

## Handbook on the Agreements Evidence Map

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The handbook is based on the text from chapters 4-6 of “Ecosynomics: The Science of Abundance” and different blog posts by Jim Ritchie-Dunham and was initially compiled by Eyal Drimmer. The present paper is a result of an online collaboration process with the Harmonic Vibrancy Network on enriching the first version of the handbook.

**Short description:** The Agreements Evidence Map is another way of drawing the 3-circle diagram that emerged from the reflections on personal experience and the application of the four lenses to your own experience. The purpose of the Map is to enable you to see your agreements in a simple but robust way as they show up in the practices, structures and processes you experience in your life. Simple, because you can apply it intuitively in every relationship and circumstance and robust, because you can consider the most important and relevant elements every time. Locating this information will allow you to determine which ones you want to strengthen and which you want to have less of. Furthermore, the comparison of different maps enables you to see the relevant differences between groups with similar goals and visions and as a consequence to elaborate leverage points for shifting agreements.

**Cross reference:** harmonic vibrancy move process, 3-circle diagram, ecosynomics framework.

	Resources	Allocation	Value	Organization
<i>Possibility</i>	Potential Capacity	Primary Relationship(s)	Future Potential	Collaboration
<i>Development</i>	Occasional examples of all five		Store manager has flexibility, autonomy on scheduling, staffing, community involvement	
	Supplier relationship is mutually beneficial, share consumer info	Group and Individual	Adoption program -- don't sell cats/dogs	Strong core purpose -- all about loving animals
<i>Things</i>	Capacity Development	Primary Relationship(s)	Learning and Growth	Co-opetition
	Cross-training and mentoring		Pets allowed at corporate	Associates can take you anywhere in the store
	Low turnover relative to retail (depends on store manager)		Active in community events	
	Awareness of broad general capacities each person contributes	Group	<u>Key Metrics for Store</u>	Data mining and understanding of consumers
	Available Capacity	Primary Relationship(s)	Outcomes	Competition
	Awareness of general guidelines		• Sales/sq ft • Gross margin (return on inventory) • Operating profit • Employee turnover Pay is relatively competitive	Well defined policies, procedures, and job descriptions in employee handbook

**Graphic 1:** Example of an Agreements Evidence Map.

<sup>1</sup> The collaborators are not named in the header, because they edited the handbook anonymously.

## Evidences for Agreements

To populate the Map with data, you need to look for **credible evidences for the agreements in practices, structures and processes** of the group. For the process of finding and validating evidences it is necessary to include **multiple resources** to ensure objectivity and reliability:

1. Interviewing individuals (internal and external stakeholders): Offers the opportunity to give the own story without the political charge of competing with other voices and opinions
2. Group interviews (focus groups, world cafes, etc.): The diversity in the group offers perspectives the individuals cannot have on their own
3. Own observations of the group in action
4. Documentary evidence of the group's processes and outcomes, both from its internal reports and from documents created outside of the group

There are different **dimensions** for validating the actual agreements:

1. Existence: Determining whether the agreement actually exists
2. Awareness: If the group is conscious of the existing agreement
3. Application: Whether and how the agreement is actually in use
  - Prevalence: How prevalent are the practices based on this agreement?
  - People: How many people apply the practices? What percentage of the whole collective represents that number of people? Do most people apply it or just a small group?
  - Time: Does the practice show up all of the time, some of the time, rarely or never?

### Scaling Evidences by Color Cording

Manifestation of Evidences	Interpretation	Color
There is no awareness and no evidence of the application of an agreement	This is completely new territory and does not exist in the groups agreements.	white
Most people are not aware of it most of the time and little to no evidence of its application	Stop and notice as this is rare. These are the newest opportunities for growth and here the collective unconscious questions usually appear.	red
Some people are aware of it some of the time and apply it some of the time	Watch out, some systems are working and some are not. Growth is beginning to happen that could be nurtured. Some people express the relevant questions and for some it's still unconscious.	yellow
Most people are almost always aware of it and apply it most of the time	All systems are good. The success needs to be maintained, while supporting new growth.	green

