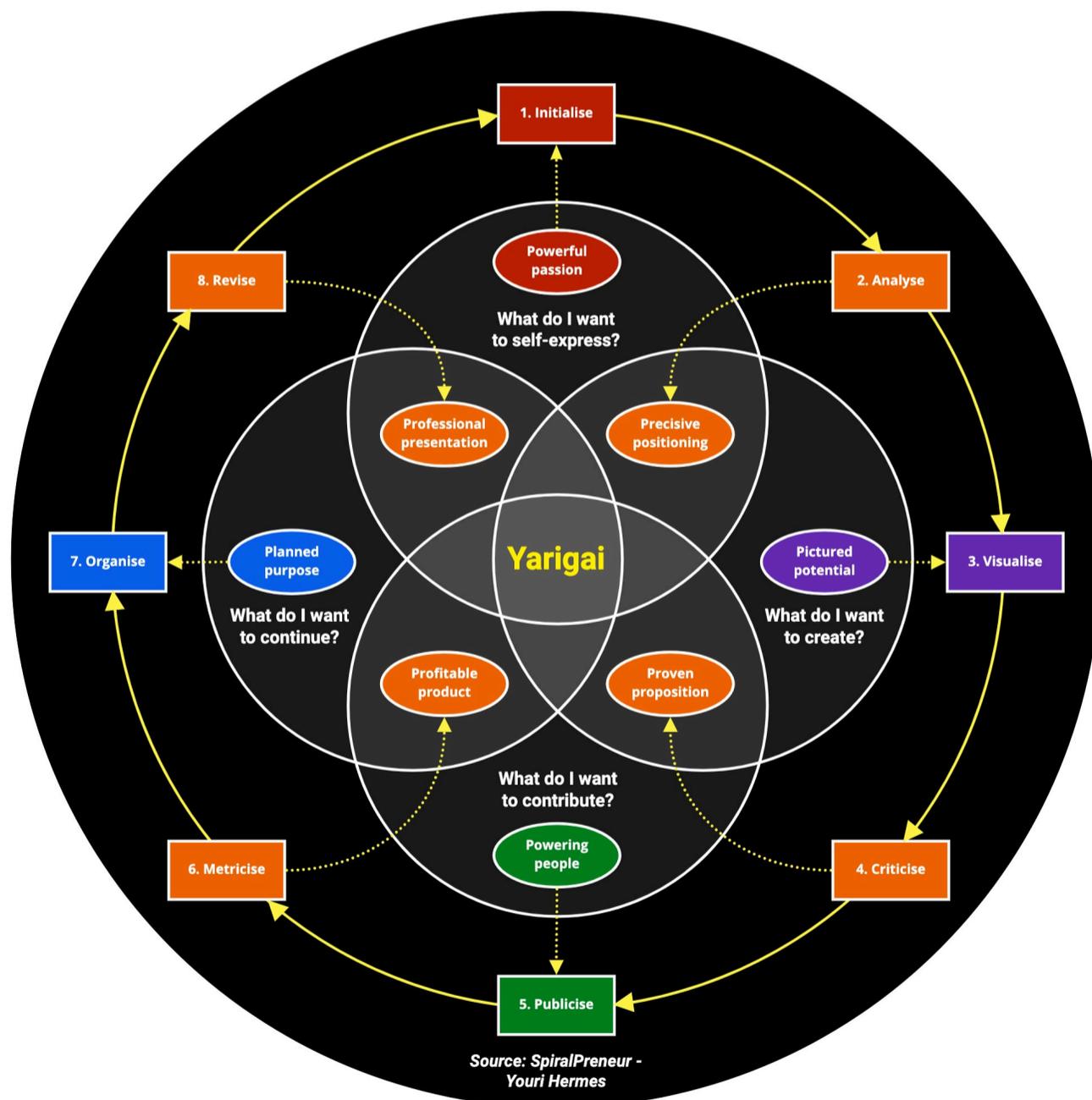


# The awakening of the spiralpreneur

The 10 focus areas for building a fulfilling & thriving business for purpose-driven solo entrepreneurs



Developed with ❤️ by Yuri Hermes

from [SpiralPreneur.com](https://SpiralPreneur.com)



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# Before you start your journey

## The relevance for solopreneurs

This guide is specifically designed for solo entrepreneurs and freelancers with meaningful ambitions. Those who want to make a living around their true potential. However, having a clear calling or purpose is definitely not conditional. This guide will help you to get more clarity about those matters. We won't stop there. You also want to take good care for yourself and those you care about. In line with this, you want to be adequately financially compensated for your efforts. Not just a little bit because you love your work anyway, but the exact amount you feel is right for you.

Too often I encounter solopreneurs who haven't found the right fit between what they deeply want to do and what they get paid for yet. They are struggling to bridge this gap. Even more so because we live in a world that's increasingly more overwhelming. Through the uncertainty and confusion it's a challenge to bridge the gap. This guide will help you to change that for good. It will help you to build a thriving business that's both fulfilling for you and impactful for the world. If you have meaningful aspirations, you may already have found out it's not fulfilling to focus on growth only. This is just a building block. This guide includes this essential building block but it's certainly not limited to it!

Please note that every time when I'm using the term solopreneurs in this guide, I'm referring to both solo entrepreneurs and freelancers.

## The necessity for this movement

I strongly experience our world system is sick. The medicine would be to match people's values to their environment in a more healthy way. So that their actions are no longer destructive for people and planet. This awareness can be provided by visionary but pragmatic business leaders who know how to bring their meaningful initiatives to life.

It's my mission to facilitate this movement through guiding purpose-driven solopreneurs specifically. For this, I found it is most effective to use an integral approach. That's why I've intertwined a psychological and philosophical approach into our lean business programs. Spiral dynamics<sup>1</sup> plays an essential role in this. I haven't seen a more relevant and comprehensive model connected to my mission. Our interdisciplinary approach provides you with the right structure, focus and clarity to build a thriving and meaningful business.

The title of this guide is 'The Awakening of the spiralpreneur'. To understand this, you of course need to know what is meant by a spiralpreneur<sup>2</sup>. A spiralpreneur is an entrepreneur who utilises this interdisciplinary approach. It's someone that views entrepreneurship as a beautiful living playfield in which she or he wants to contribute with her or his potential.

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<sup>1</sup> Spiral Dynamics will be non-theoretically covered in chapter 5. To get more context with the theory, you can consult appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about the meaning of a spiralpreneur, read about the 2 types of entrepreneurs in appendix B.

## The developer of the Yarigai system

My name is Yuri Hermes and I'm the author of this guide, the initiator of SpiralPreneur and the developer of the Yarigai model. I'm dedicated to help purpose-driven solopreneurs to develop in the most meaningful and effective way. I hold a bachelor degree in Entrepreneurship and have certifications in Spiral Dynamics, NLP, Ikigai and DISC.

After years of guiding solopreneurs through their personal and business journeys, I've developed an integral and pragmatic system for sustainable development. It's called the Yarigai system. This methodology is aimed at transforming entrepreneurs into becoming spiralpreneurs<sup>3</sup>. The Yarigai system has been developed over time by continuously combining existing theories with personal experience from working with purpose-driven entrepreneurs.

The main consulted theories are the Ikigai diagram (for its simplicity), Spiral Dynamics (for its integrality) and the lean product development lifecycle (for its practicality). Those theories and models have been combined into an integral model which served as the starting point for the Yarigai system. Since then it has been iterated based on my insights from coaching and consulting dozens of solopreneurs. Within my consults, I kept looking at which patterns were mainly responsible for experiencing more flow, fulfilment and freedom. Based on those insights and the inspiration from the mentioned theories, I developed the Yarigai system as it is known today. In this guide we'll cover this integral and pragmatic model step-by-step.

## What you can expect from this guide

This guide is full of practical resources. Before we cover those tools, I'll share with you the umbrella for the tools in this guide in chapter 1. This will help you to understand how those different resources interconnect with each other. It shows you the beautiful systemic nature between the different building blocks of yourself and your business.

In chapter 2, you'll get introduced to an extensive version of the lean product development cycle. The main purpose of this chapter is to get yourself into movement in the right way. To do this in the right way, I'll be sharing two useful tools. This chapter is all about developing an experimental lifestyle. This is crucial for moving yourself forward.

For each of the steps of the lean product development cycle outlined in chapter 2, a very useful canvas has been assigned. Those canvasses (also referred to as tools and resources) help you to go through the steps of the development cycle more effortlessly and effectively. Whereas chapter 2 is very much about deciding a focus and maintaining this, chapter 3 and 4 is mostly about giving yourself and your business the necessary structure. In chapter 3 we'll first be covering the personal-oriented canvasses, continued by the business-related canvasses in chapter 4. The canvasses offered in chapter 3, 4 and 5 are obviously not holy tools. If a similar tool works better for you, just use that instead. The point here is to structure out your ideas and thoughts in a way that is very easily adjustable.

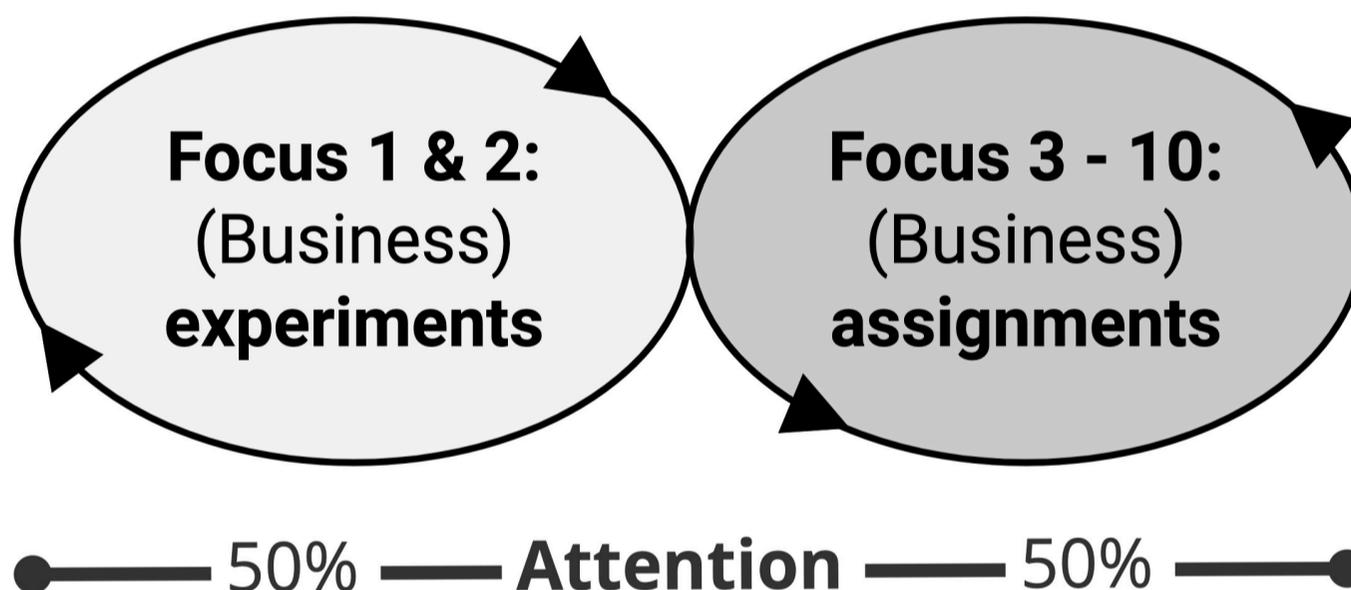
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<sup>3</sup> A spiralpreneur is an entrepreneur who understands how sustainable change can be realised and acts upon this knowing. Read chapter 7.2 to learn more about the exact meaning of a spiralpreneur.

In chapter 5, you're going to further spiral up your business through using Spiral Dynamics in a practical way. The model will be applied on your marketing. Spiral Dynamics is for me personally much more than just a framework. It's a beautiful, insightful and refreshing way of looking at your business and life in general. It's was my main inspiration for coming up with the Yarigai system. That's why it will be covered in a bit more detail in appendix A. In appendix B you'll find five other complementary and useful theories connected to the Yarigai system.

In this guide, 10 focus areas will be shared. The ideal way of dividing your attention through the focus areas is by using the 50/50-rule. Put 50% of your efforts in the first two focus areas (setting up experiments and analysing those). The other 50% is meant to put your insights together and provide yourself and your business with the necessary structure. By using this 50/50-rule, you'll activate a mutual reinforcement of the focus areas. This way, you'll soon find progress comes more naturally and effortlessly.

## Mutually reinforcing business process

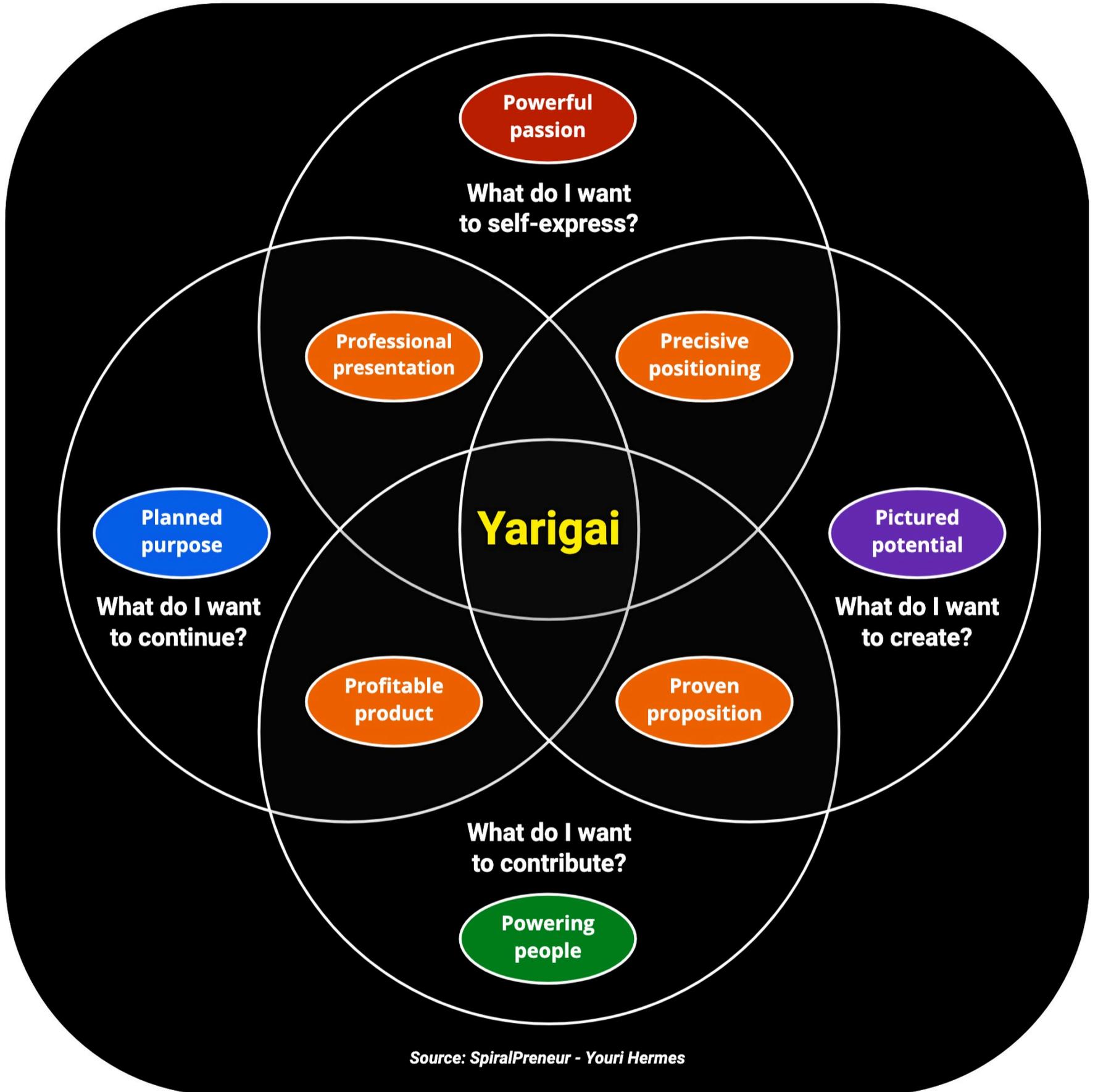


For developing this guide, I only came up with new canvasses myself if I felt it didn't exist. Only the canvasses connected to the first four focus areas have been developed by me. The other canvasses (attached to focus area 5 all the way to 10) are tools developed by others. Of course, the Yarigai diagram & system as main umbrella for everything, has also been developed by me. From the theories covered in the appendix, there is only just one theory I came up with myself: the spiralpreneur theory (covered in appendix B).

This guide only contains about a hundred pages. That's because the visual representation of the Yarigai system should already be quite self-explanatory, especially with proper context.

# Part I -

## Yarigai diagram as umbrella



# The 4 components of the Yarigai diagram

The Yarigai diagram can be seen as the coat hanger on which all of the upcoming tools are hung. It forms the skeleton and umbrella of the contents of this guide. When introducing the Yarigai diagram, people often tend to confuse it with the Ikigai diagram. Although the Ikigai and Yarigai diagram look very similar at first glance, the content of the Yarigai diagram will offer you a whole new perspective.

The Yarigai diagram has four components:

1. The Yarigai sweet-spot
2. The Yarigai questions
3. The Yarigai resources
4. The Yarigai results

Let me shortly explain each component before diving right into practical part of this guide.

## The Yarigai 'sweet-spot'

Since Yarigai is kind of similar to Ikigai, you'll better understand the concept by understanding Ikigai. That's why I'll be explaining Yarigai by comparing<sup>4</sup> it with Ikigai.

Yarigai and Ikigai are both concepts that originate from Japan, but they have distinct meanings and applications. Ikigai, which translates to "the value of being," is a popular concept in Japan that refers to the sense of purpose or fulfillment that one feels from their daily life. It is often represented in a diagram that includes elements such as what one loves, what one is good at, what society needs, and what one can be paid for. The idea is that by aligning these elements, one can find their ikigai and live a fulfilling life.

On the other hand, Yarigai is a lesser-known concept that focuses on "doing" and "work" rather than "being" and "life in general." It refers to the things that one feels passionate about and wants to do in their work. The emphasis is on cultivating a business that aligns with the Ikigai elements (passion, talents, profession and contribution).

In summary, while both Ikigai and Yarigai are concepts that originate from Japan and share some similarities in their diagrams, they have distinct meanings and applications. Ikigai is focused on finding fulfillment in life in general, while Yarigai is focused on finding fulfillment in work specifically.

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<sup>4</sup> If you want to learn more about the similarities and differences between Ikigai and Yarigai, go check out chapter 14.1.

## **The 4 Yarigai questions**

To fulfil Yarigai, you want to get answers on four important questions. This can be viewed as the starting point for more meaningful work. It's therefore no coincidence that this is covered in detail early on in this guide (chapter 3).

- **Exploring your core values:**

- What do I want to self-express?
- What do I want to contribute?

- **Exploring your main goals:**

- What do I want to create?
- What do I want to continue?

## **The 4 Yarigai resources**

The yarigai resources are the blocks in the circles. They are the focus areas for answering the yarigai questions. The four yarigai resources are:

1. Pictured potential (part 3; focus 3)
2. Planned purpose (part 3; focus 4)
3. Powerful passion (part 3; focus 5)
4. Powering people (part 3; focus 6)

Those resources will each be covered separately.

