^[85]. Self-expression is the explicit representation of our thoughts, attitudes and feelings about who we are, which can be achieved through the explicit words, decisions or actions that express our personality, or more subtly through our facial expressions, movements, clothing, possessions or objects^[85]. Expressing ourselves helps us to validate our identities and categorise ourselves in whichever way we see fit, enabling us to understand how we fit in with the wider world. Psychologically, we are motivated to be authentic because we experience distress and dissonance when we act in a way that is inconsistent with the beliefs we have about ourselves (see *having autonomy*)

Self-expression is beneficial for mental health because it facilitates social connections; sharing personal stories and beliefs with others enables us to bond with people^[86], and when our thoughts and feelings are shared we feel socially accepted and validated^[87]. Having the freedom to self-express is generally regarded as important in our western society where we have an emphasis on individualistic norms and goals, but less so in cultures when the emphasis is on community goals^[88].

In a digital age, social media platforms become a key outlet for self-expression. It is here that we showcase our personality, express our opinions and post content about ourselves. Online platforms afford us with the time to think, adapt and reflect a polished version of ourselves whilst reaching out to a wider audience. We spend more time talking about ourselves online than we do offline, where an estimated 60% of self-talk in our offline conversations^[89] rises to approx 80% on social media^[90].

Although as humans we are driven to be authentic, it is natural to want to present a polished version of ourselves. In an age where filters, captions and photo editing are commonplace, it becomes easy to portray a highly idealised or sometimes altered version of reality^[91]. The issues with excessive editing are twofold; we cannot always detect the authenticity of others, and we may feel insecure comparing ourselves to others (which we naturally do as humans). It makes us feel compelled to fit in with the norm, thus exacerbating the problem. The problem existed before social media in magazines; but what has replaced highly polished and edited magazine pictures, are constant and neverending stream of images across a range of platforms in most aspects of daily life. Worryingly, 1 in 5 British people described themselves to feel 'depressed' looking at their friends 'perfect lives' on instagram; one platform alone ^[92].



Priorities for young people

Adolescence is typically the first time in life when young people begin to understand and express who they are. At this point, young people become aware of social factors, feel conscious about themselves and about how they look^[93]. With the increase of freedom and social pressure, which drives self-exploratory behaviour, young people begin to self-categorise into groups, become expressive about their opinions and trial with their self-image, for example, one interviewee discussed trying new looks, such as *'dyed my hair pink at one point'*.

Independence and freedom to self-express was found to be incredibly important because *'being courageous and putting yourself out there a bit comes from your brain and it's what you're putting out there'*, as described by one interviewee. Young people want to be listened to, want the opportunity to express their views and are willing to speak up when they disagree with something in society^[94].

Young people invest a lot of time expressing themselves through social media accounts. Image enhancing features such as filters tend to be popular, as well as constructing the perfect backdrop for an image, for e.g. Influencers like to go to places that are 'Instagrammable'^[142]. In some instances people have more than one Instagram account, where one is personal, contains real life stories, and is shared privately with friends; and a separate one is for posting more polished, perfected and idealistic images, regarded as a Finsta account (abbreviation for 'Fake account').

Two concerns have arisen in relation to self-worth. Firstly, impressionable people idolise picture perfect and unrealistic lives they are exposed to on social media, which affects and damages their own self-esteem and self-value when they compare. Secondly, when people post their own content 'for likes and comments', they are driven by a need to be liked or accepted which encourages them to base their self-worth on popularity and other people's perception^{[95][96]}.

It is important to empower people to express themselves in authentic ways, especially during a time when young people go through a variety of physical and emotional changes.



Good to know....

Expressing one's identity is especially prioritised during:

- ★ Early adolescence, as identity needs first become prioritised
- ★ Being in a committed relationship
- ★ School, college and university

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Feeling impactful

We have a need to feel like our contribution is worthwhile.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To maintain group welfare	Empathy	Living by a set of principles	Accepted by the group
To be accepted by others	Moral principles	Contributing to groups	Empowered to contribute
	Positive attitudes and beliefs	Volunteering, helping or supporting others	
	Self-efficacy and belief		
	Meaningful careers		

How might we...

- Recognise contribution?
- See the impact their contributions made?
- Provide a supportive environment?



Why do we value feeling we are making an impact?

We have a need to feel like we're making a positive contribution in the world. The desire to make an impact is universal as it serves important social needs, closely linking to our primitive motivation to be part of a group (*see value: belonging to a group*). When we feel that we're contributing to the welfare of the group, we feel accepted, which enables us to feel secure, competent, and likeable, as well as more confident in future interactions^[98].