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you are unsure whether the evidence you find is valid, write down the evidence with a question mark next to it and ask about it.</li> <li>• There are no right or wrong answers, just the data you are finding. The intention is to be accurate and to mirror the reality of the group, not to push an agenda such as showing how strong the group is, finding its weak spots or trying to move it in a particular direction.</li> </ul>
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### 3 PERCEIVED REALITIES

#### Relevant Questions for Perceived Realities:

Level	Interpretation
<b>Things-Matter</b>	How strong is the foundation for the groups' current operations and to perform effectively?
<b>Development-Motion</b>	What is the degree of conscious awareness and application of practices around developing capacities and relationships?
<b>Possibility-Light</b>	What is the degree of awareness of the emerging future in the group and the extent to which the group is thinking creatively about how to shape its agreements to fit that emerging future (plus investment in sustainability in all five relationships)?

	<p>It is a basic principle of Ecosynomics that the level at which an individual or group is functioning applies across all five relationships and all four lenses, as part of an integrated experience of reality. Hence, if you find evidences for a certain relationship or lens at a certain level there must be evidences for the other relationships and lenses at this level as well.</p>
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#### Color Cording for Different Levels

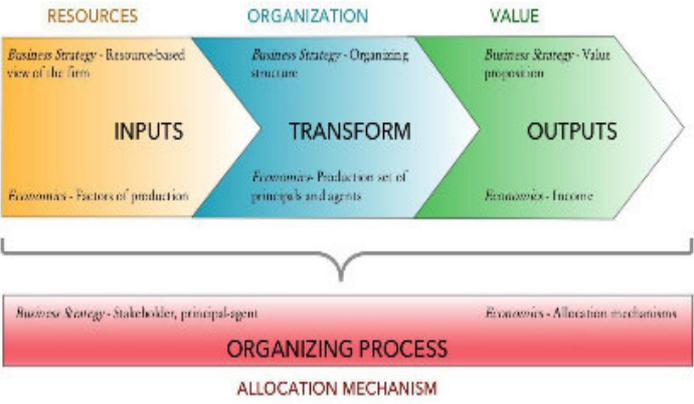
After color coding the single evidences you can further color code the levels of perceived reality with white, red, yellow and green (like in graphic 1). Use the same principles mentioned before and take the already color coded evidences as orientation. Find examples for level coding in the table below.

Color & Level	Example
<b>Yellow</b> on the Development-Motion-Level	There can be many examples of capacity development in a group; however, if these efforts were mostly focused on getting better at the job of delivering outcomes, it is considered to be a low-level of awareness at the development level. For an intermediate to high (i.e., green) code here, the focus should be instead on capacity development as an end in itself across all five primary relationships.
<b>Yellow</b> on the Possibility-Light-Level	When a group is experimenting with possibilities and organizing itself collaboratively in small pockets, by accident or out of a sense of necessity rather than a perception of value.
<b>Red</b> on the lower part of the Possibility-Light-Level	Shows that it is possible, just very infrequent; no evidence of working with the deeper potential and creativity inherent within the five primary relationships; Individual group members might aspire to engage more of themselves in the work but do not know how. Development-level practices alone do not enable them to achieve the higher potential they sense in themselves.

### 4 ECONOMIC LENSES

Most often, the textbooks provide a linear model to describe the main four perspectives in economics (see graphic 2). The model might depict the flow of money in an economy or provide the basis for a value-chain analysis of how a firm delivers a particular product or service to market. We see a process with distinct phases, and at each stage, there is a handoff—from resource owners to the organization and from the organization to the consumer, or household. This separates them in economy into distinct disciplines. Beyond this, the relationships that actually define the system are de-emphasized to the point that people forget they are there.

The **Ecosynomics framework** brings the questions together to see how their interdependencies affect agreements. The four questions shed light on different dimensions of the same experience and ways of looking at the harmonic vibrancy you experience in a group and the outcomes that result from that experience.



Graphic 2: Linear model of four economic lenses.