## **The 4 Yarigai results**

The yarigai results are placed in the overlapping areas of the circles of the Yarigai diagram. They are the results of your answers to the yarigai questions. The four yarigai results are:

1. Precise positioning (part 4; focus 7)
2. Proven proposition (part 4; focus 8)
3. Profitable product (part 4; focus 9)
4. Professional presentation (part 4; focus 10)

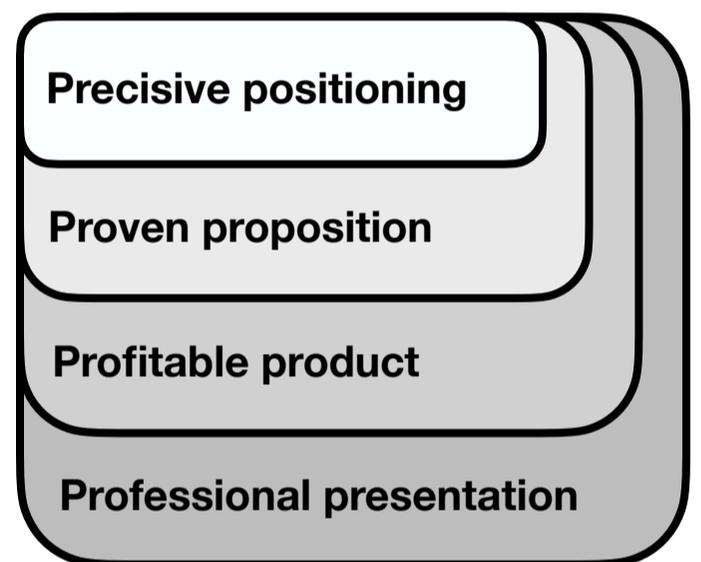
Just like the resources, each of the results will also be covered separately.

# The including principle of the Yarigai system

To make more sense of the Yarigai diagram, you want to be aware of the systemic interaction between the resources and results. For this, we cover one more component in the next part: the Yarigai steps. Those steps are very similar to the lean product development cycle. The steps beautifully connect the Yarigai resources to the results. This way, it becomes applicable for product development and gaining traction. The only difference between the Yarigai diagram and Yarigai system is that the diagram excludes the Yarigai steps whereas the Yarigai system includes it.

Every system contains three components: input, process and output. The Yarigai system is no exception to that. Looking at the Yarigai system, the input areas are the Yarigai resources. The processes are the Yarigai steps. And the output are the Yarigai results. By looking at the Yarigai system, you see more than just one resource, process and result. The main Yarigai system contains four mini systems. They follow each other up in a fixed order.

The first mini system is about how to build a precise positioning. The next system about how to prove your proposition. After that, you've got the system about how to develop a profitable product. And finally, a system about how to build a professional presentation. Healthy previous systems is conditional for a healthy follow-up system. Meaning, if your business is not profitable, it can have to do with the system regarding profitability as well as the two previous systems (regarding your proposition or positioning). For this reason, it's for example important to not be blinded by profitability too soon.

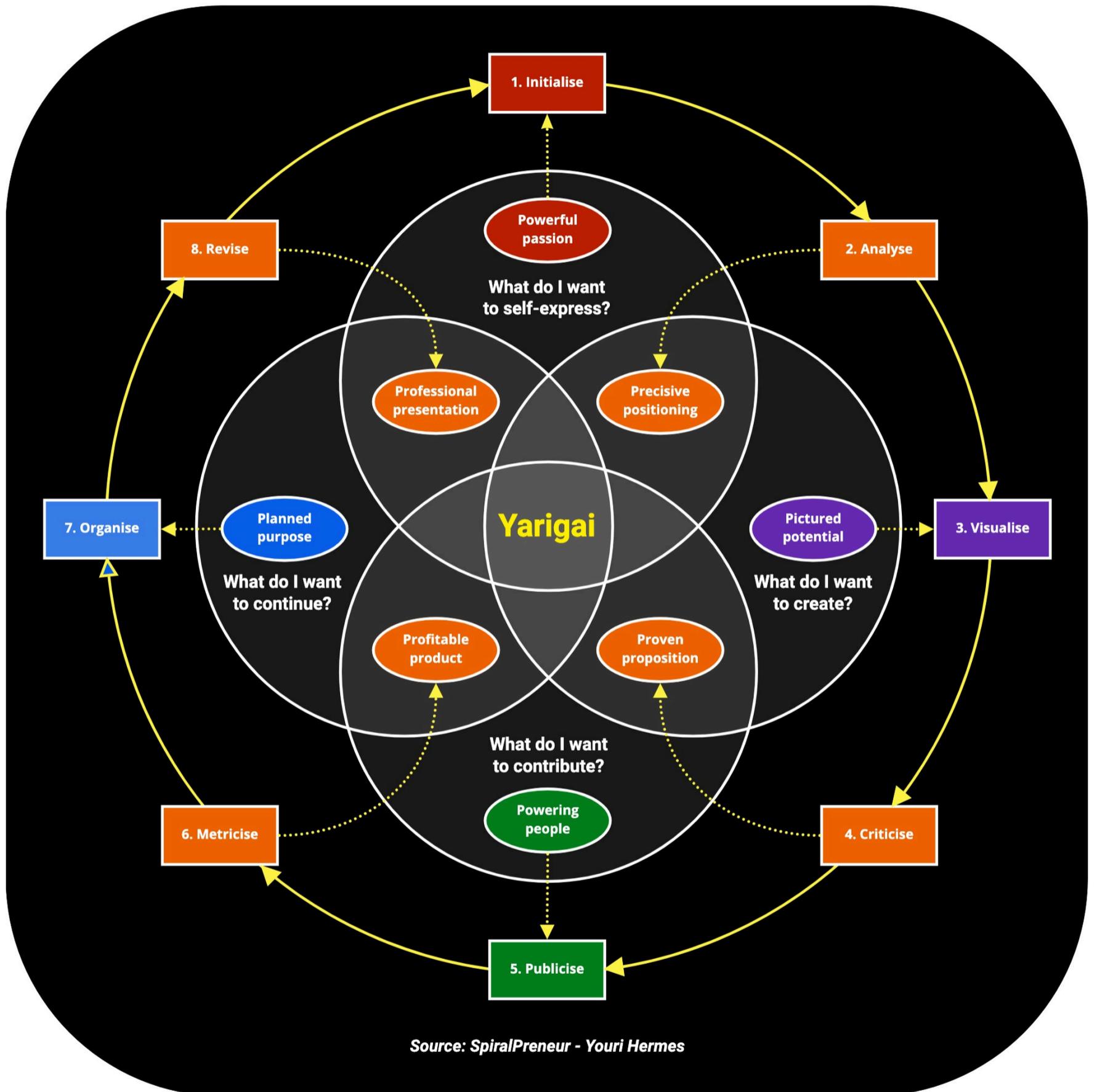


## The connected canvasses

Before diving right into your business, you first want to go through that which lays down the foundation for your business. I'm referring to the Yarigai resources that will be covered first in chapter 3. Those tools are primarily focused on you, the entrepreneur. I've connected a useful canvas to each of those resources so you know how to develop it. Filling in the canvasses will help you to make progress more quickly.

After developing a strong basis, the Yarigai results will be covered in chapter 4. Those are primarily focused on your business. Just like I've connected a personal canvas to each Yarigai resource, a business canvas has been connected to each Yarigai result. Again, filling in those canvasses are the starting point. By filling in the canvas alone you won't magically make progress. Nevertheless, filling in the correlated canvasses provide you with great structure and overview so that you won't overlook important personal and business matters.

# Part II - Continuous progress



# The 8 steps of the Yarigai system

If you had to act upon just one chapter, it should be this one. Learning by doing is the most important characteristic of an effective entrepreneur. That's what this chapter is all about. It's the basis of Yarigai, meaning the value of doing. You don't want to underestimate the importance of focussing on doing instead of just thinking. It's the key separator between very doubtful and highly pragmatic entrepreneurs who get things done.

But even with a strong focus on doing, you might do things for too long or set the wrong priorities for yourself. That's why you want to incorporate an experimental lifestyle and to be sufficiently reflective about your actions, so you can make timely adjustments. To do this in a timely matter is still challenging, especially for solopreneurs. For this, an external business partner is highly recommended. That's why we do what we do.

Very often I see solo entrepreneurs thinking their ideas and challenges all through. That's usually a big waste of their time and efforts. You want to work according to the lean methodology. This is about working out your idea as fast as possible so you can get feedback on it as quickly as possible. You want to shorten this cycle where possible. Constantly coming up with new ideas and subsequently doubting between what to focus on is slowing down your progress big time.

Following the Yarigai steps covered in this chapter is really an ongoing process. Each time you go through the Yarigai steps, you get new valuable information. You can view the Yarigai steps as the roadmap for tuning in on your Yarigai (meaningful occupation). You cultivate and activate Yarigai by going through the steps of the Yarigai system, over and over again. Along the way, you'll find out what's working and what isn't.

The Yarigai steps are a slightly more extensive variant on the lean way of working. But it has the exact same purpose: moving the needle forward. The way the Yarigai steps differ from other lean development cycles is that it's part of something bigger. Instead of just giving you the steps and say good luck to you, I've also added extra layers. The personal layer (what's important for you and how do you ideally express that) as well as the business layer (what's the business all about and how can you strongly align it with your motivations). That's why you'll find a reference to a useful tool below the short explanation of each step. Each of those tools are connected to one of the elements of the Yarigai diagram. By going through the connected element with correlated tool, you'll make sure you go through the steps more effortlessly. The more efficient you can go through the Yarigai steps, the faster you will get results. The resources in this guide provide you with that. The best order for going through the tools is by following the predetermined order of the focus areas in this guide.

Please note that you don't want to limit yourself and your imagination of the used words for the steps. For example, step 7 is about organising. But it can also include structuring, systemising, automating and standardising. The main point of the steps is to apply a lean or agile kind of approach. This way, you will minimise waste and maximise progress.

Also note that you can use the steps in two ways. In general for your entire business or specifically for a product you want to develop. Both applications are useful. Let's shortly cover each step.

## **Step 1. Initialise your business or idea**

It all starts with making a choice. If you are creative, you may have a lot of business ideas. This arises the question on which one to focus on. There is no good or wrong choice. It's about making a choice. It's about initialising your idea. This can either be an idea for setting up a complete new business as well as acting upon a product idea.

*Focus 5 (covered in chapter 3) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing a powerful passion.*

## **Step 2. Analyse your business or idea**

Once you've decided to act upon a certain business idea, you want to check how you're going to do it differently from the existing solutions. For me, this process was usually kind of demotivating because I thought: 'Man, other companies are miles beyond my idea, so why even start?' Fortunately, I eventually switched this mindset. When I'm coming up with an interesting idea for my business now, I'm just going to look at con-colleagues to get inspired instead. 'How to get inspired?' you may ask. By looking at which elements you love within other companies and products and even more importantly: the elements you don't like at all. By knowing how you'll be doing it differently, you lay the foundation for your unique selling points. Of course, you want to test those as soon as possible. But it's a beautiful starting point for coming up with important assumptions to test.

*Focus 7 (covered in chapter 4) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing a precise positioning.*

## **Step 3. Visualise your business or idea**

This step is about creating a visual representation of your potential and the potential of your business. It's important to have a clear understanding of your business's goals and how to achieve them. By making this as vividly as possible, you'll attract it more naturally. If you make this step more concrete, you don't want to only imagine the possibilities but also visualise it through giving form to your ideas. This can be done through making a video to creating a landing page. As long as you make your idea more tangible so that people can experience it. That's conditional for the next step.

*Focus 3 (covered in chapter 3) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing a pictured potential.*

## **Step 4. Criticise your business or concept**

The essential part of lean entrepreneurship is to get feedback quickly. The lean product development cycle is not surprisingly called the feedback loop. You want to get this criticism

as soon as possible. Not only from your customers but from all stakeholders, including yourself. Some people associate criticism as negative feedback but it involves positive feedback as well. This step is about evaluating your business concept and testing its desirability. It's important to identify any potential weaknesses or flaws in your business plan and address them in a timely matter.

*Focus 8 (covered in chapter 4) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing a proven proposition.*

## **Step 5. Publicise your business or product**

This step is about promoting your business and its products to the public. In the previous step you already got some initial feedback and used it to further work out your product and business. At some point, it should be sufficient to openly share it. For this, you want to stand for what you're throwing into the ether. It has to be aligned with what you think is important. You want to find alignment within yourself since you play a crucial role within your business and its products. If you embody the way you give expression to your purpose (through your products, marketing expressions and your business in general), you'll be running your business much more effortlessly.

*Focus 6 (covered in chapter 3) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing powered people.*

## **Step 6. Metricise your business or product**

This step is about measuring the success of your products and making adjustments to increase profitability. It's important to identify and track Key Performance Indicators<sup>5</sup> so that your decisions also become data-driven. In different stages you want to measure different metrics<sup>6</sup>. You want to have clear insight in this so that you can easily monitor your progress.

*Focus 9 (covered in chapter 4) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing a profitable product.*

## **Step 7. Organise your business or product**

This step is about organising your business and its products to achieve a specific goal. It's important to have a clear plan for how your business will operate, and to have a system in place for managing resources and results. Solopreneurs usually either work on their plans for too long (and overthink things way too much) or don't make a plan at all. The sweet-spot is differently for everyone, but generally speaking you want to not work with elongated documents detailing and delineating your processes. Try to keep it as concise as possible.

*Focus 4 (covered in chapter 3) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing a planned purpose.*

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<sup>5</sup> Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are measurable values that indicate how effectively a company is achieving its business objectives.

<sup>6</sup> Metrics are numerical measurements used to track, analyse and evaluate the performance of a business or specific process.

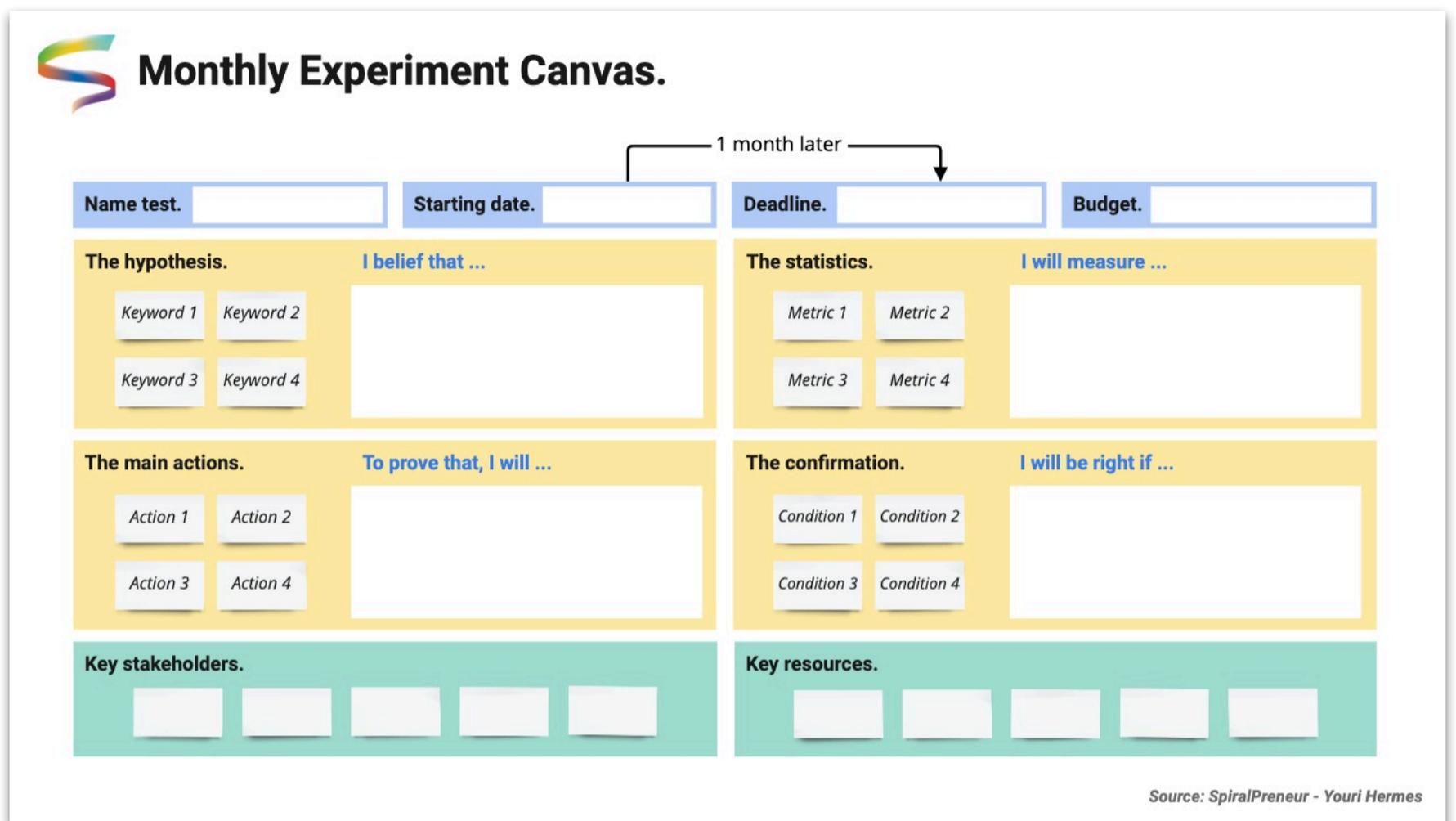
## **Step 8. Revise your business or product**

This step is about refining your business and its products to make them more appealing to potential customers. It's important to have a clear message and to be able to present your business and its products effectively. This step comes last because by gaining new insights through staying in movement, you'll find out soon enough what sticks to what you want to get across with your business. Going to sit down for your business purpose, promise and personality all the way in the beginning can be confusing for entrepreneurs who haven't gone through the previous steps yet. You want to use your insights and experiences to give form to how you ideally want to present your business. This will then guide the business decisions you make, such as focusing on a certain target audience or new product idea.

*Focus 10 (covered in chapter 4) shows you how to improve the efficiency of this step through developing a professional presentation.*

How do you now concretely go through those 8 steps? For this, I'll be sharing a useful tool called the Monthly Experimentation Canvas in the next paragraph. This will help you to go through the steps in a systematic and structured way. It will help you to use your resources (such as your time and money) in an efficient way. Let's set up your experiment right away!

# Focus 1. Set up your experiment



**Monthly Experiment Canvas.**

1 month later

Name test.  Starting date.  Deadline.  Budget.

**The hypothesis.** I believe that ...

Keyword 1 Keyword 2

Keyword 3 Keyword 4

**The statistics.** I will measure ...

Metric 1 Metric 2

Metric 3 Metric 4

**The main actions.** To prove that, I will ...

Action 1 Action 2

Action 3 Action 4

**The confirmation.** I will be right if ...

Condition 1 Condition 2

Condition 3 Condition 4

**Key stakeholders.**

**Key resources.**

Source: SpiralPreneur - Yuri Hermes

## Introduction

To effectively go through the previous 8 Yarigai steps, you want to run experiments in a structured way. This canvas, called the Monthly Experiment Canvas, is a structured way to transform your assumptions into concrete experiments. There are two huge benefits which come from using this canvas. Firstly, you prevent yourself from overthinking certain assumptions you have. That's because you write those down and while doing that, you make them concrete. You make yourself mentally ready to do something in order to verify your assumption. Secondly, you prevent yourself wasting your time on something which may not work. That has everything to do with viewing it as an experiment and as an experiment only. This view will help you to not put extra time, money and efforts into it just for the sake of making it succeed.