We have an instinctual concern for the wellbeing of others which sometimes makes us act altruistically, i.e. in a way that benefits others without personal gain^[99]. It also makes us feel deep satisfaction from doing 'good'. Research shows that behaving altruistically activates the dopamine-producing centres of the brain, which results in an intrinsic sense of reward. Feeling that we have helped others enables us to view ourselves as being 'moral' and 'good', which increases our self-esteem (*see value: understanding myself*) and contributes to our pursuit of self-actualisation^[100].

A number of factors affect our personal motivation to make an impact. The self-perception we have of our abilities is crucial, because if we perceive ourselves as capable, we are more likely to act, a principle called *self-efficacy*^[101]. We are also affected by how empathetic we feel, where being able to understand and share other people's emotions makes more likely to be altruistic^[102]. Attitudes play an important role in our helping behaviour, as we are unlikely to provide help to something when our beliefs do not align, e.g. we are unlikely donate to a charity if we disagree with their principles^[103]. Our attitudes can change over time, as we develop our moral values and responsibilities^[104].



Priorities for young people

Young people demonstrate a passion to have a positive impact on the world. They express a passion to live ethically and environmentally friendly, reflected in their attitudes, with over 50% of 16-24 year olds saying they would pay more for ethical produce, and a further 20% having boycotted a brand in the past due to unethical practices^[105]. Veganism is also on the rise in the UK, with 15-34 year olds constituting almost half of all vegans^[106].



A key theme from our interviews was the desire to have an impact through meaningful careers. One participant discussed changing careers from a corporate to nonprofit environment in order to strive for purpose and meaning, where she felt she was able to contribute to something that aligned with her beliefs. There was also a desire to do something impactful through helping others. For example, volunteering for a charity, campaigning or helping and supporting others that are less fortunate.

Good to know....

Contributing to something that has impact is prioritised through:

- ★ Careers
- ★ Being involved in social, societal and environmental initiatives
- ★ Taking part in passion projects

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Growing myself

We are driven to learn new things and develop our skills.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To achieve our full potential	Opportunities for development Support whilst growing Self-reflective tools Constructive feedback Healthy challenges	Honing skills Developing expertise Experimenting and taking on challenges Seeking alternative perspectives Actively seeking conflicting or diverse opinions	Competent Capable Accomplishing and flourishing Reaching our potential An expert Fulfilled in life

How might we...

- Empower people to step out of their comfort zones?
- Provide opportunities to develop and master skills?
- Support people through challenging times?

What drives the value of personal growth?

We are driven to self-actualise in life, which is about reaching our full potential. Personal growth is about continuously improving aspects of ourselves and our lives in order to find a purpose and meaning in life^[107]. Before we can reach this level it is important to develop a strong sense of identity, feel an inner validation and have self-esteem (*see value understanding myself*)^[107]. This enables us to acknowledge our strengths, accept our weaknesses and feel competent; empowering us to accomplish goals (*see achieving my goals*)^[108] and improving our overall sense of self-worth. Whilst approval from others fulfils one aspect of our self esteem needs (*see value: receiving recognition*), personal growth fulfils a need for self-respect and self validation (*see understanding myself*). Ultimately, growing enables us to flourish and reach our potential in life^[107].

Periods of change are often associated with growing as a person, since a change in circumstances such as a life transition presents an ideal opportunity for self development^[109]. Change pushes us outside of our comfort zone and leads us to re-evaluate our beliefs and assumptions about ourselves and the world. A desire to seek change most often occurs in times when we feel bored or as though we are stagnating, or when we feel we have learned as much as possible^[110]. When we act in line with our intentions to change, feel in control and perceive the change to have a positive outcome^[111].

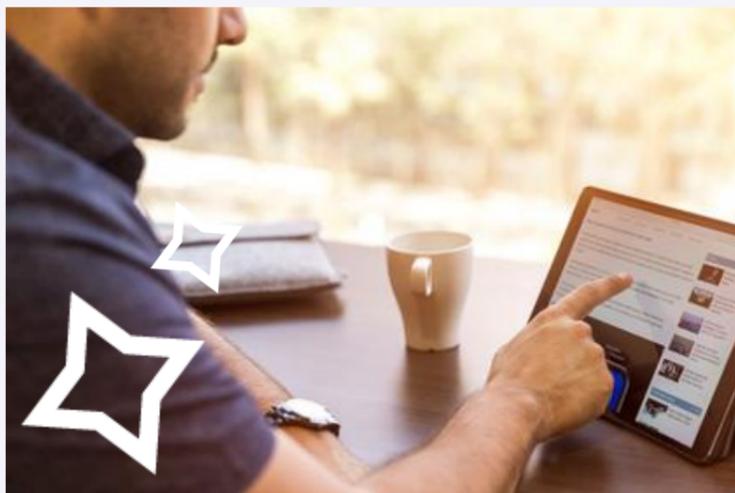
Personality characteristics are important for personal growth. Despite the need for growth residing in everybody, some people are explicitly driven and highly value personal growth. These people have an attitude that is generally open to change and new ideas^[112], and will direct their efforts by seeking alternative perspectives, challenges, or diverse opinions^[113].



