

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND TO THE FLOURISH MODEL



An Ecology of Wellbeing

The need to more clearly define and measure human wellbeing has thrown up some very interesting cultural challenges. It has revealed that, despite being members of the same species, our different cultures and backgrounds have resulted in very different ideas about what a 'Good Life' looks like. In Western society it has become increasingly associated with material wellbeing and success of the individual, whereas in other areas of the world it is more about ways of living meaningfully, sustainably and in alignment with the natural world.

As ever, what we are really seeking is a sensible balance between the two.

Through revealing the interconnected nature of human development, evolution, behaviour and sustainability, the Flourish Model aims to provide an interdisciplinary road map explaining the relational foundations of human capacities and potential and how these promote and optimise sustainable wellbeing. It promotes the need for a new '**Ecology of Wellbeing**' that better conveys the vital importance of protecting early development with our need to understand human flourishing as a dynamic and highly interconnected process.

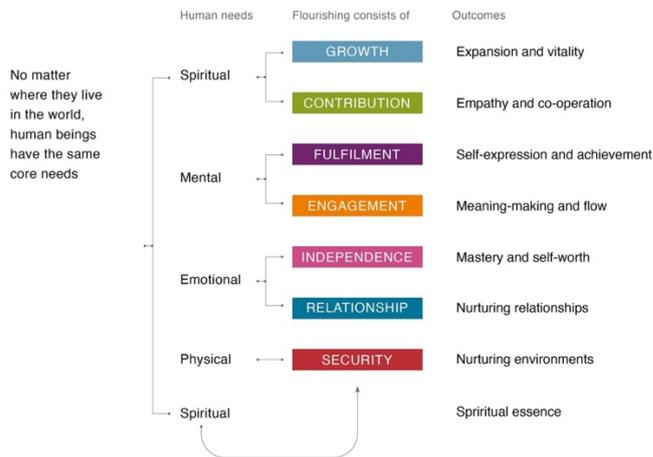
Initially inspired by Richard Barrett's work on the Seven levels of Consciousness, the model currently encompasses the new science of child development, the work of evolutionary thinkers such as Elinor Ostrom and David Sloan Wilson, the biologists Gregory Bateson, Alan Rayner and Humberto Maturana, the leading systems theorists David Bohm and Fritjof Capra, the economists Amaryta Sen, James Heckman and Richard Layard, the psychologists Abraham Maslow, Urie Bronfenbrenner, Edward Deci, Richard Ryan, Martin Seligman, Stanislav Grof, Ken Wilber and Carol Dweck, the organisational experts Otto Scharmer and Peter Senge and the trauma experts Thomas Hubl and Gabor Mate. As such, it aims to show that the academic evidence itself needs to be understood and applied using a 'whole systems' perspective. And this includes the indigenous call for ways of being in the world that are aligned with natural systems and processes.

In accordance with the work of Maslow and Barrett, the model suggests that there are seven core aspects to human flourishing that reflect the dynamics of natural systems and that need to be fully acknowledged and incorporated for us to be supported in becoming the 'best version of our selves'. These are the energetic drivers of human motivations and development that invite us to actively engage with our environments and they are then further shaped and defined by the unique experiences that we all have as individuals.

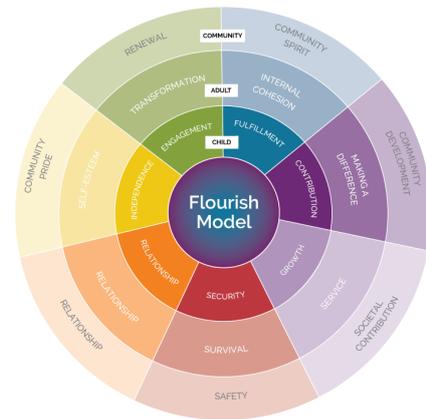
They reflect our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs as human beings and include: **security, relationship, independence, engagement, fulfilment, contribution and ongoing growth.**

Depending on our unique environmental experiences, they then become the dispositions, beliefs, values and mindsets that create our individual maps of the worlds.