Now let's go through the 7 steps of the Monthly Experiment Canvas.

### Step 1. Give your experiment a name

The moment you start different experiments, it can be valuable to make distinguish between those. By doing so, you'll be more likely to limit your investment to it since you've labeled a collection of activities as part of the experiment. A name will keep you sharp on this. Also, when working together with different stakeholders, you want to prevent confusion for them. Being able to reference to each of your experiments by a simple name will help you with that.

## **Step 2. Make it time-bound**

If you keep the deadline open, your experiment will of course never finish. Having a clear start date and deadline will prevent this. Now you may ask yourself, how long should I work on my experiment? The answer on this question depends on your budget, the impact of your assumption and much more. But generally spoken, solo entrepreneurs can best limit the duration to 4 weeks. This will still give you some wiggle room without falling in the pitfall of extending it for too long.

## **Step 3. Determine your financial investment**

Ask yourself how much you'll probably have to spend at most in order to conduct your experiment. For a solo entrepreneur, it's generally recommended to not exceed €1.000 for a single experiment.

## **Step 4. Define your hypothesis**

What belief is important to test as soon as possible? Meaning, if not verified in a timely manner it can have a devastating effect on your business in the short or long term.

Let me give you an example. I believe that many starting entrepreneurs are looking for ways to get new clients as soon as possible.

## **Step 5. Think out the main actions for your experiment**

You may not know which exact actions have to be taken. But with the knowledge you have now, you want to identify the main actions that have to be taken. You can limit yourself to three key actions to which you can connect smaller actions. Your experiment could be to start a Google Adwords-campaign with the search term 'marketing channel'. With this campaign you'll target starting entrepreneurs.

It's part of this fifth step go through the key stakeholders and resources. Ask yourself who you need to conduct the experiment and what kind of resources are needed along the process. Examples for stakeholders would be a business coach, an accountability partner or a Google Ads specialist. And examples for resources are a Google Ads course, an Excel-sheet and a Google Ads account.

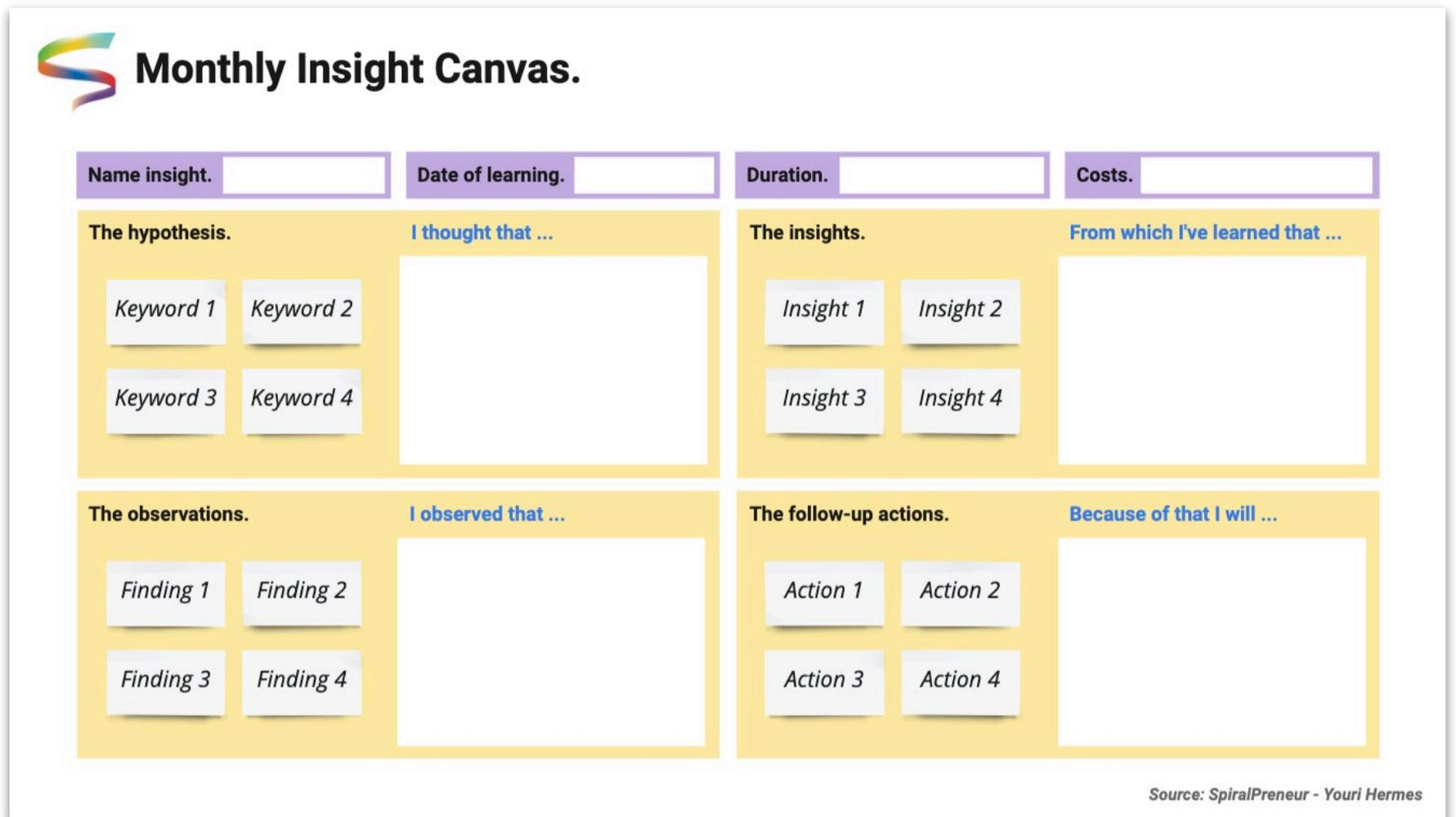
## **Step 6. Determine the statistics you'll be measuring**

In line with the example already given, this could be the performance of your ad campaign by measuring the number of clicks and cost per click.

## **Step 7. Determine the confirmation of your experiment**

In which case can you verify or refute your assumption? That's the most important thing you want to set for yourself beforehand. It can for example be to achieve a click-through ratio of at least 2%.

# Focus 2. Utilise your insights



**Monthly Insight Canvas.**

Name insight.  Date of learning.  Duration.  Costs.

**The hypothesis.** I thought that ...

Keyword 1 Keyword 2

Keyword 3 Keyword 4

**The insights.** From which I've learned that ...

Insight 1 Insight 2

Insight 3 Insight 4

**The observations.** I observed that ...

Finding 1 Finding 2

Finding 3 Finding 4

**The follow-up actions.** Because of that I will ...

Action 1 Action 2

Action 3 Action 4

Source: SpiralPreneur - Youri Hermes

## Introduction

After the deadline of your experiment has been reached, you want to draw the right conclusions and determine the right follow-up actions. For this, we got the Monthly Insight Canvas. This canvas builds on the previous canvas. The Monthly Insight Canvas is a structured way of summarising and analysing key insights. It would be a waste if you run an experiment and neglect potential interesting insights. Simply because you haven't taken the time to identify those. Let alone to assign each of your insights the right value. The Monthly Insight Canvas not only help you to analyse in a more structured way, but also to assign the right actions to your conclusions. It's an invaluable complementary practice to your Monthly Experiment Canvas.

There are 7 steps which you want to follow in a certain sequence to get the most out of it.

### Step 1. Give your experiment analysis a name

Just like you want to give your experiment a name, you want to name your analysis as well.

### Step 2. Write down the actual date of learning and the total duration

The date of learning could (but preferably doesn't) deviate from your initial deadline, just like the total duration of your experiment. Write those down so you get a true picture of how much time you spent on it (and to what extent you have overwritten your deadline).

### **Step 3. Write down the actual costs**

Although you want to prevent this as much as possible, the budgeted costs can still vary quite a bit from the actual costs.

### **Step 4. Write down the hypothesis you've tested**

By writing down the hypothesis from your experiment, you'll remind yourself of your initial reason for starting the experiment. In the previous given example, the assumption was your belief that many starting entrepreneurs are looking for ways to get new clients as soon as possible.

### **Step 5. Write down your main observations**

Drawing valuable conclusions start with making the right observations. Take some time for doing this properly, while keeping the (success) criterium of your experiment in mind. You may have observed a click-through ratio of 2,5% with your Google Ads-campaign. Write this down, together with any other notable observations.

### **Step 6. Consider the new insights you gained**

The insights are gained from your interpretations of the observations you made. Or more simply put: from analysing the results from your experiment. In our given example, this could be a conclusion that there is sufficient interest in the subject you've tested among your audience.

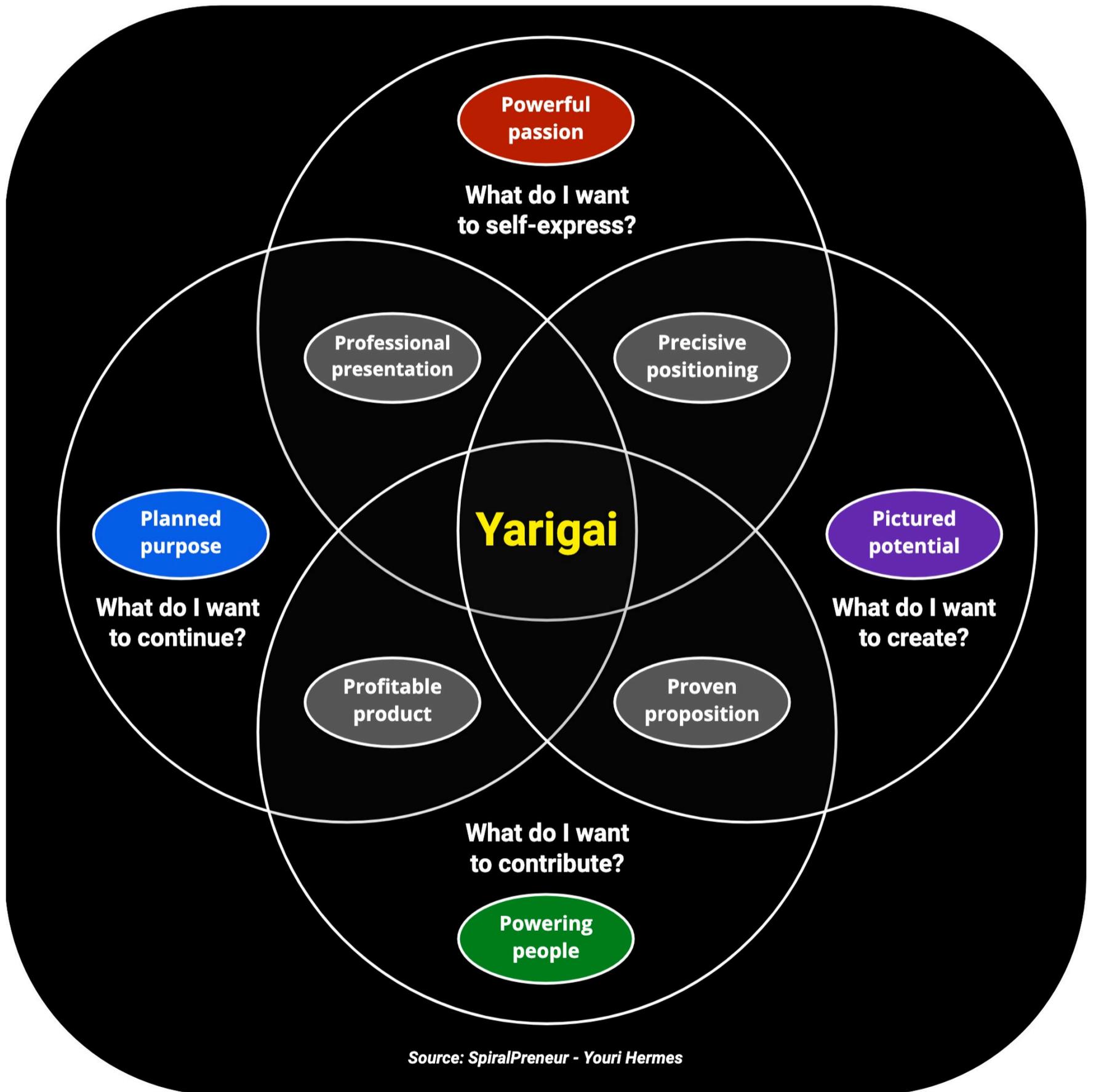
### **Step 7. Determine your follow-up actions**

Now it's time to utilise your new interesting insights by successfully responding on it in the best way possible. Building on the earlier example, this could be to start a LinkedIn-campaign to find out which segment is most interesting.

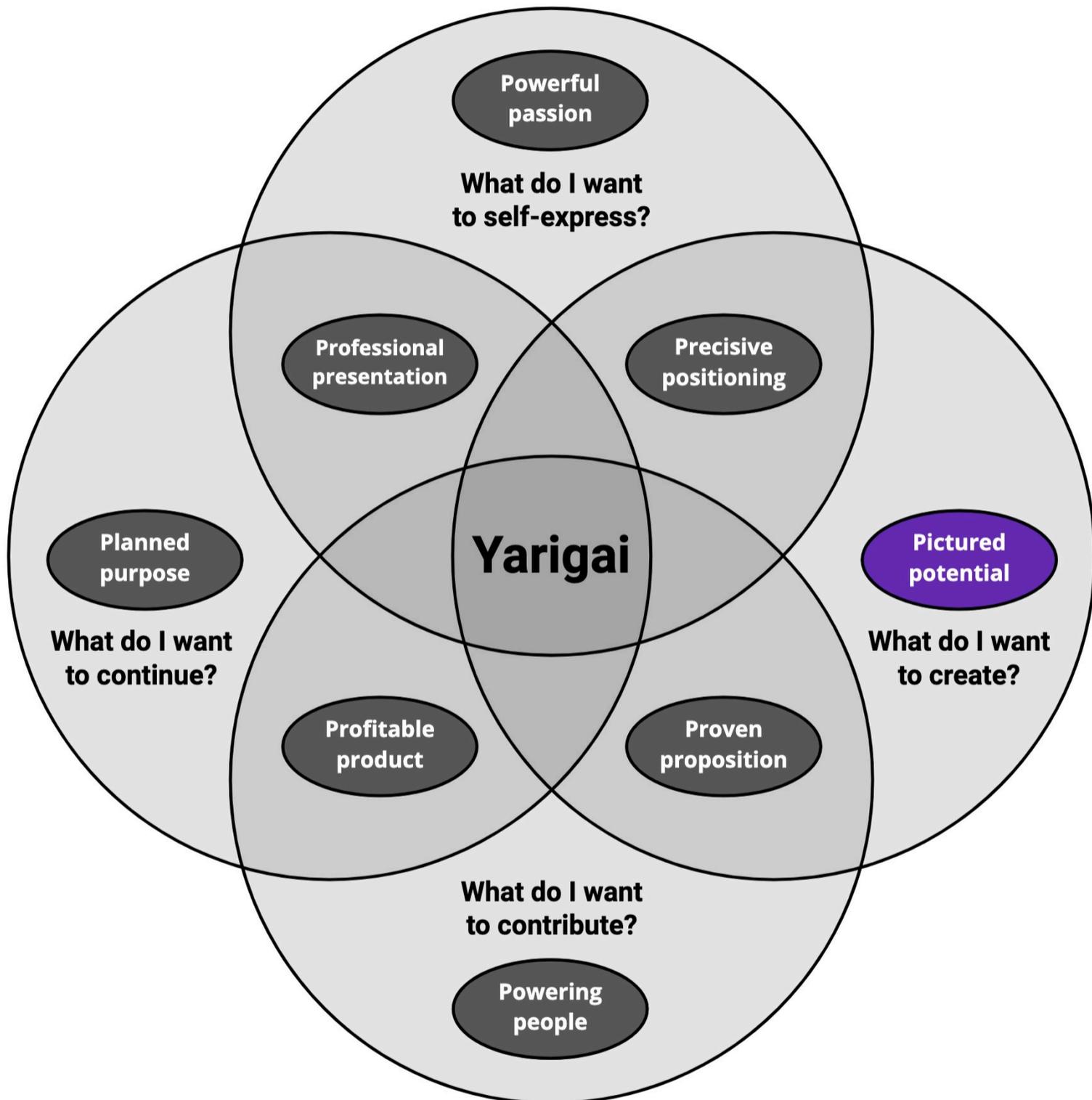
Based on the results, there are three conclusions you can draw regarding your hypothesis:

1. It has been invalidated: you're going to restart and adjust the experiment with advancing insight
2. It's interesting to learn more: you'll search for extra confirmation or deepen your insight
3. It has been validated: you continue testing other hypothesis and carry out the validated idea

# Part III - Personal transformation



# Focus 3. Having a pictured potential



*The pictured potential of the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introduction

Seeing potential in something or someone is essential for an entrepreneur. You see something which others may not see. It feels like having a golden nugget in your pocket. You intuitively feel how beautiful something can become. Then you visualise it so it comes to life. It's perfect if you can make your picture vivid and you feel strongly connected to it.

Imagination is a powerful skill for entrepreneurs. Your ability to see potential where others see only a blank page can be a springboard to success. Imagination allows us to think outside the box and come up with new ideas that may not have been considered before.

As a solo entrepreneur, it's important to not only see potential in your business ideas, but also in yourself. By envisioning what you want to achieve and who you want to become, you can tap into your full potential and bring your vision to life. This ability to see potential is what sets successful entrepreneurs apart.

Visualisation is a key tool for you to harness your potential. By imagining your desired outcome, both for your business and yourself, you can stay motivated and focused on your goals. It also helps you clarify your vision and make it easier to communicate to others.