Priorities for young people

Young people transition through a number of life stages where they are most likely to look to others for support and guidance. It is during these changes that periods of growth are possible; it is important that young people develop skills, competencies and confidence during periods of change in order to develop their sense of inner validation, self-esteem and being confident about who they are.

Opportunities are essential for young people to develop their competencies and skills in order to achieve their potential. One interviewee spoke about wanting to strive towards having “a sense of mastery and understanding” about his work. Young people are committed to working hard to achieve success, with more than half of Gen Z say they are prepared to work very long hours to progress their careers^[114]



One participant expressed:

“If you go through life not really knowing what you’re doing, you’ll quickly become frustrated, so I like to take the correct steps and make sure I’m putting in effort and dedication to make sure I feel increasingly confident and capable in what I’m doing.”

Good to know....

Growing is foundational throughout life, but especially prioritised when:

- ★ Travelling to expand one's horizons
- ★ A change in job or role (or a new/challenging experiences) to develop
- ★ Education, or to develop a skill, hobby or passion

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Having autonomy

We have a need for independence and agency over our own behaviour.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To act in line with intention	Control over actions	Making informed decisions	In harmony with our intentions
Feel in psychological harmony	Informed choices and options	Behaviour that is purposeful and meaningful	Feeling empowered
	Independence	Acting intentionally	
	Neutral and ethical technologies		
	Transparency over information and sources		

To ensure people's autonomy is upheld, we should ensure that vulnerabilities in the human psyche are not exploited.

How might we...

- Enable people to act in line with their intentions?
- Empower people to make informed decisions?
- Provide transparency and a clear understanding of information?

What makes us value autonomy?

We value having autonomy because we have an innate need for independence and agency over our actions^[115]. Having autonomy enables us to act with willingness and purpose^[116], enables self-determination that makes us feel in control. When our intentions and behaviour are aligned we experience harmony, which is essential for our psychological well-being and overall life satisfaction^[115].

Freedom is an essential requisite for autonomy and is especially important in our individualist culture where our independence is valued. When our autonomy is compromised, not only do we experience psychological distress because our intentions and behaviour are mismatched, we become unmotivated and dissatisfied with life^[117].

How has the digital age affected our autonomy?

In the digital age, our autonomy is compromised when apps and services are designed in ways that subtly nudge our behaviour to act in line with a business goal that disregards our intention. These techniques have been coined dark UX; where sophisticated behavioural science and persuasion techniques nudge our behaviour in subtle ways. These frequently serve the purpose of meeting a business goal to increase users, time spent on platforms, sales and retention rates.

Dark UX techniques exploit our intentions and decision making by deliberately designing for us to act on our subconscious, rather than using conscious thought. They nudge behaviour in way that requires little conscious thought or effort, most often with content that we find difficult to refuse because it excites our brain by delivering bursts of dopamine, i.e. the feel good hormone. This exploits our psychological disposition to fulfil a short-term gratification over longer term need (innately speaking we have been conditioned to act in this way), resulting in immediate action, being rewarded for the action and thus starting a habitual cycle.

By definition a habit is a subconscious and compulsive way of acting, thinking or feeling that is regularly repeated^[118]. Some habits can be helpful when the outcome is *intentional and desired*, as more available cognitive effort and attention can be allocated to other tasks, such as taking on new information, tackling new problems, and making decisions^[119]. By contrast, habits become destructive when they are formed *unintentionally or unwillingly*, thus breaking the harmony between intention and action. They are increasingly difficult to break as the behaviour is subconscious^[119] and has been reinforced through a neurological “habit” loop of cue (trigger), action (prompt), and reward (emotional reinforcement) which becomes more automatic the more it is repeated^[118].

Priorities for young people

When apps and services are designed in a way to nudge thoughtless behaviour by delivering digital triggers, prompts and rewards, unhealthy habits are created. For example, push notifications trigger urgent action to alleviate anxiety and reinforce a habit of “checking” of our phone^[120], a technique that was taken from the gambling industry with a sole premise to cause increased engagement with the service,^{[121][122][123]}.

Other examples include the infinite scroll making content seemingly endless, hiding or removing exit buttons, or using autoplay to make it much easier to continue watching a programme. The latter being designed for subconscious thinking, with it being both physically and psychologically easier to continue watching TV and fulfil the natural need for short-term gratification, than it is to make a conscious effort to switch off and seek alternative activities^[124]. An intention for watching one episode can quickly turn into a ‘binge watching’ spiral, creating a mismatch between our initial intention and action^[125].