#### Process of Populating the Map

Work systematically through the four lenses looking across the five relationships at each of the three levels of perceived reality and insert your evidences in the matrix. As an orientation, you will find in the next paragraphs for every lens at every level guiding questions and examples for evidences.

## 4 Economic Lenses - RESOURCES

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**Guiding Question:** How much capacities and resources are there right now and in future?

In economics resources are called 'Factors of Production' (that is, the necessary inputs to the process of production to get the valued outcome). The following factors can be distinguished:

- Land: Natural resources as the raw materials for the production process
- Labor: Effort people contribute to the production of goods and services
- Capital: Any man-made resource that makes it possible to assemble the other resources needed to produce goods and services, such as money, machines or handbooks
- Intangible Resources: Intellectual property, goodwill, reputation and social capital (social relationships that have economic value)

### Resources - THINGS-MATTER Level

Focus on **Available Capacity**: How much capacities and resources are there right now? What is the concrete of the here-and-now?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	What are the specific capacities you bring into this group to get the work done?
<b>OTHER</b>	Is there some form of awareness and acknowledgement of the capacities that other individuals bring in?
<b>GROUP</b>	What is the level of awareness of the unique contribution each individual's capacity makes to the group?
<b>NATURE</b>	What is the level of awareness of concrete available resources that is focused on outcomes?
<b>SPIRIT</b>	What is the level of awareness of written down protocols that everyone knows to follow – the rules that have been handed down?

Evidences for Answering the Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job descriptions or performance evaluation of employees</li> <li>• Directory of special capacities</li> <li>• Resource person who knows the specific capacities of the group member and can be asked for</li> <li>• Protocols or check sheets for inventory or funding</li> <li>• Are they thinking of the different parts in a process and do they bring in the person, who knows most about a certain part?</li> </ul>

## Resources - DEVELOPMENT-MOTION Level

Focus on the dynamics of generating resources over time, **capacity development**, and relationships in influencing how much resource is available at any future time. How do the capacities and resources change over time? What do we need to do, over time, to develop those capacities, to meet in those ever-changing needs for resources? What capacities are we developing?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	Do our agreements include an awareness of how we are individually developing our capacities over time?
<b>OTHER</b>	Do we support each other in the development of these capacities?
<b>GROUP</b>	Are we learning and developing as a group? And what is the group's capacity to support the development of the individuals?
<b>NATURE</b>	Do we focus on improving our processes to achieve better outcomes over time?
<b>SPIRIT</b>	Do we, as a matter of daily practice, look for creativity to enter into our work?

Evidences for Answering the Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring-program</li> <li>• Practices that track the inflows and outflows of a resource</li> <li>• tracking the development of relationships among different members of a network</li> <li>• plans and buffer for unexpected changes</li> <li>• Time slot for reflection and inquiry about development (actual time spend on it)</li> <li>• Ways that track what is being learned (e.g. documents, peer-learning, etc.)</li> </ul>

## Resources - POSSIBILITY-POTENTIAL Level

Focus on **Potential Capacity**: What are potential capacities and resources? Does the group see resources that could be available and could be developed in the future, whether they are now or not?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b> <b>OTHER</b> <b>GROUP</b>	What possibilities and emerging potential do I/ You/ We see right now in ourselves/ You/ the group?
<b>NATURE</b> <b>SPIRIT</b>	<p>Is there a consistent expectation by all that possibilities and creativity are everywhere, all of the time, in all of the relationships, and it is just a matter of being open to and looking for it?</p> <p>Are people actively inviting in the possibility for new resources to emerge?</p> <p>Does the group sense a potential that has not shown up yet?</p>

### Evidences for Answering the Questions

- Time in daily live to reflect on what the group sees emerging and time to share this.
- Do we record it in journals, so that we can see what we are enacting of that potential?
- Do we continuously explore possibilities or does this attitude only show up sporadically?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be alert to the difference between talk and practice: Only capture what is actually happening and being applied.</li> <li>• There are many groups where possibility is the only reality that shows up in the resources lens. This is tricky because it looks like people are exploring possibility, but they are only looking at possibility. They are not choosing to develop a particular possibility and bring it into being at the concrete level. For them, seeing the possibility is the outcome, the only outcome. Hence, it should be located at the Matter-Things Level as on-the-level path.</li> </ul>
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## 4 Economic Lenses - ALLOCATION