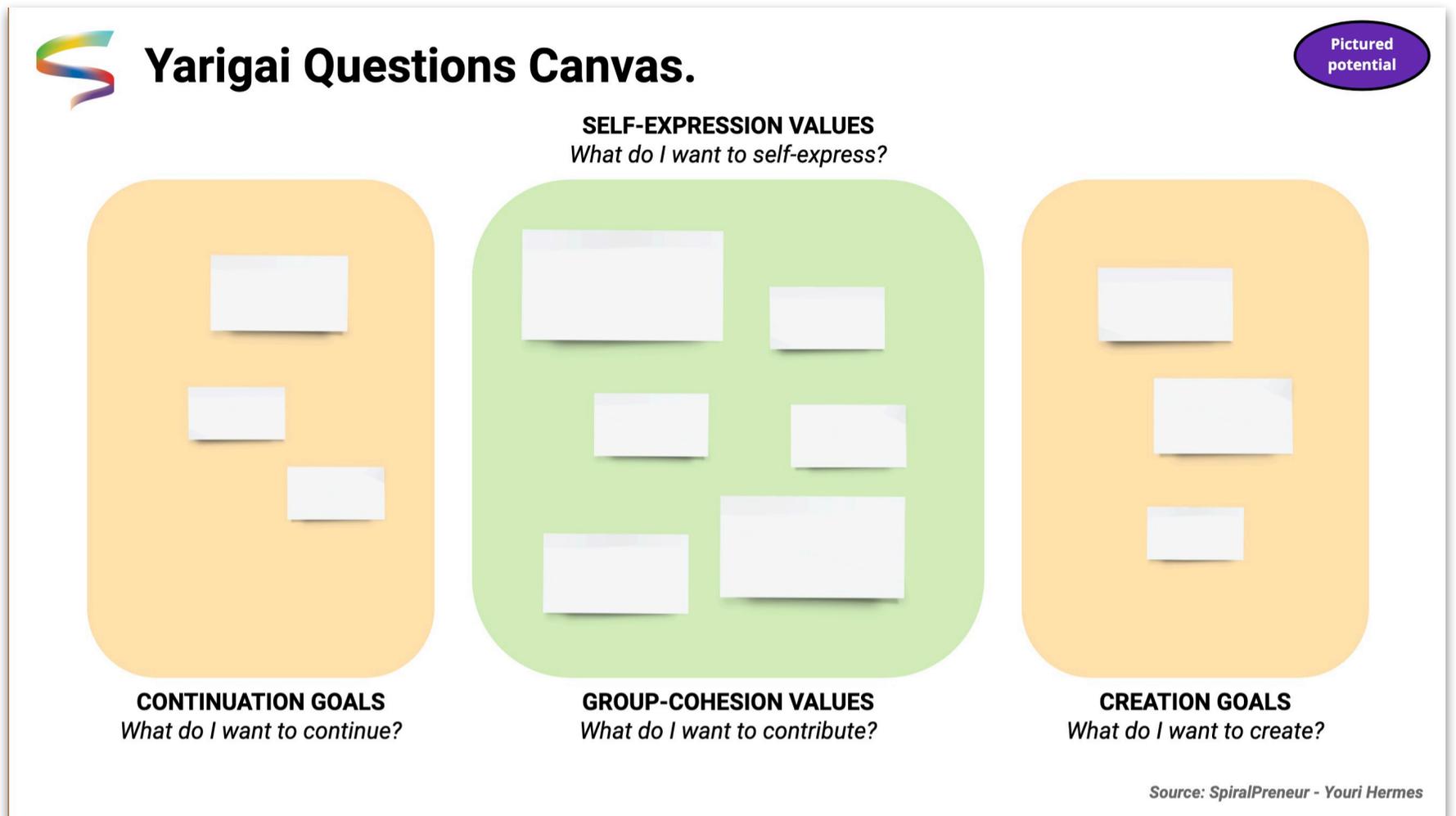
Once you see the potential of something, little can disturb you. You are strongly committed to utilising it. When other people are involved, you give them the feeling to work together for a "Holy Mission". There are less doubts which are limiting your energy towards bringing your picture alive.

Visualisation is the first step in creative thinking and can help you find new ways to solve problems and make decisions. When you visualise something, it's as if you're creating a mental image of what you want to happen.

You can also use visualisation to help motivate yourself when you feel stuck or unmotivated. If you have a goal that seems impossible at the moment, simply close your eyes and imagine yourself achieving it. Visualise what success will look like and how good it will feel.

Too many solo entrepreneurs can't see the potential in their own business because they don't believe in themselves enough. They think that their idea won't work or that people won't buy into it but this is simply not true. If you can picture it, you can achieve it. It's time to develop a pictured potential!

# Develop a pictured potential



## Introducing the Yarigai Questions Canvas

I developed a tool to connect your business goals to your core values. This will be insightful and helpful for determining your business focus. The tool is called the Yarigai Questions Canvas. It's a visual way to connect your goals and values so that you instantly see the systemic nature between those.

The questions connected to your core values part are: 'What do I want to self-express?' versus 'What do I want to contribute?'. An obsessive focus on the self-expression part will result in being too selfish. Whereas an unhealthy focus on the contribution part leads to neglecting your own health, social and financial needs. Both not the way to go.

The opposing questions connected to your main goals part are: 'What do I want to continue?' versus 'What do I want to create?'. Too much of the same leads to low energy, boredom or even bore-out. Too much focus on starting new challenges on the other hand leads to stress, overwork or burn-out.

By answering the Yarigai questions, you get insight in how to better align your goals with your key values. It makes you more aware of the connection between those two. By writing down what is most important to you, you may discover new goals. And by writing down your main goals, you may bring to the surface which is actually driving your goals. Let's cover the canvas in more detail and make it practical for you with a clear roadmap of 10 steps!

**Step 1. Which 5 values, related to yourself, are mainly driving you?**

This question is about getting your core values, related to what YOU want, to the surface. So I'm not talking about the values that you live by, like honesty, respect and loyalty.

The opposite of the self-expression values are the values aimed at others, like connection and compassion. We'll cover these kind of values in the next step, but first let's look at your values related to self-expression. Think about the values that motivate you to achieve what you personally want in life. How you would ideally express yourself.

A few examples of typical self-expression values are:

- Creativity: To express your creativity in many ways
- Courage: The willingness to speak up with candour when you have something important to say—even if it is unpopular or uncomfortable for others to hear
- Freedom: Live up to your own terms without having to conform to other people's standards.
- Self-awareness: To become more aware of who you are
- Happiness: To be happy as much as possible.

Other examples are power, confidence, domination, excellence, autonomy, self-development and innovation.

Often, these self-expression values are also partially related to group-cohesion. We'll cover the group-cohesion values, as mentioned earlier, in the next step. So if any of the values which pop up right now mostly belongs to group-cohesion, then save those for the next step. Because you want to place the value to which is belongs to most.

My own core values are warmth, immersion, playfulness and understanding as considerable self-expression values.

Now it's time for you to think about your core values related to expressing yourself.

## **Step 2. Which 5 values, related to others, are mainly driving you?**

Now that we've been looking at your core values related to self-expression, we want to also cover the other type of values. I'm talking about the values related to group-cohesion.

These kind of values are somehow connected to others, either individuals or groups. Group-cohesion values are not always easy to identify. They can be hidden from us or buried under certain beliefs that we hold. They can be things like "kindness" or "honesty" that sound obvious but can be hard to put into practice. They can also be more complex ideas like "respecting differences" or "leading by example" which takes some thought to define clearly.

A few examples of group-cohesion values are:

- Humility: Knowing that we are all equal in value, regardless of background or position.

- Inclusion: Being part of a community where diverse perspectives are valued and embraced.
- Commitment. A deep sense of loyalty to the team, its mission and its members' success.
- Trust: Having faith that you can rely on others for support and guidance.
- Openness: Willing to share ideas with others without fear of judgment or rejection.

Other examples are safety, stability, brotherhood, morality, responsibility, purpose, harmony, equality, sharing, acceptance, compassion and unity.

My personal motivations that are related to group-cohesion are aliveness, connection, curiosity and embodiment. Different words have different meanings for different people. You may probably define those values completely differently. That's why it's important to really ask yourself the question what you actually mean by the motivations you highly value. If love is important for you, what does it mean? Is there a word that gets more to the point? Those questions are important to ask yourself for each of your identified values.

Now it's time for you to think about your core values related to others.

### **Step 3. Which 3 values do you give too little attention to?**

We all have values. We make decisions and live our lives based on them. But when we get busy and distracted, it's easy to forget what really matters to us.

If you don't give your core values the attention they deserve, you risk losing sight of what really matters. You may find yourself waking up one day with a sense of dissatisfaction about your life or business.

If you had a hard time figuring out your core values in the previous steps, then there's a good chance that you've already neglected them. They might have been crowded out by other priorities, or they may have become invisible during periods when you weren't paying attention to them.

In that case, you want to ask yourself: What do I value most in life? What are my top priorities? As you reflect on these questions and consider your choices over time, you'll begin to see patterns emerging in your behaviour and attitudes. And your values become more clear.

Now take a moment to think about which one of your values you're giving too little attention to.

### **Step 4. Looking at all of the values you've written down, which 3 values are most important to you?**

Your core values can be anything, but they should be the ones that guide you in making the right business decisions and taking action. It's essential to have a set of core values that are deeply ingrained in who you are and what you believe.

They will help guide your business life and provide a framework for making decisions about what is good or bad for you, and what is worth pursuing and what is not. They will also help you make sense of who you are and why you do what you do.

But remember, just because something comes up as a core value doesn't mean it's a good one. There are usually quite a few things we value that actually don't lead us in the right direction. So if a core value keeps coming up — even though it may be one of those “negative” ones like “I hate change” or “I don't want to work hard” — pay attention to it and try to figure out what's behind it.

Which 3 core values are most important to you?

### **Step 5. Which 3 incremental business goals (aimed at improving/increasing) are most important to you?**

Goals related to improving or increasing something are known as “incremental” goals, like increasing market share or improving customer service. This can also include goals which are aimed at decreasing and reducing something, like decreasing your overall costs or reducing the product defects.

Incremental goals are specific and measurable. They can be short-term, mid-term and long-term and can be set for example by drawing on the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timed).

Examples of incremental business goals include:

- Increasing sales by 10% over a period of one year.
- Decreasing costs by 10% over a period of six months.
- Increasing profits by 20% in 12 months time.

Now it's time for you to determine your 3 most important incremental business goals.

### **Step 6. Which 1 incremental business goal (aimed at improving/increasing) is most important to you?**

In the previous step you've chosen your top-3 incremental business goals. Now it's time to select your most important one. Because as you'll understand, focusing on just 1 goal increases the likelihood of achieving it tremendously. That's because you can build up momentum much quicker and get results sooner. This quick feedback loop will contribute to an upward spiral, from getting more motivated (because of the good results) to getting quicker to even better results.

### **Step 7. Which values are driving your most important incremental business goal (aimed at improving/increasing)?**

In the first two steps you worked out your top-5 values for both those related to self-expression and group-cohesion. Now you want to ask yourself which of those values are actually the driver behind your most important goal. If it's not connected to any of your

values, you either want to add different core values (which you forgot about earlier) or choose a different business goal (which is strongly connected to some of your core values).

### **Step 8. Which 3 goals, aimed at starting something you don't have or do yet, are most important to you?**

It is important for any business to be innovative and to keep up with the latest trends in your industry. But it can also be difficult for a small business to make this happen. Especially when you are just starting out or if you don't have a team, you do not have the cash flow or the manpower to do everything you want for your business. That's why it's important to look at your most important goals related to creation and focus on just those.

Here are some business goals related to starting something new:

- Create a prototype for an innovative product idea
- Create a new brand for your company or business
- Launch a new marketing campaign for your business
- Build a website from scratch or redesign your current one
- Write a book about a new method you invented

Take some time now to determine your 3 most important business goals which are aimed at starting something you don't have or do yet.

### **Step 9. What goal, aimed at starting something you don't have or do yet, is most important to you?**

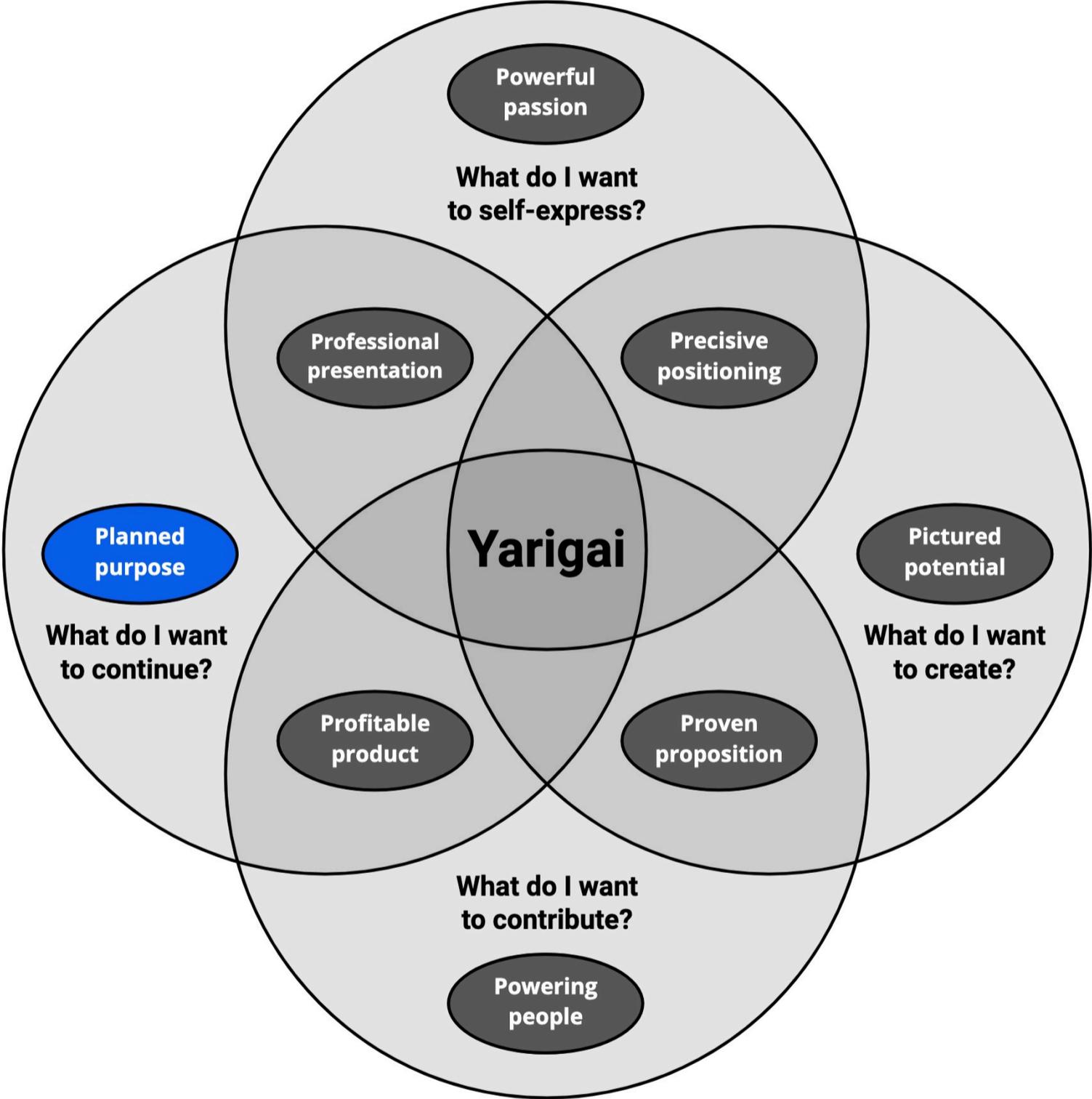
This step is similar as step 6, except that it's related to your top-3 goals aimed at starting something you don't have or do yet (instead of your goals aimed at improving or increasing something). Look at your answers of the previous step and pick your most important goal. Again, this will help you with getting results way quicker so you'll stay more motivated along the way of realising it.

### **Step 10. What goal, aimed at starting something you don't have or do yet, is most important to you?**

Just like the previous step, this step also sounds familiar to you. That's because we already covered which values are driving your most important incremental goal. But again, this step is not related to your incremental goals. It's connected to your goals regarding starting something new. This having said, which values (which you worked out in step 1 and 2) are driving your most important goal (which you picked in the previous step)?

Alright, by now you've worked out all of the steps of the Yarigai Questions. This will certainly help you go get more focus and be more certain on what to focus on in the first place. It's recommended to repeat these steps once every half year. Your core values could change a big deal after achieving certain goals (and therefore fulfilling certain values). That's why you want to update those values (and connected to that your business goals) regularly.

# Focus 4. Having a planned purpose



*The planned purpose of the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introduction

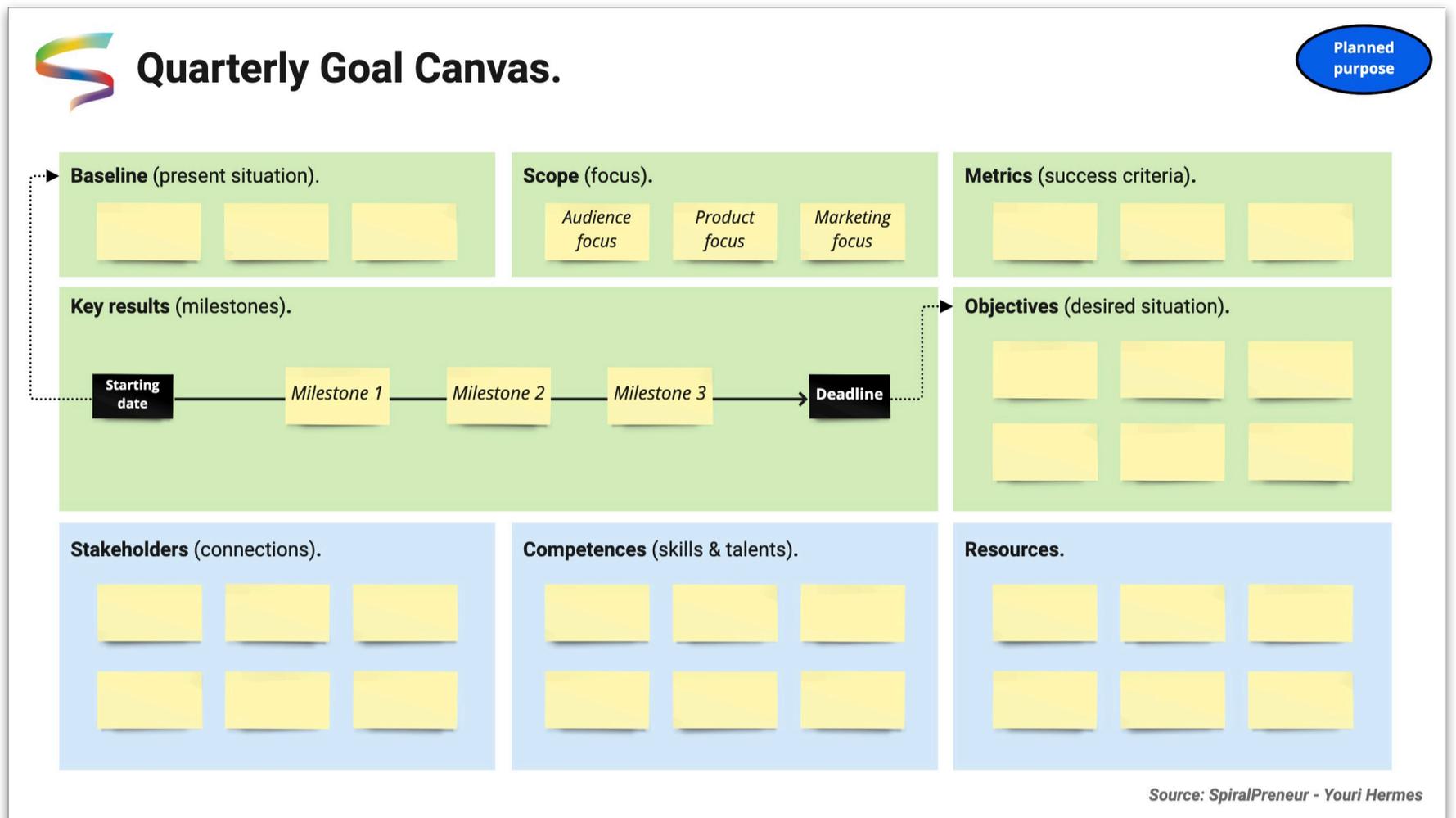
*"If you chase two rabbits, you will lose them both."* — Leonard Nimoy

Entrepreneurship is about being fine with moving through uncertainty. But if you have no clear goals in mind at all, you're uncertain in a world that is already uncertain. If you do have a goal, you can find a way through the land of uncertainty. You'll start attracting things you need because you're more aware of the necessary resources to get where you want to be. You'll gain new insights along the way. Those insights will provide you with more clarity about what you want. It's not about knowing what you want so you can then take action upon it. It's really the other way around. You want to start out and keep moving. For this, you want to have clear goals in mind. This will be a powerful direction. It will help you to find solutions you would otherwise not explore.