The excessive and unintended screen time that we see time and time again have been linked to a range of damaging psychological effects^[126], a few include poor quality of sleep^[127], feelings of guilt^[128], loneliness and anxiety^[129]. Gen Z have been regarded as the most lonely generation, feeling both distracted and overwhelmed. Approximately 8 in 10 British adults indulge in binge-watching habits, with 35% doing so on a weekly basis^[130]. When consumption behaviour is out of control, people postpone important tasks in favour of short-term gratification^[125]. When the need for autonomy cannot be fulfilled people feel as though they have lost control over consumption behaviour^[125]. Worryingly, the number of young people in the UK who self-reported feeling as though they have no control of their lives rose from 28% in 2017 to 39% in 2018^[131].

Some people are starting to take control over their digital behaviour by switching off, taking a digital detox^[59] and using services to understand where their time is being spent, e.g. apps such as Moment, Forest, iPhone screen time.

Good to know....

People prioritise the value of autonomy for making decisions, for example:

- ★ For jobs and careers
- ★ Travelling and having the freedom to explore
- ★ Moving or relocating

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Having stability

We have a need for certainty and security in life.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To predict outcomes in life	<p>Trusted information</p> <p>Organisation and planning tools</p> <p>Decision making skills</p> <p>Guidance from trusted sources</p>	<p>Sourcing information</p> <p>Organising and planning e.g. finances</p>	<p>Calm</p> <p>Empowered to make decisions</p> <p>Proactive over future behaviour</p>

It is clear that young people value the advice and guidance of others.

How might we...

- Raise awareness of information, support and resources?
- Help people to proactively plan their future?
- Be a reliable source of stability?



Why do we value having stability?

Stability is essential because we are motivated to feel certainty, security and predictability in life^[132], which may mean living in a stable society, being financially secure, or having dependable relationships. Key to our survival are the stable attachments we form with primary caregivers, who enable us to explore the world safe in the knowledge that we have a secure base if danger arises. We develop a range of attachments with friends, partners and peers who provide additional bases of stable reassurance and comfort^[133]. Relationships are fundamental, where continuous disruptions in relationships can cause cognitive, social and emotional difficulties^[134].

A secure and predictable environment is especially valued when it gets difficult to adapt to changes in life^[132]. Generally speaking, older adults value stability more than younger people which may be linked to the physical decline in strength, cognitive speed and memory^[132]. Whilst young people generally prioritise values of hedonism, exploration, and stimulation^[135].

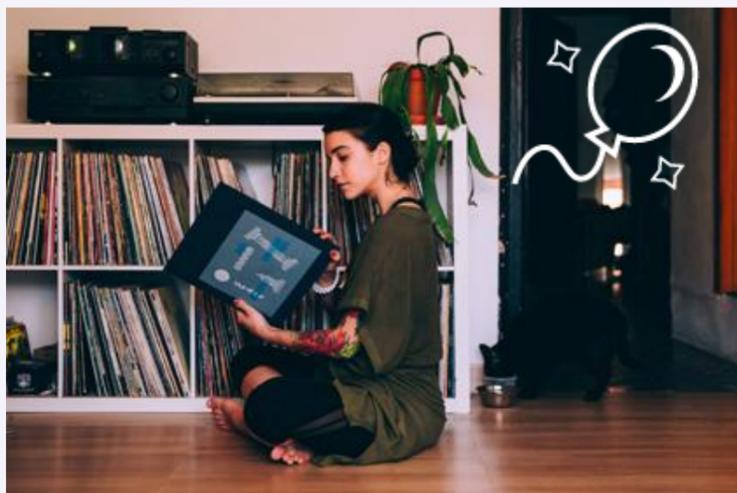
Having stability becomes highly prioritised during times of uncertainty and change. Transitional points in life are examples of this, such as starting a family or when work responsibilities increase^[136], or in times of instability, such as job insecurity^[137]. The latter has been linked to increased anxiety and depression^[137], with periods of instability being generally associated with declined psychological well-being.

Uncertainty about the future triggers anxiety, hyper vigilance or stress in the same way that our brain reacts to an immediate threat^[138]. This alert mode, or better known as the fight or flight response, evolved as an adaptive behaviour because it prepares us to take action in ambiguous situations^[139]. Valuing stability becomes more important during these challenging periods of transition^[135] and generally having a secure and predictable environment is more valued when it gets difficult to adapt to changes in life^[132].

Priorities for young people

In spite of busy lifestyles and a general attitude for *living in the moment* (see value: *pursuing pleasure*) young people demonstrate a number of motivational goals for seeking stability in their future. In regards to finances, careers and relationships, youthsite data revealed that 77% of 16-24 year olds hope to own their own home by 30, two-thirds hope to have had their first child by 30^[140] and 48% spend a lot of time thinking about their finances^[141]. However, young people experience uncertainty in light of current economic and political environment, with 56% of Gen Z and 48% of Millennials report being anxious about their future^[140].