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### Guiding Questions:

- Who makes the decision about the allocation of the current, developing and potential resources?
- Who has the “power” to decide, to set the rules of the game, to enforce those rules?
- What is the motivating objective of the system, the moral imperative? What is the system trying to achieve?
- What are the power structure and the decision mechanism?
- Who are the owners of land, labor, and capital?

The allocation lens is often the expression of a deeply held philosophy within the group, not just what the leadership is saying but also what the community is saying. The used allocation mechanism defines the political-economic system you work and live in. In other words, it sets the rules of the game: this can be rules within your group, organization or up to the national and global level.

### Allocation - THINGS-MATTER Level

Economic thinking that is based on scarcity creates the tendency to see one of the five relationships as primary with the assumption that the others will also be met (see *Excursion*). The focus on the Things-Matter Level is therefore: Which relationship predominates in guiding decision making about how resources will be used?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	Is the emphasis on freedom and self-determination of individuals? The material or spiritual well-being for the individual?
<b>OTHER</b>	Is equity the all important consideration?
<b>GROUP</b>	Does the well-being of the group as a whole comes before all else and ensures the well-being of all?
<b>NATURE</b>	Is resource allocation guided by a systemic view that emphasizes maintaining a dynamic balance among the parts of the system?
<b>SPIRIT</b>	Does the organization privilege creativity over all other considerations?

### Evidences for Answering the Questions

- Who is included in the decision – just one person, a couple of people, many or everyone?
- When the decision is in the hands of only a few people, are those representing their personal needs or the needs of the group of which they are part?
- How do they decide? Whose opinion, whose vote, whose enforcement?
- What is the power structure? Behind-the-scenes design (invisible), out-front debate (others vote – others opinion), election (you vote – representative give opinion), or participatory (you vote your opinion)?

	<p>Again, be alert to the difference between talk and practice (e.g. many companies talk publicly about the importance of individual freedom as part of their advocacy for free-market policies. But they rather see that individual as an employee, contributing through very specific tasks to the good of the group. Hence, they actually make most agreements based on the health of the group—the company—and not the individuals within the company)</p>
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**Allocation - DEVELOPMENT-MOTION Level**

Often groups hold different relationships primary at different levels of perceived reality. The focus on the Development-Motion Level is therefore: What is the primary relationship to decide how we develop our resources? Is there another relationship primary at this level?

**Allocation - POSSIBILITY-POTENTIAL Level**

When we look through the allocation lens at the possibility level, we see occasional examples of all five primary relationships at the same time. The focus on the Development-Motion Level is therefore: Is there evidence of all five relationships engaged in resource decisions?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	Individuals deciding for themselves
<b>OTHER</b>	Pairs of individuals working with each other to achieve a sense of felt-fair equity
<b>GROUP</b>	The group deciding on the basis of the health of the whole
<b>NATURE</b>	... in a way that works with choosing of possibilities to develop towards specific outcomes
<b>SPIRIT</b>	... and invokes the full creativity available to the group

## 4 Economic Lenses - VALUE

### Guiding Questions:

- What is the deeply held philosophy the allocation mechanism is an expression about?
- What criteria guide the allocation/ the allocators of resources in the group?
- What values guide our decisions?
- What is important in the first place? Is it the same for everyone?
- Are we assigning value to what we actually care about?

### What is being valued?

Material well-being at the outcomes-things level of reality? Economic surplus? Possibility, development, and outcomes for all five primary relationships?

### How will the value be exchanged between the parties? What is the mode of exchange?

What are the currencies? What properties do they have? Is everything exchanged through scarcity-based, interest-based money? Are other currencies or barter systems used, such as time banks and non-interest-based currencies?