As a solo entrepreneur, it's crucial to not add too many goals make well-crafted plans for all of those. You want to have a short-term focus instead. Your vision and mission can be very long term related, but your goals really shouldn't. I found that the quarterly goals are the most effective and natural goals. It's the perfect duration: not too long or too short. It gives you plenty of room to redirect your path or even completely pivot. A yearly goal however invites rigidity. That's why I only work with quarterly goals: both for my clients and myself. In case you do have a clear yearly goal in mind already, you want to break it down into smaller, more manageable chunks and get started with those first.

If you know what you want, and you have a structured plan for achieving it, then you can start working towards your purpose in a structured and organised way. This will help keep your priorities straight and help you avoid getting sidetracked or caught up in making plans that aren't going to take you anywhere. Having a plan will also help keep the motivation going, especially when things get tough. Let's now develop a planned purpose yourself!

# Develop a planned purpose



## Introducing the Quarterly Goal Canvas

This canvas helps you to determine your focus for the next three months. You'll be splitting up your quarterly goal into manageable milestones and make your goal very concrete.

I probably don't have to tell you why a focus is important to make quick progress towards your goals. This canvas will not only bring the best focus to the surface, but also strengthens your focus. Because every time when you'll be reviewing the canvas, you'll be reminded again of your main short-term goal.

This focus will help you to prevent yourself from wasting your valuable resources (like time and money). You'll direct it to the areas which will be most fruitful regarding your business ambitions. You'll be more likely to manage your time efficiently which will result in more progress on a shorter period of time. Let's go through the 8 steps.

### Step 1. Define your objectives (desired situation)

What do you want to achieve after a quarter from now? What will be both realistic and ambitious to have realised by then? I say realistic because it will be demotivating and disappointing to set the bar too high for yourself and not being able to reach it.

An example for this part could be to build an online learning environment which will be used by some people. This sounds vague and could mean many things. That's why you'll later define what you mean by this. So that it can be measured. But before doing this, you want to set a clear scope in the next step.

## **Step 2. Define your scope (focus)**

The canvas is all about getting more focus. So knowing exactly on what you will and will not be putting your attention on for the next three months. Having a clearly defined scope will definitely contribute to that. This could be focused on the audience you'll be focusing on, the product you'll be mainly promoting or the marketing channel which you'll primarily use. It can also work to exclude things from your focus if you're not too sure yet what you'll be including into your scope.

In the situation of building an online learning environment, you could decide to focus on online only (instead of physical or a blended form). Next to this, you could already determine to focus on B2C (individuals) instead of B2B or both. Also, you can predetermine that you want to offer content exclusively to paid members (instead of just making it free to the public). And you can choose to first focus on the local market before directly going international (and using English as the main language). These are just a few examples of things you can already decide to start with more focus.

## **Step 3. Specify your metrics (success criteria)**

As I already pointed out in the first step, this is very important. Because how would you otherwise measure if you've accomplished your objectives. Or if you're on the right track. For every objective you came up with in the first step, ask yourself how you can measure its progress. For some objectives you may have more than just one metric.

Let's give you some examples. To stick with the example in the first step, you could choose 100 free and 10 paid users as a metric for deciding if you built a learning environment which will be used by quite some people. In addition to that, you can measure if you sold 30 online courses. Or measure if you've published at least 10 pieces of content on your online learning environment. These are just a handful of examples to measure if and to what extent you reached your objective(s).

## **Step 4. Define your baseline (present situation)**

What's your status quo looking at what you want to achieve? It's hard to define this by using subjective language. That's why you want to mainly look at the previous step and ask yourself for each metric: what do I currently score on this? What is my current progress?

Looking at the examples in the previous step, you may already have 50 free members (which can be converted into paid members), 2 created courses (which can be sold) and 5 published articles. You want to name all of this so that you know where you were coming from. It gives you a total picture and reminds you to stay more realistic looking at your desired situation by taking into account your present situation.

## **Step 5. List the key results (milestones)**

As mentioned earlier, you want to break down your quarterly goal into manageable parts. Ask yourself the question which milestones would be celebration-worthy. And put these milestones in the right sequence of the road from your present to your desired situation. When thinking out your milestones, you also want to write down the starting date (ideally

today if that's possible) and deadline (after 3 months from now). In between, you work out the necessary steps to get there. Limit yourself to 2 to 5 milestones so that your listed milestones are essential and noteworthy to mention (and celebrate).

Some examples for the road to building an online learning environment for quite some users, would be to set up your own learning environment, launch your website (and landing page), publish 10 new articles, having acquired your first paid customer and so on. These milestones can but doesn't have to be similar as your success criteria which you specified in the third step.

### **Step 6. List your key stakeholders**

In this step you want to think about all stakeholders which are essential for achieving your objective(s). This is very important to work out because it will remind you of connections you may want to forge or utilise. And together with other people, you'll increase your odds of succeeding big time.

Examples for stakeholders you could think of are a business coach, accountability partner, investor, affiliate ambassador, colleague entrepreneur, you name it. To get inspiration for people you want to list in this step, I'd recommend you to scroll through your contacts list on your phone and LinkedIn.

### **Step 7. List the key competences**

I deliberately write "the" instead of "your" key competences. That's because you want to think of all the needed capabilities and skills to get to your desired situation. Including those competences which you won't have or want to develop yourself. You can decide to delegate those to the stakeholders which you identified in the previous step. Talking about delegation, this is in fact already an example of a competence you could list in this step. Because this may be essential to reach your goal.

Other examples for competences would be software development (for the online learning environment), marketing (to gather new leads into your funnel), sales (to convert your existing leads) and financial planning. Try to limit yourself to the most essential activities so that the canvas remains clear and really gets to the heart of the matter.

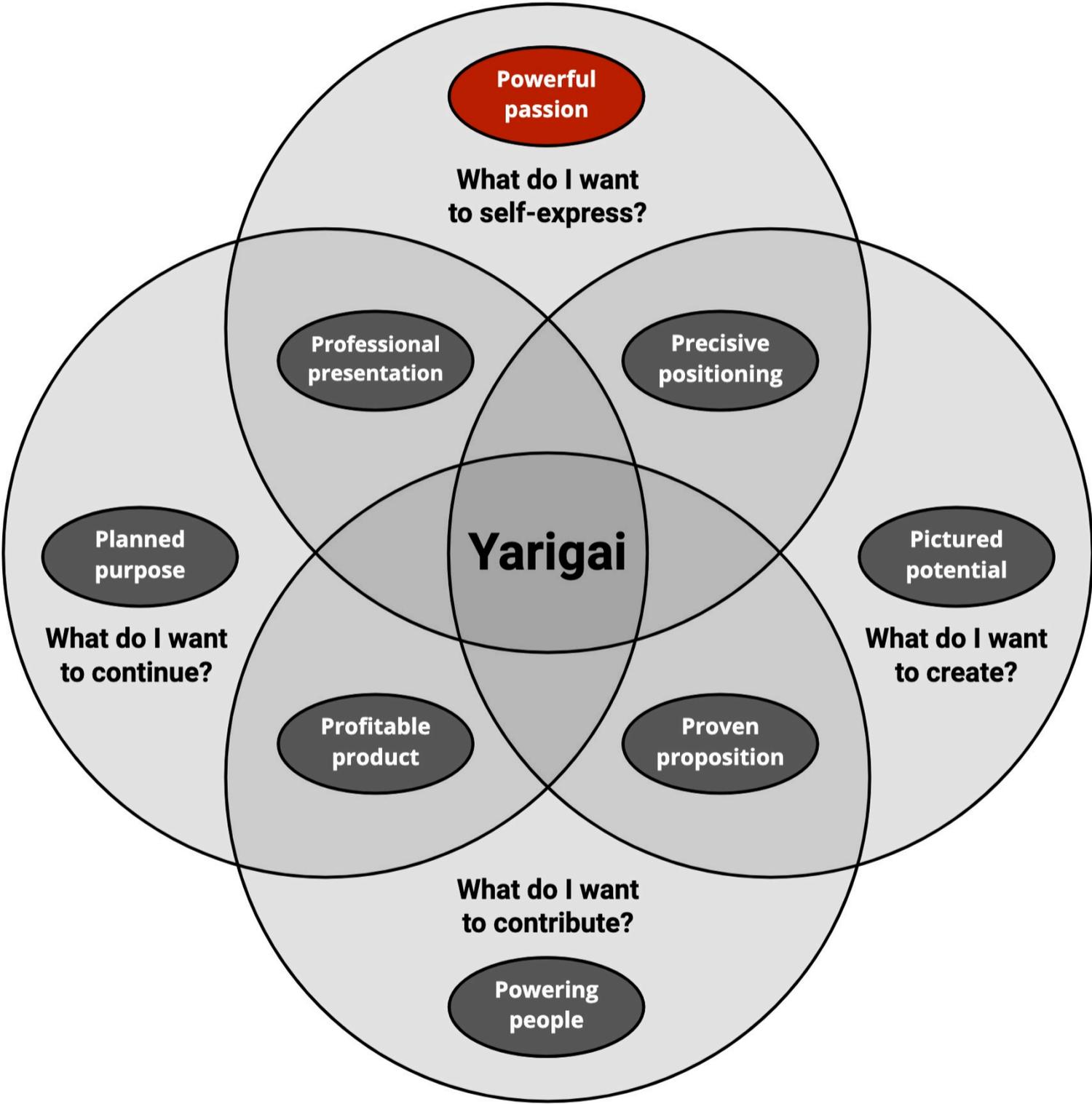
### **Step 8. List the key resources**

If you're familiar with the Business Model Canvas, the last three steps would sound very familiar to you as well. You may question if it's needed to go through these steps if you already once worked out the Business Model Canvas. The answer is yes. Because you want to limit the answers of the last three steps to your quarterly goal canvas.

In this step, you want to list all remaining necessities (besides stakeholders and competences) to accomplish your objectives. This could be literally anything, from having a clearly defined value proposition to have a registered trademark law. Other examples would be an email list, a website, a clear target audience, sufficient cash flow for the needed expenses or your available time.

You've now filled in the Quarterly Goal Canvas. You want to review this canvas regularly so that you keep reminding yourself of the things you need to focus on and utilise. By repeatedly doing this, you'll be more likely to stay on track and reach your desired business situation. It will help you to stay focused on that which matters most with your business for now. Also, review it when you're doubting your day-to-day activities and when you're losing motivation.

# Focus 5. Having a powerful passion



*The powerful passion of the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introduction

Passion is an incredible force that can fuel your entrepreneurial journey. It's the driving force that gets you out of bed in the morning<sup>7</sup>, keeps you going through long days and sleepless nights, and pushes you to make your dreams a reality.

As a solopreneur, having a powerful passion is essential to your success. It's what gives you the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and face challenges head-on. With passion as your guide, you can overcome obstacles, deal with difficult situations, and push through challenges that would otherwise be too much for someone without that same kind of energy or drive.

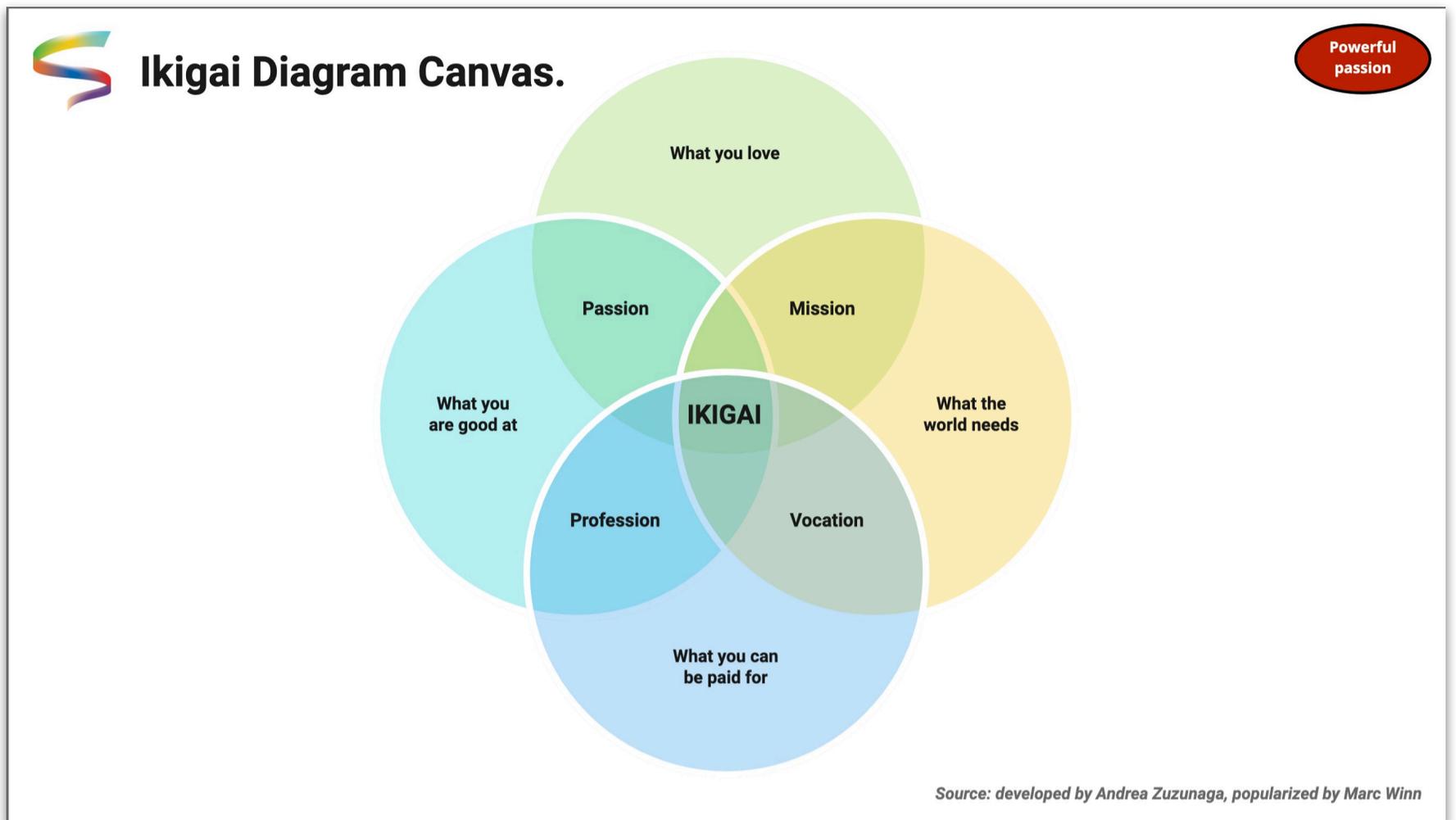
Passion isn't just important for you, though. It's contagious, and it can inspire and excite those around you. Passionate entrepreneurs are engaged with their businesses, excited about what they do, and eager to share their journey with others.

In short, passion is what separates the entrepreneurs who make it from those who don't. It's the driving force that keeps you going when things get tough, and the reason why you started your own business in the first place. Without passion, it's difficult to find the motivation to do what it takes to achieve your goals and dreams. But with passion on your side, you can accomplish anything you set your mind to.

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<sup>7</sup> The reason for waking up is often how the Japanese Ikigai gets defined. In this subchapter we'll already share the Ikigai tool. If you are interested in learning more about Ikigai, go to appendix B.

# Develop a powerful passion



## Introducing the Ikigai Diagram Canvas

The Ikigai Diagram Canvas is a tool that helps individuals find their purpose in life by combining what they love, what they are good at, what the world needs, and what they can be paid for. The concept originates from Japan. It became popular when Marc Winn Westernised it by connecting an already existing diagram (developed by Andrea Zuzunaga) to it. Ikigai literally means the value or reason (kai) of living (ikiru). It's something worthwhile. Something that gives you a feeling of purpose in life. It's your reason to wake up in the morning.

By putting the Ikigai diagram into practice you'll provide yourself with the needed motivation to get to your desired situation. Let's go through this diagram by covering 4 steps.

### Step 1. What do you love to do?

In this step, reflect on the things you enjoy or even love. Think about what activities bring you the most joy and fulfillment, regardless of whether you're getting paid for it or not. Write down these activities as they will play a crucial role in helping you find your Ikigai.

It works best to bring this question to the present moment. Meaning, what do you already do what you like or even love? And for your paid activities, you want to ask yourself if you would maintain the activity in case you wouldn't get paid for it.

To give you a few examples, I'll share what I love to do. I like self-reflection very much. That's why I'm journaling for many years on a consistent basis. I love to connect with like-minded entrepreneurs. That's why I go to co-working spaces and network events almost every day. I also get a lot of energy from comprehending philosophical theories. That's why I read about those quite often and love to write about it as well. Combining existing concepts and organising those is something I'm passionate about as well. It's part of my nature to organise information about psychological, philosophical and entrepreneurial subjects through mindmaps. I'm fond of delicious Thai food, including cooking it myself. I eat Thai at least once a week and even consider to stay in Thailand for some time to learn more about the food. What I also love is to be in nature and travel. That's why I like to go to the woods and explore new cultures.

## **Step 2. What are you good at?**

This step involves identifying your skills and abilities. Consider both what you think you're good at and what others see as your strengths. Write down these skills and abilities to see how they might intersect with your passions from step 1.

For me, I've written down that I'm a strong listener. It comes naturally to me to deeply listen to other people and be curious about learning more about their motivations. Most things of what I love to do are also aligned with my competences. For example, to make complex theories more accessible. I do this by utilising my passion for combining existing concepts and organising those in a more accessible way. Sometimes through making mindmaps and other times through making infographics, which are also both skills.

## **Step 3. What does the world need?**

In this step, think about the needs of your environment and the impact you'd like to make. Consider how you'd like to contribute to the world and what problems you'd like to solve. Write down these ideas and initiatives and see how they align with your passions and skills.

The original question ('What does the world need?') attached to the Ikigai diagram can come across as very big. It works to chunk it down to a smaller piece. What does your local environment need?

For me, this question really boils down to my personal vision (what I believe the world needs) and mission (how I'd specifically like to contribute to my vision). I shared this in the beginning of this guide already. I'm also sharing it below in case you've missed it.

I believe our world system is sick. The medicine would be to match people's values to their environment in a more healthy way. So that their actions are no longer destructive for people or planet. This can be provided by strong visionary business leaders who know how to bring their meaningful initiatives to life.

It's my mission to facilitate those purpose-driven entrepreneurs. For this, we found it is most effective to use an integral approach. That's why I've intertwined proven models from organisational psychology into our business programs, like Spiral Dynamics. Our integral

approach provides you with the right structure, focus and clarity to build a thriving and meaningful business.