Our interviewees expressed a desire for having a general level of certainty in life, but the thought of having solid *stability* was something that would be prioritised in more detail in the future. For example, one interviewee suggested she liked having *“the reassurance that things are going to continue to be fine, rather than trying to sort things out last minute, right now I value that I have a stable job, a nice apartment, a good group of friends, and I’m in decent health.”*



The advice of others for planning is crucial for young people. Youthsite data reported that approximately one third said they need help when planning their finances^[141], and our interviewees discussed looking to their trusted friends and family. Young people also use digital tools and apps to support their planning and saving. For example, the Robin Hood app, released by Barclays bank, provides skills and confidence to save and invest, has a user base of predominantly under 35’s (80%)^[142].



Good to know....

Stability is foundational and becomes highly prioritised during transitional points in life, such as:

- ★ Making a significant life change
- ★ Starting a family
- ★ Buying a house

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Pursuing pleasure

We are driven to act in a way that enhances positive experiences and reduces pain.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To maximise pleasure and avoid pain	<p>Fun</p> <p>Opportunities to consume media</p> <p>Access to non media activities</p> <p>Tools and methods to be creative</p>	<p>Playing and enjoying activities</p> <p>Creating things</p>	<p>Pain free</p> <p>Immersed</p> <p>Creative</p> <p>In a state of flow</p>

How might we...

- Encourage playful behaviour?
- Spark creativity and passion?
- Encourage balance?



Why do we value pursuing pleasure?

As humans we are psychologically motivated towards seeking pleasure and avoiding pain^[143]; pleasure referring to hedonic feelings of enjoyment, satisfaction, relaxation, comfort and excitement. Hedonism has a neurobiological basis, since a surge of dopamine is released when we anticipate receiving a reward^[144], which is crucially involved in motivating our behaviour. We have various “hedonic hotspots” in the brain that enhance our enjoyment for sensory rewards,^[145] and as such, pleasure seeking has evolved as a learned behaviour, or as we learn to repeat rewarded behaviours and reduce punished ones^{[146][147]}.

When hedonism is prioritised we tend to live in the moment, disengage from ongoing worries, and feel carefree^{[148][149][150]}. People whose lives are high in hedonic pursuits tend to feel greater levels of life satisfaction^[151]. Whilst the specific activities that bring pleasure are subjective and individual per se, we are all ultimately driven to act in ways to strive to experience them. As such, it enhances our positive emotions and physical experiences in order to increase our well-being, maximise pleasure and overall happiness in life.^{[152][153]}



Priorities for young people

Research continuously demonstrates that young people generally prioritise values of hedonism, exploration, and stimulation^{[154][155]}, compared to that of an older adult group who generally value a stable environment due to their decline in strength, cognitive speed and memory^[156]. Our interviewees discussed their desires to *'have fun each day'* with pleasure being experienced through having (new) experiences, enjoying the moment and disconnecting from daily life. There was a mindset expressed to *'live in the here and now'*.



Interviewees discussed achieving a state of flow; i.e. the feeling of deep enjoyment by being completely absorbed, fully focused and time passing without awareness. Flow is subjective and achieved by people in individualistic and personal ways, from exploring passions, engaging in activities and having experiences. All of these have in common the deep sense of enjoyment and immersion. Interviewees talked about flow in a multitude of ways, for example, one interviewee experienced it through meaningful work *'Sometimes I'm so engrossed and absorbed in my work I forgot to have a break'*.

A desire to be creative is an emerging behaviour of this audience, as we see a rise in young people making their own content. For example, over one quarter of Gen Z consider themselves to be creators of digital content^[157] as well as being heavy users of platforms that enable content creation, such as Youtube, Snapchat, Instagram, Musical.ly. Young people like to experiment and take opportunities to put content out to the world^[157].

Another emerging behaviour of this audience is the over consumption or over indulging of media content, "binge watching". As discussed in *Having Autonomy* we see the numbers of people "binge watching" on the rise (approx 8 in 10 British adults)^[130]. Streaming services might have revolutionised our viewing habits, but in doing so have made leaving the platform increasingly difficult; it's both psychologically and physically easier to stay and fulfil the natural need for short-term gratification, than to make a conscious effort to switch off and seek alternative activities^[128]. Any form of bingeing behaviour is not healthy, regardless of the nature of the content itself. It is important that whilst people enjoy content, they are able to have a healthy balance.



Good to know....

Pursuing pleasure is important when:

- ★ Looking for shared experiences with others
- ★ Aiming to achieve balance during times of hard work or study
- ★ To express creativity

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Receiving recognition

Other people provide external validation that boosts our self-esteem.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
To feel self-esteem	Opportunities for constructive feedback	Seeking validation	Acknowledged
To feel accepted by others	Opportunities to recognise others	Representing a team or club	Appreciated
	Validation and/or praise	Being asked for information, guidance, expertise	Recognised
	Self-esteem and self-worth		Validated
			Praised

It is important that people are encouraged to fulfil both types of esteem needs.