### Who gets what part of the value generated in the exchange?

Who “owns” the surplus value? This is the economic value distribution question. For land owners it is rent, for labor owners it is wages, and for capital owners it is profits. This question also addresses the issue of which goods and services we consider publicly owned, to be paid for collectively, and which ones should be privately owned, paid for individually.

### Value - THINGS-MATTER Level

Focus on **Outcomes**: What outcomes do we value most? What are we getting for what we put in?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b> <b>OTHER</b> <b>GROUP</b> <b>NATURE</b> <b>SPIRIT</b>	<p>What is the value, if any, placed on the existing capacities of the individual, the other, the group, the outcomes and the creative offer of the group?</p> <p>Is everyone aware of this value, in each relationship and do they practice it?</p>

Evidences for Answering the Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What outputs are produced, and in what quantity? And for whom are the outputs produced and distributed?</li> <li>• What are the specific structures and processes the group uses to track the value it is producing with its resources?</li> <li>• Are there outcome metrics focused on efficiency and how much resource they used to achieve what outcome?</li> <li>• Are the incentives for the individuals and the groups clearly aligned with their outcomes?</li> <li>• Concrete Numbers:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Volume of sales revenues per square foot of storefront</li> <li>○ The financial return on the investment in inventory in the store</li> <li>○ Net operating profit</li> <li>○ The rate of employee turnover</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Value - DEVELOPMENT-MOTION Level

Focus on **Learning and Growth**: Do we see value in the building of capacities and relationships over time in the five relationships? Where do we most want to learn and grow?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	Do we value and support individual growth and development?
<b>OTHER</b>	Do individuals support learning and growth in others?
<b>GROUP</b>	Is there awareness of how the development of individuals contributes to the group as a whole?
<b>NATURE</b>	Do we see the value of process, of the journey and learning along the way?
<b>SPIRIT</b>	Do we see the value in moments of creativity springing forth from individuals?

### Evidences for Answering the Questions

- How much time and space is the group giving to reflect about and apply learning?
- Are there structures or processes to appreciate/ highlight this field of development? (e.g. awards for reaching a certain level of development)
- Signs that indicate that the network is becoming stronger because of the relationships that are developing among the members

## Value - POSSIBILITY-POTENTIAL Level

Focus on **Future Potential**: What is the most desired future? Does the group place importance on its members' living into their full potential in the five relationships?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	Do the practices, systems and culture support looking for the best in each individual?
<b>OTHER</b>	Do individuals support each other in that exploration?
<b>GROUP</b>	Does the group as a whole value the search for its own highest possibilities and invite what each member might contribute to achieving them?
<b>NATURE</b>	What value is placed on the processes of seeing new possibilities and working with them?
<b>SPIRIT</b>	To what extent does the group value creativity in all of its forms?

### Evidences for Answering the Questions

- Structures & processes that express the nature and degree of how the group values possibility
- Some kind of freedom for e.g. own scheduling, staffing, community involvement to find an area where the individuals can unfold their potentials

## 4 Economic Lenses - ORGANIZATION

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**Guiding Question:** How shall we interact with each other and with resources to achieve what they value?

Why do we decide to come together in the first place?

Economic efficiency? For a shared higher purpose? This opens the whole area of why people cooperate in the first place, as captured in group charters, vision and mission statements, or sometimes cost-benefit analyses.

How do we agree to interact with each other?

Competition? Cooperation? Co-opetition? Collaboration?

What kind of structure and process best supports how we want to interact?

Should it be a corporation, a partnership, a network or something else? Economic specialization and division of labor around tasks? Interwoven, integrated collaborative conversations? What are the incentives people will need to participate in desired ways within that structure?