## **Step 4. For what can I get paid for?**

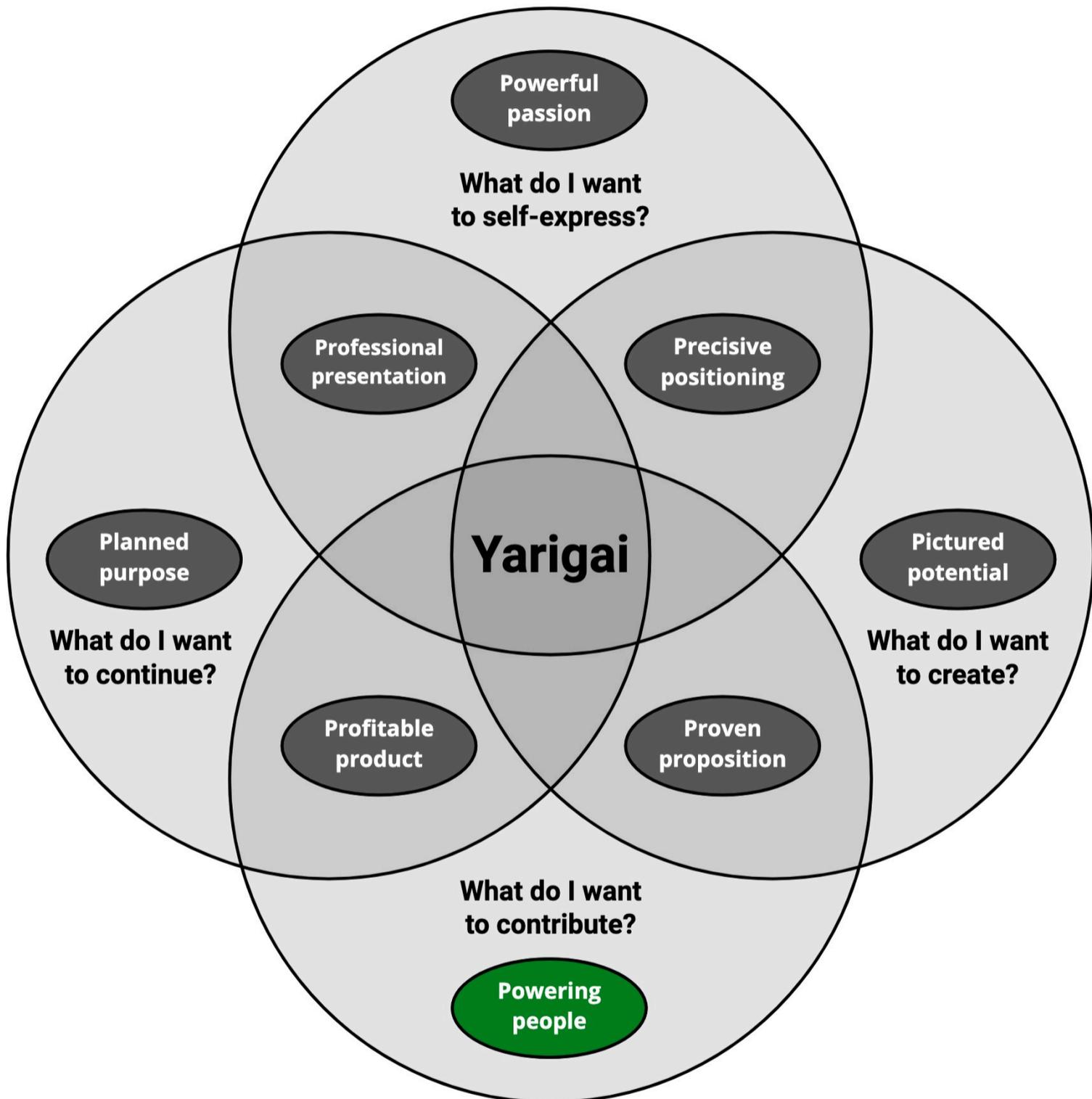
In this step, think about what you're currently paid for or what you aspire to be paid for in the future. If financial compensation isn't a priority (due to retirement or financial independence), consider activities with alternative compensations, such as fulfillment or recognition.

Again, just like the other questions, you don't want to overthink this question. That's why it usually works best to not make all kinds of assumptions about the future, like 'I may like to get paid for x or y one day.' The most reliable conclusions regarding what you like to get paid for is of course from the things you already tried out.

By combining the answers from these four steps, you'll have a clear picture of a meaningful occupation. This will help you make informed decisions about your future and give you the motivation to work towards your goals.

Let's give you an example. I'm getting paid for the products I sell at my business (SpiralPreneur). My main income stream is the 6- and 12-month business program I offer. I also earn a bit through selling ringtones and being an affiliate for certain types of software. There are also a few areas I'd like to earn money in but haven't found the time yet to realise. This can of course also be included.

# Focus 6. Having powered people



*The powering people of the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introduction

When you feel like you're truly in sync with yourself, it's a powerful feeling. It's a state of being where your beliefs, values, capabilities, behaviours, environment and purpose are all working together towards a common goal. It's what psychologists refer to as a state of congruence, where everything about you is in alignment. This allows you to be more effective, efficient, and authentic in your personal and professional life.

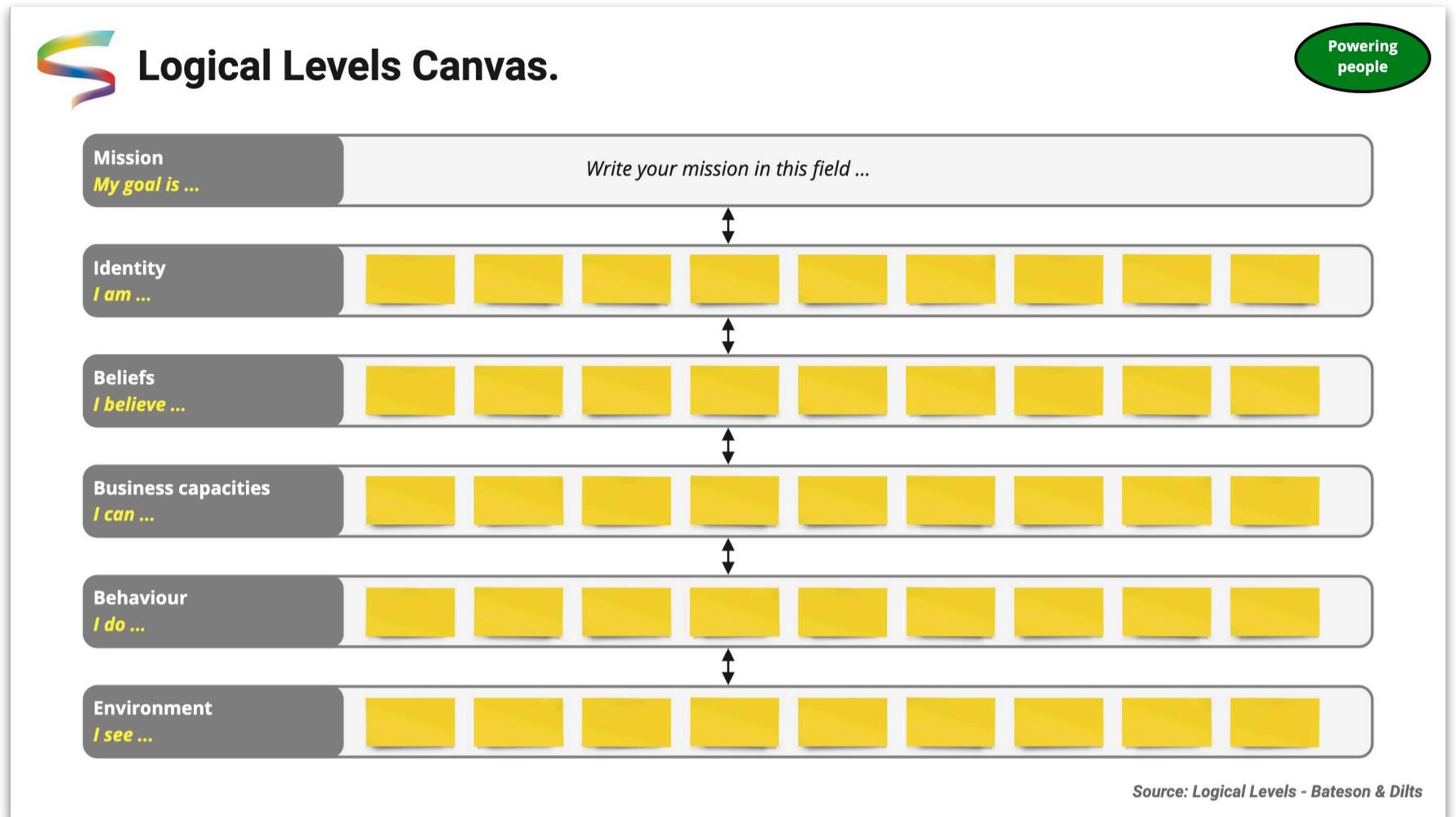
Congruence in your life is about having an internal sense of integrity and clarity. When your beliefs and values match your actions, you can live with a sense of inner peace and fulfillment. When your capabilities match your purpose, you can achieve a sense of mastery and progress. When your behaviours align with your environment, you can feel a sense of comfort and ease.

Living a congruent life means being true to yourself and your identity. When you know who you are and what you stand for, it's easier to make decisions and take actions that align with your goals, values, and identity. This can lead to greater success and satisfaction in your personal and professional life.

When you're not congruent, you may feel like you're fighting against yourself. You may experience self-doubt, confusion, or a lack of direction. Your actions may not align with your values or goals, leading to a sense of frustration or disappointment.

So let's develop more congruence right away!

# Develop people empowerment



## Introducing the Logical Levels Canvas

The Logical Levels of Learning and Change (in short LLL) is a theory developed by Robert Dilts in 1983. It was originally based on Bateson's Logical Levels, which can be used to help people understand how they learn and change. The model is made up of six levels. Each level builds on the previous one.

The LLL model is often used in business because it helps companies develop training programs that align with their employees' needs and increase productivity. As a small business owner however, it can be of tremendous value as well. Because you can fully apply it on yourself and reap the fruits from doing so. Understanding the structure of Dilts' logical levels can help you take steps toward achieving your goals or intentions. You can view it as a psychological structure that helps you manage yourself and your business.

Understanding the world of business, entrepreneurship and leadership is a lot like understanding the human body. You can't just go in with a scalpel and cut out whatever organ you want in order to fix something. For example, if someone has high blood pressure and it's caused by an enlarged heart, then simply reducing the heart size wouldn't be enough because this would cause other problems. Instead, you need to address all the related issues such as diet and exercise that are causing excessive stress on the heart (and therefore increasing its size).

What I'm saying here is that there aren't any quick fixes when it comes to building a successful business or being a great leader. Instead, it requires constant attention at each level of your organisation so that nothing falls through the cracks.

Let's now go through the 6 steps.

### **Step 1. Define your environment**

The first level of the Dilts Model is the environment. The environment is what you see and interact with, which includes your office and all of the equipment you use to conduct business. It also includes people, who are part of your business whether they work for you directly or not. This level also includes any external factors that influence you or your stakeholders (e.g., laws or regulations).

I'll give you some examples from my personal life. Because of the very dynamic nature of the environment, it probably have been changed the moment you read this. The higher you go through the Logical Levels, the less fluid it gets. Your mission probably will stay the same after half a year from now, whereas your environment can look quite different.

My environment contains an inspiring co-working place in Amsterdam. Not in the centre of Amsterdam since that's a bit too crowded for me to work with full focus on my business. Especially when you're sensitive to energetic fields, you want to be aware of the effects of your direct environment. Something else I've put down in my environment is having nature around me. That's already the case to a certain degree (since I'm living in Amsterdam North instead of in the centre), but I have the need for much more nature. That can be fulfilled by going on vacation from time to time. But it may not be sustainable. That way, I might need to look for spot in which there is more nature around me. Nature makes me feel more at ease and alive so I automatically become more creative. However, living in a village far from the inhabited world wouldn't work for me. The hustle and bustle of the city has to be nearby.

Your personal environment of course very much influences your business environment. That's why you don't want to limit yourself to your workplace alone. Something else I value is having a comfortable living place where I really feel at home. Fortunately, that's the case for me at the moment. If that's not the case for you, this has to be your biggest priority.

You can also think about the people you surround yourself with. The kind of relationship you have with family members and the amount of importance you give to that. Maybe you want to mention the type of clients you have at the moment, like those whom are giving you a headache or actually those who whom seem very much aligned with what you have to offer.

### **Step 2. Define your behaviour**

Behaviour is the way we act on a daily basis and how we think and behave towards other people and ourselves, as well as how we handle our emotions.

Business habits are by far the biggest part of your behaviour in business. These habits can be broken down into two categories: good/productive or bad/unproductive. They are formed through repetition. They can be changed by using positive reinforcement techniques such

as goal-setting. Or creating a reward system for yourself if you do something well or reach a specific goal (or even breaking bad habits).

Examples are getting up at 7am every day, eating lunch at 13.00 every day and reading a book once every week. I personally love to meditate every day, sometimes for hours. Next to that, I really like to travel and work on my business. Ideally, both at the same time. I know, impossible combination. They call it a “workation”. Organising workations continuously would make you a digital nomad. But then we actually already get to the identity level covered in step 5.

Of course, there are so many things you can think of when going through your behaviours. You want to limit yourself to the main buckets which hold your most important actions or desires. The bucket of working on your business may be a little too big. Personally, I split that up in my main activities, which is writing this guide, scouting potential matches for my programs and giving the coaching.

You can also already make some connections with the previous step. As I already mentioned, I value an inspiring co-working place. If I translate that to my behaviour, it would be to connect with like-minded entrepreneurs. I also value nature all around me. This desired environment translates to my behaviour of going to the woods. My need for living nearby the hustle and bustle of the city translates to occasionally walking downtown and enjoying crowds of people and the architecture.

### **Step 3. Define your business capabilities**

Capabilities are the skills, knowledge and resources that enable you to do what you need to do. They're the things that make your business unique and give you a competitive edge.

A good example of this is McDonalds, who have built their entire brand around their capabilities in fast food service delivery. They know how to make a burger quickly – and at scale – which makes them very efficient at feeding large numbers of people with little effort on their part (and minimal mess). This capability has enabled them to open thousands of locations around the world; they've mastered the art of quick service dining so well over time that they can now be found just about anywhere you might want a cheap meal in a hurry.

But you are no McDonalds of course. You have a small business and are just by yourself. So let me give you some personal examples as solopreneur myself. Again, I can connect it to my behaviour. My behaviour of connecting with like-minded entrepreneurs meets my capacities of holding space and facilitating a strong connection. My behaviour of writing this guide is connected to skills such as analysing processes, coming up with new concepts and connecting different theories from different fields. Skills connected to my behaviour of looking for new clients are the ability to sell services naturally and undoubtedly and to outsource certain business processes. My behaviour of coaching people is connected to my skill of moving people through providing them with the right structure and focus. At first glance, it may seem far-fetched to connect my behaviour of travelling all around the world. But even for this, a skill can be attached to it. In my case that would be to adapt quickly to

new situations. You don't necessarily have to connect each of your behaviours to a skill. But it can certainly help you to get your inspiration flowing.

#### **Step 4. Define your business beliefs**

Beliefs are the foundation of your business. Just like the previous discussed levels of behaviour and environment, beliefs can be healthy or unhealthy in nature. The key here is to bring them into alignment with what you want to achieve as a business owner: if they don't support your intentions, then it's time to re-think and re-align them.

If you for example have the belief that people in a business context should pay for what they receive, then it is likely that all of your customers will be paying customers. Your behaviour would be to ask what you think it's worth instead of downgrading it through discounts. If, on the other hand, you believe that everyone should be able to get free stuff whenever they want it, then most likely only people who can't afford to buy anything will be interested in buying from you—and they probably won't buy much.

Level 4 is where we sit down and figure out what our beliefs really are when applied to our business model. What do you believe about yourself, your products and pricing, the customers and remaining business environment and your personal situation?

It's challenging to come up with your most important beliefs. Especially those which are harmful are usually hidden. They are in your blind spot so you need to dive into yourself more deeply or consult a professional to guide you through this process. Maybe you already got a few limiting beliefs to the surface through for example journal exercises. What you then want to do is not formulate the belief in a limiting way. Instead, you want to formulate it in an empowering way. Now, every time when you check-in on your beliefs, you get reminded by the belief you want to replace it with. This will stimulate positive enforcement. In other words, write down beliefs you wish were true. For example, to be enough and complete as you already are.

Let me also share some beliefs from myself. I've written down that I'm a strong and intuitive speaker about topics I'm passionate about. I also stated that all I can do is to facilitate people through their change. I cannot make the change for them. Next to this, I wrote that it's totally okay to make use of the expertise of other people. I don't have to do it all myself. More sales type of beliefs I formulated is that I can effortlessly earn €10.000 every month from doing what I love. And that I naturally attract the right clients at the exact right moment.

#### **Step 5. Define your identity**

This is the level where you have the ability to see yourself and your business as a complete entity. It's a critical level because it's where you define who you are and how others view you. It's also important because it's where beliefs such as "I am an excellent salesperson" get formed, which influences all other levels.

Identity can be defined as the way you see yourself in terms of your own uniqueness, characteristics and social standing when compared with other people or groups within society. Our identities are shaped by our experiences growing up; our life lessons learned

along the way; successes achieved; failures overcome; goals achieved or not achieved for reasons beyond our control; relationships with others that impact us emotionally as well as physically (family members); and so on. They are formed over time and can be either a big obstacle or resource along your way. That's why it's crucial to have a clear view on your identifications.

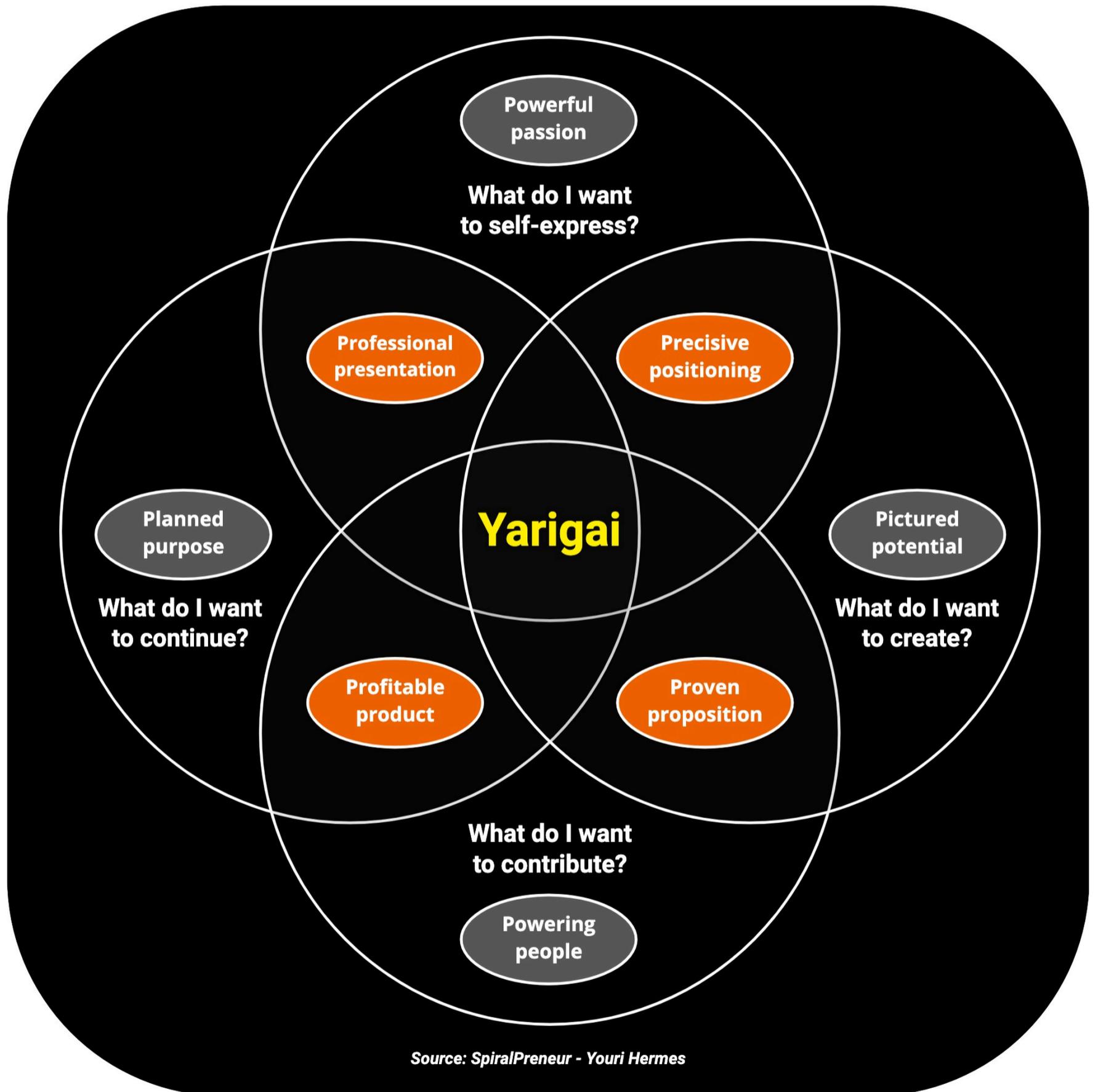
Let me give you some examples from my situation. Please note that I'm not identifying with this full enumeration completely yet. But there is definitely the will to develop it. I'm a leading expert on purpose-driven entrepreneurship. I'm a credible consultant and an excellent business coach. Also, I'm a pragmatic and successful spiralpreneur.