How might we...

- Celebrate effort over popularity?
- Recognise success in authentic ways?
- Boost self-esteem without creating dependency?

Why do we value receiving recognition?

We value receiving recognition because we are driven to fulfill our need for self-esteem^[158]. Whilst some of our esteem needs can be met from feeling value in ourselves (self-acceptance, self-worth), we have social aspects that require other people^[158]. As social animals, the respect and appreciation of others helps to feel included^[158]. These needs can be met through admiration from others^[159], such as by having attention, recognition, status, prestige and fame.

When efforts go unnoticed, we are at risk of developing feelings of inferiority and can consequently become less productive or motivated^[158]. For example, a lack of acknowledgement and approval in the workplace is associated with stress symptoms and lower confidence in job performance^[160].

Priorities for young people

Being prolific users of social media, young people are driven by the need for social approval. With these platforms being a key part of their lives, the need to be liked by others becomes the main method to fulfill their self-esteem needs^[161]. The problem with relying solely on others (*in this case, social media platforms*) to fulfil self-esteem needs results in people behaving in ways to constantly seek approval, by seeking 'likes, follows, comments'. These exaggerated and quantified social status techniques amplify the need for social approval, where an over-reliance can result in people being especially vulnerable to experiencing negative emotions when there is a lack of validation^[166]. It is unsurprising that high levels of social media use have been linked to lower levels of self-esteem^[162].

These platforms make it easy for people to seek attention and compare themselves to others. By using techniques that over exaggerate the very human need to be liked by others, the popularity platforms heighten social comparisons and in doing so compromise people's inner self-esteem needs, which are attached to their self-worth^[162]. With young people being driven by social approval, they associate their self-worth solely on the judgements of other people^[162].

It is important to recognise and acknowledge people in a way that is authentic, supportive and devoid of popularity. Young people should have a balance between being validated externally, as well as developing their self-worth; because whilst recognition can fulfil one aspect of self-esteem, without an internal validation it becomes difficult to experience confidence and self-acceptance^[158].

One interviewee highlighted an example of having her accomplishments celebrated in her group away from popularity metrics '*the community makes a lot of effort to show off each others' achievements and that's really important*'.



Good to know....

Authentically recognising people's effort is important at times such as:

- ★ In education, when working hard, as well as milestones such as exams
- ★ Being on the career ladder, to support progress and development
- ★ Taking part in projects, activities and overcoming obstacles

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Understanding myself

We are driven to gain a clear sense of who we are.

Need	Having	Doing	Being
Collection of beliefs about who we are	Beliefs and attitudes	Self-reflection exercises	Self-reflective
To feel good about who we are	Self-awareness	Trying new things, hobbies, meeting new people	Self-aware
To establish identities	Self-perception	Spending time with social groups	Self-appraising
	Interests, hobbies and passions		Self-accepting
	Information to a range of sources		
	Challenges		

Since the BBC is in a position to enable a constructive, reflective and trustworthy space to allow people to explore who they are.

How might we...

- Provide a safe space for people to explore who they are?
- Encourage self-reflection?
- Inspire people to embrace their identity?



Why do we value understanding who we are?

We are driven to form an identity, which is the collection of beliefs we hold about ourselves. A pre-requisite to establishing our identity is to understand ourselves in order to be aware of our beliefs and understand the attributes that make us^[163]. To adequately do this, we are required to go through a process of *self-awareness* and *self-reflection*, which enables us to develop consciousness, becoming aware of our thoughts, attitudes and behaviour to become who we are^[164]. Developing self-acceptance is important as it enables us to feel secure in our identity and is associated with psychological well-being^[165].

In addition to our personal identity, we are driven to understand who we are in relation to other people. When we identify with a group and adopt their identity we develop a social identity, which can range from being a citizen of a country to a member of a football club^[166]. The groups beliefs, characteristics and attitudes filter into our understanding of who we are^[167].

Throughout life we experience a number of identity crises. These periods of internal conflict occur most prominently around the stages of our life development, during the transitional period, or in response to a change in the environment^[168]. They can also occur when we feel a discomfort between the way we perceive ourselves against how other people perceive us^[169]. These times are categorised by periods of high confusion, and we resolve these by either affirming our beliefs or adopting alternative ones^[170]. When we successfully navigate an identity crisis, we are able to clearly understand who we are, become well-adjusted and able to confidently socialise with others^[168]. Developing a clear identity enables us to become secure, emotionally mature and confident in who we are, all important aspects in the pursuit of self-actualising^{[169][171]}.