### THINGS-MATTER Level

Focus on **Competition**: How shall we interact to compete?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<p><b>SELF</b></p> <p><b>OTHER</b></p> <p><b>GROUP</b></p> <p><b>NATURE</b></p> <p><b>SPIRIT</b></p>	<p>Questions for all five relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the group’s ability to utilize its available resources in a way that maximizes desirable outcomes relative to what it values?</li> <li>• Is the group efficient and effective to do the task at hand with the given capacities?</li> <li>• Is the group organized in a way that enables it to deliver on its purpose?</li> <li>• Is the group organized in a way that it can produce results?</li> </ul>

Evidences for Answering the Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-defined procedures, policies, structures and job descriptions that can support people in performing effectively and efficiently, across all five primary relationships (e.g. Employee handbook)</li> </ul>

**DEVELOPMENT-MOTION Level**

Focus on **Co-opetition** (cooperative competition): How are we organized to build capacities and relationships? And how shall we interact to cooperate competitively?

- Not competitive: the group cannot compete successfully
- Only-competitive: Competition is the principal drive of the organization—striving to be better than others is its main focus (internal and external)
- Also-competitive: The group is organized for a purpose other than competition, and it is also very competitive. The group works in service of a shared purpose and the goal of performing effectively and achieving success (with some degree of focus on learning and growing together)

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	Are individuals motivated towards personal growth and working with others?
<b>OTHER</b>	Are there processes to support individuals’ knowing what others can contribute, not just with their current capabilities, but also with the new capabilities they are in the process of developing?
<b>GROUP</b>	Does the group focus on teamwork and readily form new teams as projects require them?
<b>NATURE</b>	
<b>SPIRIT</b>	

Evidences for Answering the Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processes and structures for developing understanding of and belief in the core purpose</li> </ul>

**POSSIBILITY-POTENTIAL Level**

Focus on **Collaboration**: How shall we interact to collaborate? Are people working together toward a shared purpose that transcends operational effectiveness? Is everyone participating and contributing creatively to imagine future possibilities in all five relationships on a continuous basis?

Relationship	Guiding Questions
<b>SELF</b>	
<b>OTHER</b>	Is there a flow of mutual support among group members in meetings, in interactions between meetings and in all forms of communication?
<b>GROUP NATURE</b>	Is everyone aware of the core purpose and how their local tasks align (or not) with those purposes? Do people continuously seek clarity around this alignment?
<b>SPIRIT</b>	Do the group’s communication and information systems and processes of interaction enable its members to identify moments of creativity and know how to capitalize on those moments?

Evidences for Answering the Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there patterns, processes and structures that support collaboration?</li> <li>• Examples “integrated collaborative conversations” (from THORLO): These conversations are designed to keep different parts of the organization in constant interaction and create a continuous flow of information, all focused on THORLO’s clearly articulated purpose—to ensure the foot health of its loyal customers. One of the processes supporting the integrity of these conversations is “surfacing surprises.” It is part of the agenda every time the "conversation" gets together, often weekly, to see what new, big, or different things are happening. It represents an effort to avoid gaps in communication that might create future problems.</li> </ul>

## Excursion – Reality on the THINGS-MATTER Level

### Comparing political-economic systems

Current political-economic systems have one basic similarity: An exclusive focus on the things-matter level of perceived reality and preoccupation with the scarcity that exists in that realm. All the systems promised and promise to be the final solution, but none of them managed to bring in more vibrancy. The assumption of scarcity emerged along with capitalism in Western Europe and continued to evolve between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The alternative systems that arose out of critiques of capitalism, primarily socialism and communism, challenged many of its basic principles but not the assumption that all resources are scarce. This assumption is true at the things-matter level but it is not all pervasive and, for the grounded potential path, not transferable to the potential and development level. A scarcity based view on these two levels ends up in the enlightened-matter path and reproduce scarcity. Graphic 3 depicts the focus and relevant questions of the five different political-economic systems assigned to the five primary relationships.



**Graphic 3:** Different systems on the things-matter all starting from the assumption of scarcity

### Resources on the Things-Mater-Level

The focus regarding resources on the things-matter Level is typically the allocation of scarce resources to get scarce outcomes. You exchange your scarce labor (your resource) for an employer's scarce money (employer's resource) at a competitive "price," your wage. Hence, the *mode of exchange* is based solely on the things-mater level and can be seen as a competition of scarce goods. There are two economic concepts for it:

- Ownership: Exclusive right to use something, what inherently implies scarcity
- Price: Price is the moment of agreement between producers and consumers when goods or services are exchanged.