## **Step 6. Define your business purpose & mission**

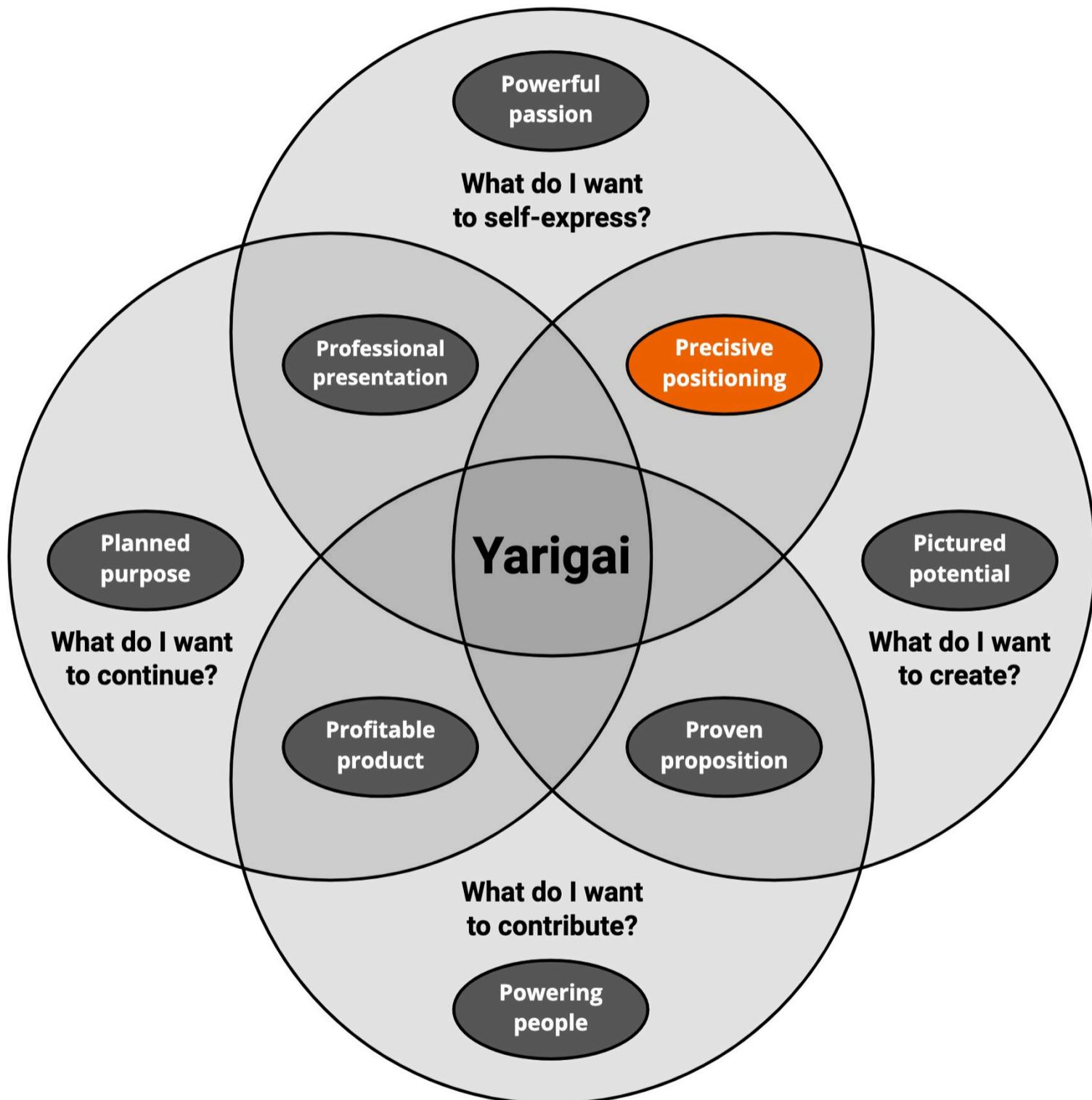
Why are you in business? What's your purpose? What is your mission and vision? If you're struggling to answer these questions, try asking yourself why it is that you do what you do. Do you have a genuine passion for the products or services that make up your business model? Is there something bigger than yourself at play here—a true calling that drives not just how but why you operate each day?

The purpose of your business is the reason you started it. The mission of your business is what you want to achieve with that purpose. What are the results you want to achieve? What do you hope to accomplish with this particular business? In other words, what do customers get out of it? You can formulate it into whatever you like. Maybe it works best to formulate it in a clearly defined goal. Maybe you want to keep it a bit more vague because by doing so, you feel more strongly connected to it on an emotional level. Just try to not make it too complex and well-thought-out with your ratio. Also, feel it. If you don't feel it, take some time to let it emerge within you. There is no hurry.

# Part IV - Business transformation



# Focus 7. Having a precise positioning



*The precise positioning of the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introduction

Having a clear and precise positioning for your business is important for several reasons. First and foremost, it helps you stand out in the market and differentiate your business from competitors. This is especially important if you operate in a crowded or competitive industry.

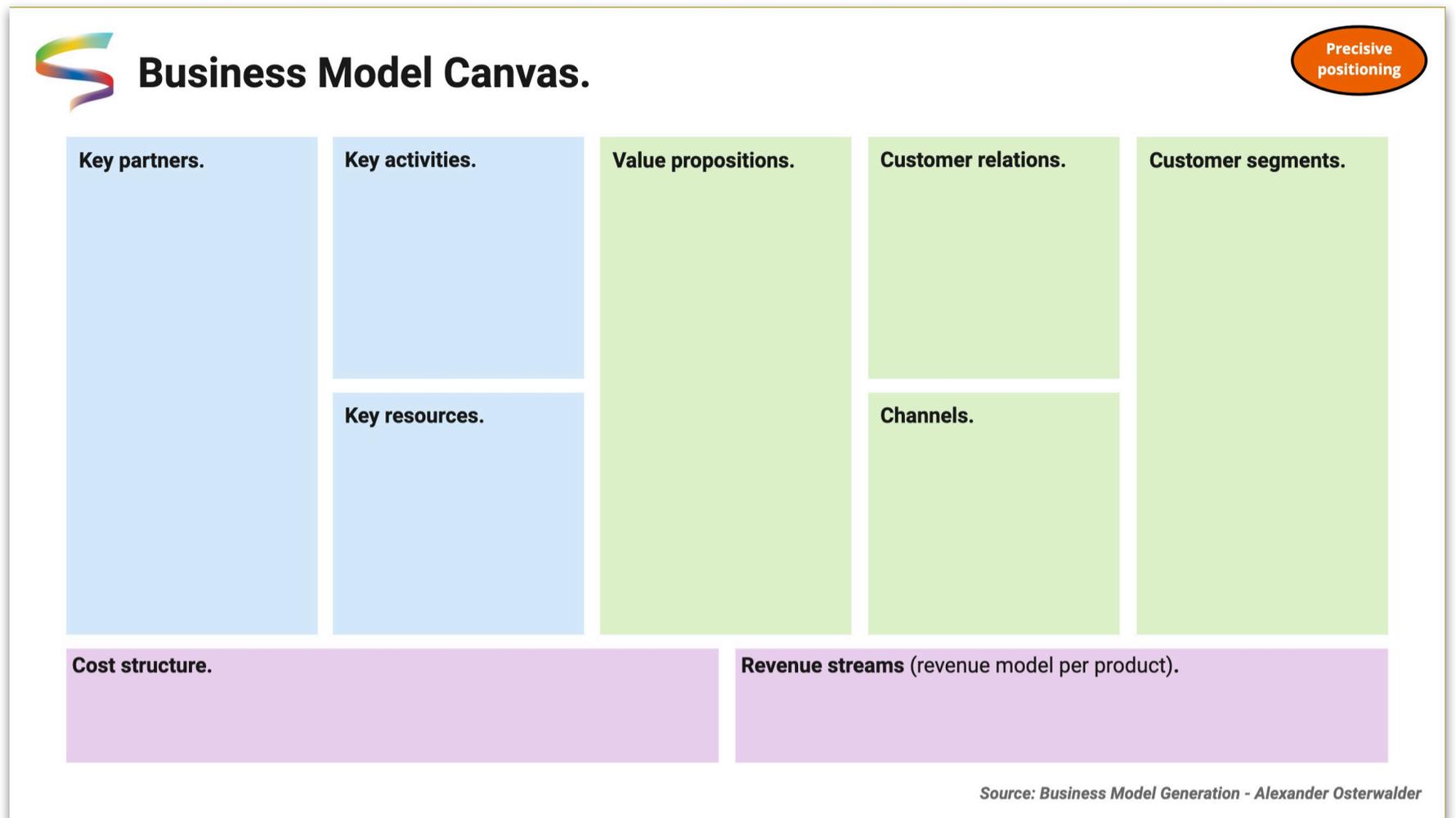
Having a clear positioning also helps you attract the right customers, as it allows you to target specific demographics or groups that are most likely to be interested in your products or services. It also helps you shape your marketing efforts and messaging to better resonate with your target audience.

Unique selling points (USPs) are an important part of your positioning because they highlight the features or benefits that make your business different from competitors. They are the things that set your business apart and make it stand out in the market. USPs should be prominently featured in your marketing efforts and woven into your branding to help customers understand what makes your business unique and why they should choose you over others.

Examples for unique selling points are a unique well-defined target audience, a very specific expertise, any authority materials (like a book), a specific resource (like a valuable patent) or a fruitful collaboration (with for example a big influencer).

Let's introduce you to a tool that will help you to remind yourself of all building blocks of your business. For every building block, you can ask yourself how you want to do it differently. How you're going to uniquely position yourself in the market.

# Develop a precise positioning



## Introducing the Business Model Canvas

Although you may have heard many times about the Business Model Canvas before, it won't harm to fresh up your know-how about this model. This way, you'll better understand how to utilise the value of using this model for your business.

The Business Model Canvas is developed by Alexander Osterwalder. It's a simple tool for visualising a company's value proposition and the key activities that create that value. It helps you visualise your business in a way that's easy to understand. This can help you see where new opportunities might exist within your current business. It quickly brings the strengths (like a valuable partner) and weaknesses (like an unclear proposition) of your business to the surface. They say the chain is as strong as the weakest link. For that reason, you want to focus on each of the 9 building blocks of your business.

Before we cover each building block, it's good to know that the canvas can be divided into three main parts. The desirability (green part in the right), the feasibility (blue part in the left) and the viability (pink part in the bottom). You ideally want to start with desirability. Because if your business (initiative) isn't desired by anyone, it obviously wouldn't matter if it's possible to create or make profitable. For this reason, the first 4 steps are all connected to the part of desirability. After this, you want to go through the feasibility part (step 5 to 7) and finally go through the viability.

## **Step 1. Customer segments: Who pays for my product and/or service?**

Let me give you some examples for customer segments:

- Infopreneurs
- Teams in SaaS-companies
- Starting solopreneurs

The customer segments are groups of customers who have similar needs and are similar in how they behave. They can be defined by the customer's demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, income level, location or occupation. Customer segments can also be defined by their behaviour characteristics: interests, needs or buying behaviours. Certain product usage patterns can also be taken into account when defining the customer segment.

Although it's a good practice to delineate your customer segment based on specific pain points, you don't do it here. That's because the pain points are already included in the value proposition block. So you just limit yourself to the demographic and buying behaviours mainly.

## **Step 2. Value proposition: Why do customers choose me over my competitors?**

Some general examples for value propositions:

- Being a certified sparring partner for infopreneurs (connected to the first example of a customer segment)
- Being an integral growth manager for teams (connected to the second example of a customer segment)
- Being an experienced business coach for starting solopreneurs (connected to the third example of a customer segment)

A value proposition is how you're going to deliver value to your customers. The Business Model Canvas defines the value proposition as "the unique and compelling reason a company offers its solution." It's what defines why people will want to use your product over a competitor's.

It differs from other business models because it focuses on how you deliver value, not how you make money. It also differs from the value chain because it focuses on what outcomes your customer gets from using your product or service. Instead of their experience interacting with all parts of delivering that product or service.

The key elements of a strong value proposition are:

- The customer archetype (or segment) that will be targeted by your solution
- The specific pain point(s) that drives customers to seek out your solution

- Your approach for solving their pain point and creating value for them

### **Step 3. Channels: How do I find (potential) customers for my business?**

Some general examples for channels:

- Content marketing (videos, blogs) combined with SEO
- Cold-calling prospects from LinkedIn (existing platform)
- Going to network events and network with prospects

Channels are the means by which you deliver your value proposition to your customer. They include the way that you get your product or service to both your potential and existing customers. The channels also include the way in which you interact with them.

It includes your distribution channels (for example through Udemy, Eventbrite or Zoom), marketing channels (like content marketing, SEO and social advertising) and communications channels (such as WhatsApp, Twitter and Slack). There are many channels that can be used for a business model canvas; channels can be physical (such as a physical training location), digital (such as an online learning environment) or both.

### **Step 4. Customer relations: How do I maintain contact with my customers?**

Some general examples for customer relation channels:

- WhatsApp group app
- Mail which is mostly automated
- Facebook Groups with moderators

Your customers are the most important asset of your business. They are the raison d'être of your business. Meaning, it's crucial to understand who they are and what they value. A customer can be an individual, group or organisation that buys products and services from you. You want to build strong relationships with these customers and create long-term value for them. Therefore, you need a strategy for managing their relationship with your company (Customer Relationship Management). In this building block you want to include your most important tools and platforms related to your CRM.

A CRM will help you to understand why your customers interacted with your company, whether they were satisfied with their experience and what will motivate them to re-engage in future interactions. How does a CRM system give insight about these matters? By collecting data about your customers, monitoring how they interact with your company and taking action in response to their behaviour. As such, it provides an effective way for entrepreneurs to understand how customers use products or services over time so that they can get better at delivering what those customers want.

### **Step 5. Key partnerships: With which individuals & companies do I work together?**

Some general examples for key partnerships:

- Your business coach
- Your financial advisor
- Your accountability partner
- Your affiliate partner

No business is an island. Partnerships are essential for success. It's useful to frequently think about which partnerships brings value to the table. Because they can help you grow and succeed. They can even change the way you do business.

Partnerships can help you grow your business way faster. They can also open up doors to new markets that would otherwise be closed to you. Partners can give you the chance to work with people you may not have had access to otherwise. These people can, in turn, give you the opportunity to build something larger than what you could have done on your own.

Partnerships can give you access to new customers and markets (through affiliate partners or satisfied ambassadors). It can save you a lot of money (by combining resources such as an office space or web hosting). And it can provide access to new technologies that would otherwise be out of reach for small businesses (such as machine learning).

## **Step 6. Key resources: What are my most important business resources?**

Some general examples for key resources:

- Trademark certificate
- Personal working space
- Powerful computer
- Recording equipment

When thinking about a key resource, it's important to ask yourself: what is the type of resource? For example, if you are selling software, then your key resources may be your codebase and app store listing. It is also important to consider whether a resource is a tangible or intangible asset. Tangible assets can be easily seen by people and include things such as equipment and inventory. Intangible assets are those that have value but cannot be seen such as intellectual property.

The resources that are most important to your business are the ones you can't do without. Resources include anything that your company needs to operate, such as a computer and some physical workspace. Some resources may be obvious (like good WiFi and reliable hosting), while others will be less so (like customer information and copyrights). The key resources of a business model canvas are the things that make it work, such as revenue streams or channels of distribution.

## **Step 7. Key activities: What are my most important business activities?**

Some general examples for key activities:

- Giving workshops
- Producing video content
- Doing your book keeping
- Setting up experiments

The Key Activities element is a simple list of the main activities that take place in your business. While this building block may seem obvious, this is actually one of the most important elements. Because it sets up everything else you're going to do for your Business Model Canvas. For example, if you want to sell products online, you have to have an online store or website where people can find those products and make purchases.

You usually want to include the activities which are related to creating the product/service, delivering your value proposition, promoting and selling the product/service and giving customer service. Try to make these fields of activities as specific as possible for your business.

## **Step 8. Cost structure: Which main business investments do I have to make?**

Some general examples for business expenses:

- CRM software membership
- Depreciation expenses for your recording equipment
- Hosting and maintenance costs for your website

The cost structure includes the biggest costs associated with your business. It is a critical component of your business model and helps decide how profitable or unprofitable your company will be.

Your cost structure can be broken down into four categories: product, people, marketing and operations. If you have to pay someone to develop something, then that expense goes under product costs. If you for example have a business coach or consultant, then his or her rates go under people costs. Marketing expenses include advertising, marketing campaigns, promotions and anything else related to attracting customers. Finally, operational expenses cover all fixed costs associated with running the business on a regular basis such as rent, taxes and insurance.