How does digital society affect our identity?

The digital world has increased the opportunity for people to form and express their identity online. Apps and games enable participation and engagement with groups, affording people the ability to form personal and social identities. Being instinctively curious, people are driven to seek information about how they compare to others or fit in with the wider context of the world. Online surveys and quizzes that categorise people into groups or in relation to others perform well for this reason.



Priorities for young people

One of the markers of the under 35 audience is the transition from adolescence to adulthood. During this stage young people go through a number of internal conflicts in the pursuit of establishing who they are and how they want to be perceived. Identity exploration is a key aspect of adolescence^[170] and the transition to adulthood is marked by increased maturity and development of key physical, cognitive and social skills. The crisis represents a struggle between developing a personal identity whilst being accepted and fitting in with others. It is important for young people to take the time to self-reflect and become self-aware, because a failure to adequately work through this stage can result in people becoming socially disconnected, lonely and lacking emotional maturity^[168].

We found that young people feel unsure about themselves. They report feeling as though they wish to understand how to progress in life but feel largely distracted to be able to do so. Being the most digitally connected yet lonely generation, they experience busy lifestyles where they are rarely away from their devices. The behaviour of filling time by consuming content, checking their phones or distracting themselves has manifested in being connected all the time. The idea of filling time and distracting themselves is a result of the content rich and notification led world, and is distracting people from important thinking time. Having a constant stream of information, notifications and other tasks is risking the development of deep thinking, critical analysis and self-reflection skills. It is important that young people have the time to properly self-reflect, as well as engage in deep thinking to understand both themselves and the world better.

If used positively, the tools themselves can enable young people to self-reflect and become aware of who they are. For example one interviewee talked about using a blog to *'get things out of [her] head'* as a form of therapeutic understanding.





Good to know....

Understanding oneself becomes prioritised during:

- ★ Early adolescence, as identity needs are highly valued
- ★ Establishing a career
- ★ Being in a relationship

Your Notes

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04. Human values toolkit

The Human Values Tool Kit contains the following resources:

- Presentation
 - for a project overview, background rationale and context of the human values project
- Human Value Cards
 - to stimulate thinking and putting human values into design, ideation and innovation
- Design Guide
 - to health check designs and decisions
 - to ensure human values are enhanced and not compromised

3 ways to play

Card sort



To understand audiences' value priorities

Most to least prioritised

The 14 cards can be sorted from most to least prioritised. This enables a deeper discussion about values.

In small groups (2-4)

Each person is given 3 values and the remaining are face up in the centre. Each person takes a turn at swapping their least valued card for one in the centre. Swaps between people can occur and the process continues until people are happy with their 3 values. This facilitates a discussion about most prioritised values.

Ideation



Designing for value priorities

Life stages

Taking the key value priorities for a chosen life stage (2-4 values), the cards can enable ideation for designing products and new services.

Product priorities

Value priorities can be established for the product by questioning the intended audience and intended aim for the product (2-4 values). The cards can be used to help guide ideation.

General ideation

For instances where there is no specific product, aim or when the brief is open. The cards can be used for general ideation.

Health check



Are original values still prioritised, and can any new ones be met?

For knowledge

About when values are compromised by unethical design patterns. Tips for enhancing values.

Key questions

To guide thinking about ethical designs.

Human Values

Appendix

1. Further information

- a. Behaviour and innate needs
- b. Behaviour and the digital world
- c. Behaviour, Trends, values
- d. Value priorities
- e. Values across life

2. References

Human behaviour

A. Behaviour and innate needs

Society puts a context framing on the way we behave, where our actions are influenced by social, technological, economic, and political factors. The environment that our ancestors inhabited posed threats to their everyday survival, so their actions were driven by a motivational goal to stay alive. Spending their days either fighting off harm or hunting and gathering, they made instant actions to gain instant rewards. This principle is called immediate gratification, and has been passed through the generations to us today. Our brains have been hardwired to act on fulfilling this instant need to survive, but the environment we live in has dramatically changed, with those threats of yesteryear long gone. Our motivations have evolved to encompass a range of needs that help us strive for self-actualisation in the long term.^[1] Whilst society rewards delayed gratification our human nature and natural disposition to fulfil immediate needs remain.

B. Behaviour in the digital world

The digital world is a timely example of how society can alter trends in culture. With the extreme utility of digital devices, we live in a world surrounded by abundance of information, infinite choice and immediacy of reward. At the touch of a button, and with recent advances in AI, the immediacy of reward has accelerated whilst removing the need to apply conscious thought or effort.

Whilst devices have revolutionised behaviour, they have also shaped our expectations, changed the way we interact and played a role in our emotions. Since we inherited our ancestor's survival mode, our brains are geared to acting on immediate gratification, despite living in a society that values delayed gratification. As such we are highly likely to act on short term immediate wants and desires, rather than attempting to postpone action for a longer term goal or need. We see companies capitalizing on this by recognising that people are privy to acting on immediate desires, and as such cater to having everything now. This has infused through our culture and changed our expectations.