Although this was originally seen as only that part of individual and social action which is most closely connected with the attainment and with the use of the material requisites of wellbeing, it has become a fundamental assumption that scarcity dominates every aspect of life, not just material resources. The other both types of non-material requisites of wellbeing are neglected:

- The first one consists of a person's own qualities and faculties for action and enjoyment (e.g. business ability, professional skill or the faculty for deriving recreation from reading or music)
- The second defined as "beneficial" relations with other people, either in business or personal life

### Allocation on the Things-Mater-Level

Like mentioned before, political-economic systems are organized around the principle that one, and only one, of the five relationships should be privileged in guiding resource allocation. They suggest optimal designs for allocating scarce resources in the most efficient way - optimal decisions in the context of scarcity to get the most value for the least cost. The key difference among political-economic systems is thus the resource allocation mechanism.

Relationship	Focus of System
<b>SELF</b>	The focus is on individual freedom. Allocation occurs through the choices of individuals and the rules support individuals deciding with other individuals (e.g. neo-liberal markets)
<b>OTHER</b>	The focus is on equality with the other (e.g. egalitarian systems of justice, social democracies)
<b>GROUP</b>	The focus is on solidarity of the group's well-being (e.g. corporations, nation states, collectivist societies )
<b>NATURE</b>	The focus is on the relationship with nature, the balance within it and sustainability (e.g. tribal communities, ecological groups)
<b>SPIRIT</b>	The focus is on the relationship with spirit and the creative flow (e.g. theocratic communities, Buddhist societies)

### Value on the Things-Mater-Level

The view in mainstream economics today is that value is a subjective criterion primarily influenced by scarcity. Value theory is specifying what value is generated from existing resources - value of specific goods and services determines their prices, and prices guide the economic decisions that determine how resources will be used to produce goods and services. This contribution has helped to create the improvements in material wellbeing experienced globally over the past two centuries. But it has also shaped how most people think about what things are worth. Value is only defined as a subjective judgment by consumers about the utility of a given product, and the price is the indicator of the scarcity of the product relative to consumers' demand for it.

Economic thinkers have found it useful to divide subjective criteria of value into three categories:

- Virtuositas: the ability to satisfy human needs (dealing with all five primary relationships at all three levels of perceived reality)
- Complacitas: a personal preference (deals exclusively with the primary relationship to self)
- Raritas: The scarcity of the good (deals only with the things-matter level of perceived reality)

The costs of only considering Raritas (scarcity) are conflicts between what we think is important and what we value in scarcity-base, economic terms. Here are some examples:

- Although grade school teachers play an important role in their children's lives these teachers tend to be paid relatively low wages. The same is true for most caregivers. The wages for teachers and the lack of wages for caregivers is determined by the supply and demand for replaceable units of resource, a scarcity-based view that values only the things-level outcomes and not the development and potential levels of value realized by teachers and caregivers teaching young children and caring for the sick and elderly are "unproductive" activities.
- Gives much less value to learning at the developmental level of reality or to potential-realization at the possibility level. This value system shows up as the job contract based on a job description—you are paid to do the job. The contract specifies what outcomes meet the expectation; nothing about learning and the potential of the individual. Rewarding of employees is based largely on the specific capacities they brought, with a heavy focus on financial and operational outcomes.
- Most attention is given to what is in the immediate foreseeable future. This leads to a focus on immediate impacts of decisions, along with the costs and benefits of those impacts. This thinking ignores longer-term impacts, calling them "externalities," as they are economically external to the responsibility of the economic decision maker. Externalities today include pollution, and the management of common goods, such as air, forests, and water.