Flourishing consists of...



Flourish Model



The positive dimensions of flourishing subsequently manifest as: physical health and vitality, positive relationships with others, emotional mastery, environmental mastery, autonomy, self-acceptance, personal growth, contribution and purpose in life.

We all need . . .

- Growth** to expand who we are and what we know
- Contribution** to contribute to something greater than ourselves
- Fulfilment** to test our skills and know that we can overcome challenges
- Engagement** to explore and take risks in order to learn
- Independence** to feel a sense of self-worth
- Relationship** to love and be loved
- Security** to have a safe and secure place to live



In order to . . .

- Growth** positively impact a dynamically interconnected world
- Contribution** be able to follow and fulfil our unique purpose
- Fulfilment** be able to fully optimise and express our skills and capacities
- Engagement** be fully playfully and creatively involved
- Independence** develop a sense of personal mastery and agency
- Relationship** develop a sense of connection and belonging
- Security** be able to develop healthy bodies and minds

The Triple Aspect

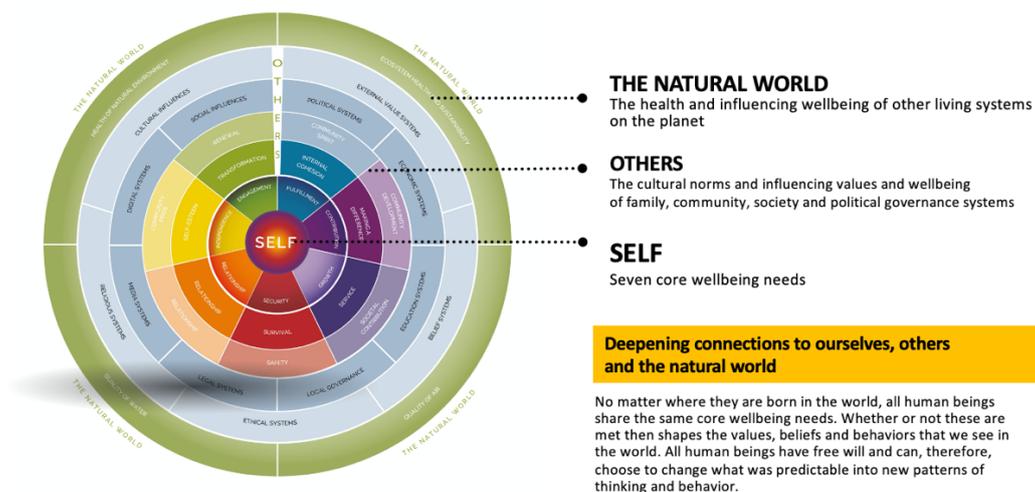
What the Flourish Model brings to the current global discussions of flourishing is the understanding that human beings do not live in isolation from the natural world and that there is an ecological self that is always shaping, and being shaped by, the wider system. In this respect, there is always a triple aspect to human wellbeing and the model suggests that it is this disconnect between how we experience our separate 'selves' and the larger system that is the root cause of human suffering and dysfunction. It also reinforces the understanding that wellbeing is a fluid and dynamic state that includes the need for personal agency.

As an innovative new wellbeing framework, the model contributes a unique method for assessing and promoting the wellbeing of systems. It spans the whole of human life, from conception through childhood, right through to the wisdom of 'elderhood' and the legacy that we leave behind for future generations. It provides tools, resources and indicators that enhance societal wellbeing, but that also promote our shared humanity.

Through being implemented as an ecological model it shows that the same core principles can be applied to any human system, that there is a natural intelligence that is always trying to bring us into integration and wholeness, and that the spirit of the child is the source of the emergent, generative creativity that we need to flourish as a species, in touch with ourselves, each other and this beautiful planet that we live on.

Children's lives are embedded within the larger systems of family, community and culture and their values and views are shaped by the worlds of others.

The Ecological Self



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