C. Trends, behaviour and values

Behaviour is observable and measurable, which helps us to understand new and emerging audience behavioural trends. Trends provide rich information about observable actions that occur on a large scale that within the context of the societal, external and cultural factors. However, the aspect of behaviour that trends do not cover are the particular reasons or motivations for those observable action. So we might see two people *acting* in the same way but with very different intentions. For example, two people might demonstrate the same behaviour of running, and we might assume this is to improve fitness, or maybe to connect to others, or to simply enjoy the activity. But we have placed an assumption on that behaviour, which loses the real intention and motivation.

To truly understand the reason for behaviour, we need to understand the motivational goals that drive that action. A gateway to understand motivations is to understand core values^[2]. Values are deeply held ideals about how we ought to act and engage with the world^[2] which serve as guiding principles that drive our thoughts, attitudes and judgements about “right” and “wrong”^[3]. For that reason they play a foundational role in life and have visceral effects on our everyday feelings, attitudes and behaviours; influencing a wide range of behaviours, from everyday consumer decisions to life changing choices such as about study, voting and religion^{[4][5][6]}.

The values we hold represent our psychological and human needs. Research shows that we are able to generally describe our values^[2], and so understanding our values is an important gateway to understand what is fundamentally important in life what drives our actions, and ultimately the psychology of our audience^[7].

D. Value priorities

The values we hold are core to our very being. What might change is the relevant importance we place on them at any given point in time. We prioritise different values at different points in time, according to our personal situation, needs and wider context of life, but they have in common that they are what shape our everyday behaviour, thoughts and attitudes^{[4][5][6]}. Generally speaking, our “value priorities”^[8] fluctuate as we transition through different life stages^[9]. Sometimes we might not be consciously aware that we are acting in line with our values^[10] and sometimes we only become aware of what we value when a situation makes it apparent^[11]. A specific event or situation might make us reassess the current priority of our values. For example, a value of *being safe and healthy* might not necessarily be a priority until something happens to make us feel unsafe or unhealthy.

Value priorities differ across social groups, cultures and societies^{[12][13]}, as well as being subject to societal norms. For example, in a society where personal freedom is prohibited, the value of *having autonomy* might be a low priority compared to a society that has only temporarily had their freedom restricted^[14].

It is important to understand what is fundamentally important to people in life on a core human level, away from influences of media, the environment and society. To strip the media lens away enables us to get at the core of who we are. In doing so, we are able to ensure that we preserve human values in the digital age by putting audience’s best interest at the heart of every decision we make. Being value led we can align our digital offerings to have meaningful impact in people’s lives.

E. Values across life

Value priorities change over time in relation to our stage of life, to a change in the environment or in response to a specific event^[8]. Lifespan research demonstrates that value priorities change through various stages of our development in tandem with the change in our psychological needs throughout these times.

Typically, children progress through a number of milestones that occur in a general linear fashion, where their needs are associated with these various stages of development. For example, young children are dominated by their biological and cognitive development needs so they can grow and learn about the world.

At early adolescence, social and cultural needs become heightened as children begin to develop a sense of independence. At this time, children live in the structured context of school, and as such young people are driven by the same motivational goals to make friends, learn and pass exams. Since the majority of young people experience the same milestones of development, and since children live within the structure of school, age is an appropriate marker as a demographic.

When the structure of school is completed, people experience an increase in choice, opportunity and availability. People experience a range of milestones, some of which can be seen as traditional markers of adulthood, e.g. moving out of home for the first time or starting a family, whilst others are more nuanced, e.g. travelling, moving to a different country or setting up a business. These milestones do not happen in the same order as people have the opportunity to pursue their personal motivations and needs (e.g. career, partners, social circles, passions, making a difference), and the environment dictates the likelihood of these things happening. For example, if university is an option a person is able to continue learning, whereas if a recession hits then securing a job is difficult.

A big change in the environment is the affordance of the internet. In the digital age the internet has enabled people to get access to information easier and quicker, which has increased the number of potential opportunities for people in their life choices, e.g. in travel, working patterns and structure, meeting new people, etc. The demographic of age becomes less meaningful, because two 20 year olds might have completely different lifestyles, be at different stages of life and as such have different value priorities. Whilst using age as the demographic for segmentation is appropriate when that cohort experiences the same life stages at the same time. For example, at 15-16 years old the majority of people are taking exams, and so the structure of their environment is the same. But for a 16+ year old cohort the segmentation of age becomes less meaningful. In this project we map value priorities to different life stages.

It is important for public service in the digital age to be responsible and align with audiences values.



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