### Organization on the Things-Mater-Level

The organization lens deals with following question: By what techniques should inputs be combined to produce the desired outputs? How should human activities being organized to transform resource inputs into outputs people value? In economic thought on the things-matter level, the heart of this question, rooted in the assumption of scarcity, is how to find the most efficient way to make the resource transformation happen. Two principles became central for this approach because they made it possible for companies to closely control the activities of their employees, and for the employees to become increasingly proficient at executing specific tasks or operating specialized machinery at faster and faster rates of production. The principles are:

- **Hierarchy:** The command-and-control style of management has made scarcity of autonomy, of initiative, of relationship, of deep trust and commitment, of creativity, of responsibility.
- **Division of Labor:** Specialization divides up the group's work into smaller and smaller chunks. While this might allow individuals to experience some of the development level of reality, as they learn and build capacities, deeper learning and capacity development require relationships with others and the group's support for the development of that unique contribution. However, where things-matter-level efficiency is the overriding organizational goal, specialization can lead to scarcity in the relationships to the other and the group

Transaction Cost Economics go one step further and look at the benefits and costs of every human interaction in order to determine how to structure that interaction in a way that maximizes the net benefit. But the benefits in human energy and creativity derived from greater vibrancy in the five relationships are usually also not part of the calculation.

### **Moving to the Possibility-Potential-Level**

As a first step, we need to rebuild the foundation on different assumptions because the foundation of the agreements we are now living with seems cracked. Like the foundation of a building, these assumptions are often not visible. Yet the viability of the building depends on the stability and strength of this foundation. When it is a solid foundation, we do not even think about it. When the foundation is cracked, however, there are major consequences. To work differently together, we need to change the group's agreements. To change the agreements, we need to be able to work at the foundational level.

As another step we should stop thinking of competing political-economic systems as hostile or evil. The paradox of scarcity is that we are pursuing an experience of harmonic vibrancy and abundance in a context dominated by thinking that denies the possibility of its essential characteristic, the importance and necessity of all five relationships. But how is it possible to focus on all five relationships at once? By focusing on how much abundance and vibrancy are in our experiences and not by focusing on the five relationships, four lenses or three realities, because they all relate to the vibrancy and are different aspects and perspectives of it. Just listen to one thing: Tthe harmonic vibrancy that you are experiencing.

Groups that operate at all three levels take a distinctive approach when addressing the four basic economic questions. They think first about what they would like to achieve. Then they consider what resources would support them in achieving that objective and how to develop those resources over time in order to have what they need when they need it. In organizing human interaction, these groups look for, recognize and invite in the potential they see in the people they work with and in their relationships. They choose the capacities and relationships they want to develop over time and, with these developing resources, are able to be at their best at any given moment. Finally, they think about value in terms of their vision of what can flow from the development of their capacities and relationships, and their vision embraces the benefits to be enjoyed, not only by group members, but also by all who interact with the group.

## Excursion – Agreements & Choices at Different Zooming Levels

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### Level of each experience (50-foot level)

- “That is just the way things are, good or bad” (not much choice in this if you don’t see the questions and agreements resulting in this experience)
- Instrument: Agreements Evidence Map (Evidence for agreements in the experiences)

### Level of the system (5.000-foot level)

- A series of assumptions and agreements which determine my experiences in a way that can be described by the four lenses perspective:
  - Allocation = *Who decides?*
  - Value = *By what criteria?*
  - Organization = *How do we interact?*
  - Resources = *How much?*

### Level of nation/ whole region (500.000-foot level)

- The whole region within which those assumptions lie. In different regions of the earth and in different times, there have been very different ways that people have responded to the following questions (and following build very different worlds):
  - *Politics* (“Who makes and enforces the rules?”)  $\triangleq$  Allocation
  - *Culture* (“What criteria are being used?”)  $\triangleq$  Value
  - *Social* (“How should the people interact for that?”)  $\triangleq$  Organization
  - *Economics* (“What do people produce and exchange?”)  $\triangleq$  Resources

If you want to experience greater vibrancy in daily life, it seems important to occasionally zoom out to the 5.000-ft view to look through the four lenses at the system that influences my experience and to start asking questions. It is by following these questions that we can begin to see the agreements currently buried deep in the economic systems we have today and even the unconscious assumptions that inform them. And, every once in a while, it seems important to zoom out to the 500,000-ft level to examine the lenses I am using to design the system.