## **Step 9. Revenue streams: Which main in income streams do I generate?**

Some general examples for income streams:

- One-off payments for your business consultancy trajectories

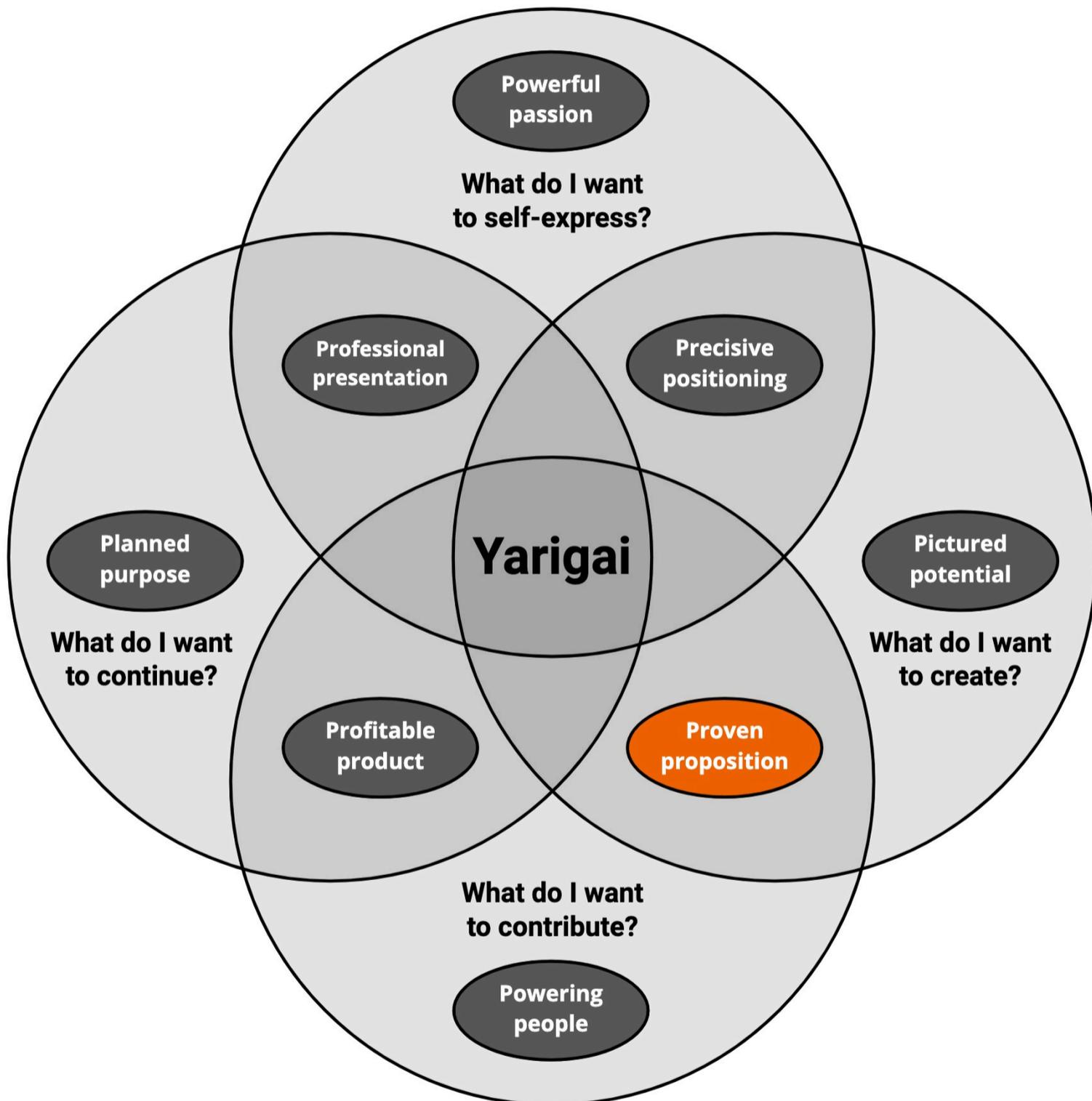
- Subscription money for your your online community
- Commissions for your referrals to your affiliate partner

A revenue stream is the way you make money. They're the top layer of the Business Model Canvas—any other layers should be built on top of them. The first step in deciding what revenue streams to include is identifying which of your options have potential for growth or scale. You'll want to choose those options that are scalable and have a high enough margin that they can support growing demand without cutting into profits too much.

In order to figure out which (preferably scalable) revenue streams should be included on the canvas, consider what is most important for your organisation right now—and for how long? What do people want most from you? Do you have enough money coming in through these particular sources? Is there something else you could offer that would increase sales volume even more than your current offerings do? These are all valid questions when determining what types of income streams need inclusion to fund your operations without going out-of-bounds financially.

Your Business Model Canvas should be a living document that you update and refine over time, just like your Value Proposition Canvas. It's important to remember that your business model is a tool for making decisions, not just a static description of the current state of affairs. If you find yourself using it less—or even ignoring it entirely—then perhaps it's time for an overhaul!

# Focus 8. Having a proven proposition



*The proven proposition of the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introduction

Having a proven proposition for your business is crucial for its success. A proven proposition is a clear and compelling statement that explains the value of your product or service to your customers. It should be based on a thorough understanding of your target market and the problems or needs that your product or service is designed to solve.

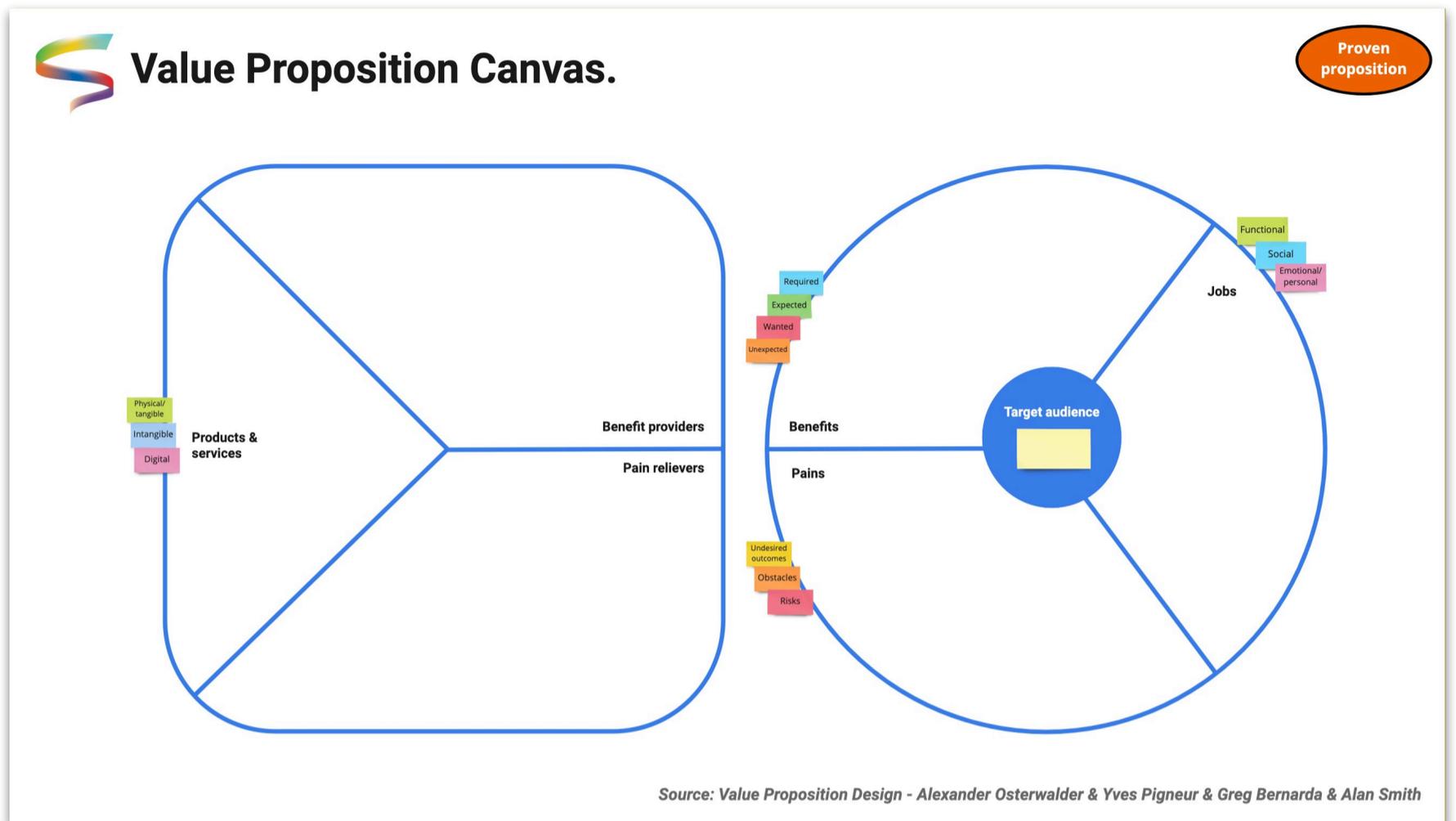
Having a strong and proven proposition is important because it helps you to focus your marketing efforts on the right audience, and it also helps you to communicate the value of your product or service effectively. It serves as a foundation for your branding and messaging, and helps you to differentiate your business from competitors.

One way to test and refine your proposition is by using a minimal viable product (MVP). An MVP is a stripped-down version of your product or service that is designed to test and validate your business concept with a small group of customers. By gathering feedback from these customers, you can refine and improve your proposition, and ensure that it resonates with your target market.

Using an MVP can also help you to minimise risk and save time and resources. By testing your proposition with a small group of customers before investing heavily in product development and marketing, you can avoid the costly and time-consuming mistake of launching a product or service that doesn't meet the needs of your target market.

Overall, having a proven proposition is essential for any business owner. It helps you to focus your efforts, communicate the value of your product or service, and test and refine your business concept with minimal risk and resources. Let's work out your proposition!

# Develop a proven proposition



## Introducing the Value Proposition Canvas

The Value Proposition Canvas is a tool for making your value proposition more compelling. It has been developed by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur. The goal is to discover if and to what extent there is overlap between your audience and your products and services. The model is used in business strategy, new product development and marketing. It helps you identify what your customers really want and need, and then show how your product or service can give it to them.

A value proposition can be referred to as a USP (unique selling proposition). It's the reason your product exists and the difference it makes in people's lives. The canvas helps you to map out what you are trying to build and how it can be different from other products in the market. A value proposition canvas helps you define why customers should buy from YOU rather than someone else by answering 3 questions: Who? Why? What does your product do for them? The 7 steps in this article will help you to answer these questions in the right way.

The canvas contains two parts: the customer profile (circle) and value map (square). The customer profile is about the customer: what do they want? The value map on the other hand is about your solution: what do you offer them?

**Step 1. Customer segment: What customer group could benefit most from your solution?**

Before you directly start with filling in the fields of the Value Proposition Canvas, you first want to pick the customer segment. The customer segment is the group of people you want to sell to. The more specific the segment, the more focused your value proposition will be. So instead of keeping it general like 'entrepreneurs in professional services', you want to make it specific like 'solo coaches with an hourly rate between €175-600'.

A great way to think about your customer segment is by using an example from your own life. If you're a photographer, for example, what kind of clients do you want? Are they business owners or high school students? Do they need event photography or family portraits? Your ideal client might not be a specific profession at all. It could be someone who needs help cleaning up their home after a move or organising their office supplies.

Asking yourself questions like these helps define who exactly should see and use your product: They have something in common with each other that makes them share similar needs and problems (in this case, moving). This will make it easier for you when developing features and benefits later on!

## **Step 2. Jobs to be Done: Which main tasks could you help your customers with?**

The job to be done is a term coined by Clayton Christensen (in his book *The Innovator's Solution*), which refers to the reason a customer buys your product. This approach suggests that people don't buy products; they hire them for a job – and if you can figure out what that job is, then you have the key to building a successful business. It's what they want to get out of using it.

For example, if someone buys an electric toothbrush, their job may be "to remove plaque from my teeth so that my dentist doesn't yell at me when I go for my next cleaning."

Jobs to be done can be functional, social or personal. By making this distinction, you're less likely to forget about important jobs to be done. Examples of functional jobs for a solopreneur could be to create content, determine your audience, time management and acquiring new clients. Social jobs are focused on gaining power/status, like positioning yourself as the expert or differentiating yourself from all of the other providers in the market. Personal jobs are about pursuing an emotional state, like getting more confident in selling yourself.

## **Step 3. Customer pains: Which main problems are your customers facing?**

To begin, you'll want to identify the problem that the customer is experiencing. Ask yourself, what's going on in their lives that makes this pain so painful? This could be something like "I am constantly frustrated with how difficult it is to communicate with my team members." Or perhaps something more specific, like: "Whenever I travel and leave my laptop behind, I cannot gain access to important documents and spreadsheets."

Next, consider what context(s) might make this pain worse. In other words, what are some situations where this person would be especially motivated by a solution? Maybe they're working remotely or on-site; maybe they're traveling for work or leisure; maybe they're at a conference and have trouble connecting with people who don't have an internet connection;

etc. If there's no context of interest here (e.g., if there isn't much travel happening), then skip ahead.

Pains could include unwanted results/problems/characteristics, like not having enough customers, little revenue and having little free time due to time-dependent work. It could also include obstacles to start (due to an unclear value proposition) or continue (doubts about your audience choice). Next to unwanted results/problems and obstacles, you could also think about any risks for your customers.

#### **Step 4. Customer gains: Which main benefits are your customers looking for?**

Gains are the benefits that your product or service offers to customers. They are what your customer gets from buying or using your offering, and they're the reason why they buy or use it.

Gains are often intangible but may be both short-term and long-term: a short-term gain might be that a customer feels more relaxed after using your product, while a longer-term gain might be that they stop getting headaches when they work on their computer.

Gains can include things like saving money (e.g., by buying an item on sale), experiencing pleasure (e.g., eating chocolate), making money (e.g., selling something online), being healthier/more relaxed etc., depending on what's important to you as an entrepreneur.

#### **Step 5. Products and services: Which main products and services do you offer?**

The products and services you offer your customers are the tangible offerings you provide them. Products are the things you sell, such as a pair of shoes or a copy of your book. Services are the things that you do for your customers, such as writing an article on travel hacking or giving advice on how to start a business.

Products and services can be physical (book), virtual (online course) or intangible (content marketing strategy). They can range from simple (like a sign up for your newsletter) all the way to very complex (like getting an investment manager).

#### **Step 6. Pain relievers: In what ways can your product make it easier for your customer to solve their problems?**

The pain relievers are the benefits and promises of your solutions. It can be anything that will reduce the pain which your customers are experiencing. They are often quick fixes and provide relief from pain while they work on a more permanent solution. An example of this is buying ibuprofen when you have a headache, or getting new tires when your car has been making noises for awhile. Pain relievers can also be services like fixing a computer network if it's experiencing problems, or providing someone with therapy so they can cope with stress better.

Other examples would be a money-back guarantee, practical tips for more customers, or a roadmap for determining the right target audience.

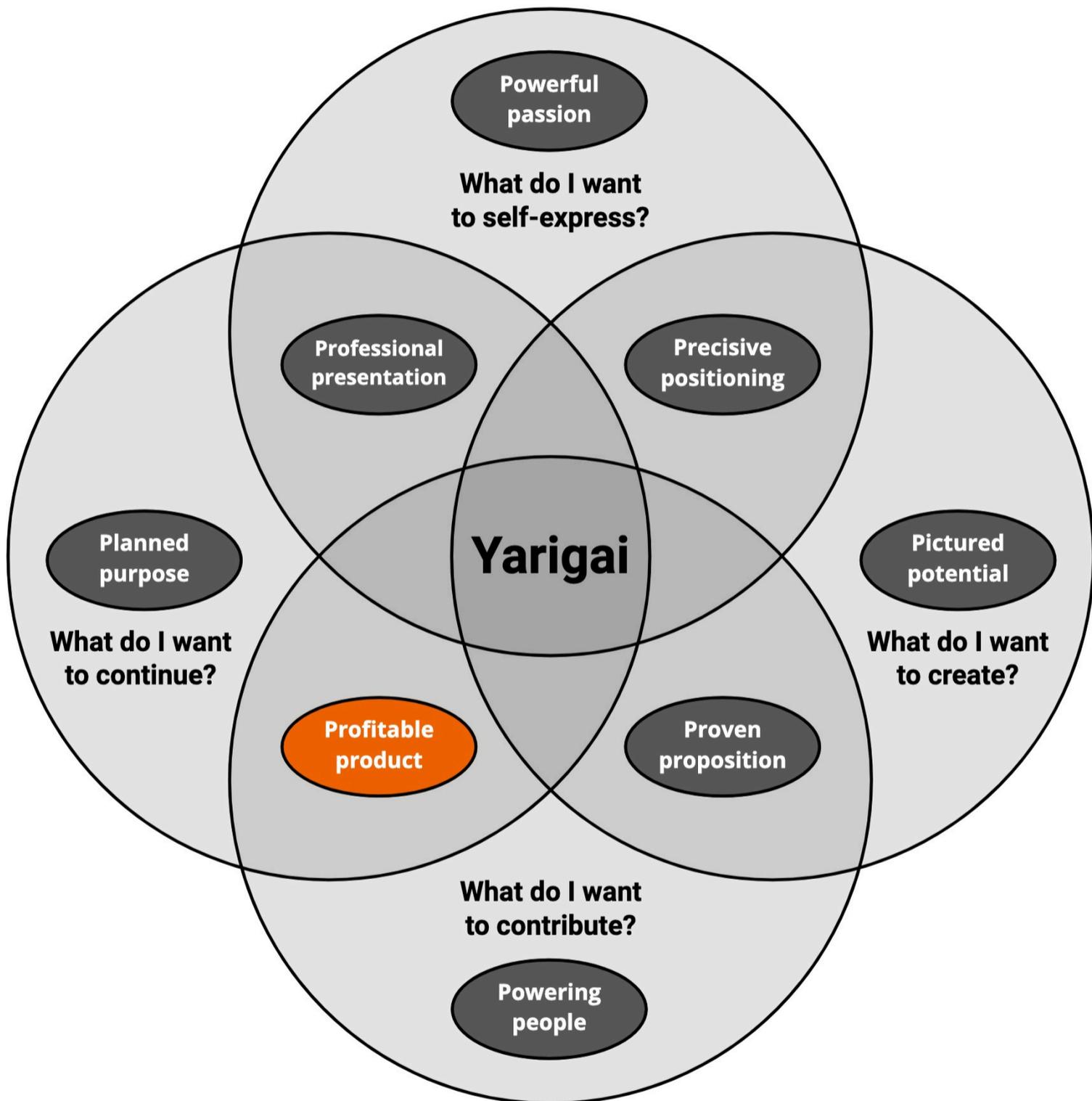
Pain relievers can be tangible (like a product feature) or intangible (like a service). For example, if your solution is “I will give you advice on how to get better at tennis” then one pain reliever might be “I’ll show you how to improve your serve”. Or if it were more like “I will help you get into shape by giving personal training sessions once a week” then one pain reliever might be “I’ll make sure everyone has access to healthy food at home so they don’t have to go out for pizza all the time”. A pain reliever can also be connected to your sales process, like having a money-back guarantee in place.

**Step 7. Gain creators: In what ways can your product make it easier for your customer to get access or stimulate the benefits?**

Gain creators are the actions or processes that create a benefit for your customers. For example, if your solution is a better way to manage customer data, then one gain creator might be “organise customer information” (i.e., grouping all client info by category). Another gain creator might be “automate data entry”, which would eliminate the need for a human being to physically type information into spreadsheets, databases and other tools.

Gain creators can also be intangible; for example, if you own an online business selling shoes then one of your gain creators could be “give customers personalised recommendations based on their purchase history and preferences”. This is an example of how companies like Amazon use algorithms to suggest products they think will appeal to each customer who visits their site.

# Focus 9. Having a profitable product



*The profitable product of the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introduction

As a business owner, it is crucial to have a profitable product in order to ensure the long-term sustainability and success of your business. Having a product that generates a profit allows you to not only cover your costs, but also to invest in the growth and development of your business.

One important way to measure the profitability of your product is by setting clearly defined key performance indicators (KPIs). These are specific, measurable goals that help you track the success of your product and identify areas for improvement. Some examples of KPIs for a product might include revenue, profit margin, customer satisfaction, and market share.

By regularly monitoring and analysing these KPIs, you can gain a better understanding of how your product is performing and make informed decisions about how to optimise its performance. This can help you to increase profits, attract and retain customers, and drive the overall success of your business. Now it's time go come up with your main metrics.



## **Step 1. Attention: How to get visitors?**

This step is all about showing yourself/your product out there. Attention (both organically and paid) is the first step on your path to engagement. That's with a good reason. Because if your public doesn't get to see your message, they obviously can't engage with it and the cycle doesn't start. The more people that are exposed to your product, the higher the chance that some of them will be interested in what you're offering and engage with it further down the funnel.

Getting attention for your products and services can happen through many different channels: search engine optimisation (SEO), organic social media posts and paid advertising on social media platforms like Facebook ads. Your company should have an understanding of all these options so you know where best to spend your marketing dollars depending on what type of business you have.

Things you could measure in this phase are the amount of impressions, visitors and likes/comments.

In case you don't put enough attention to this phase, think about it this way. This step lays down the foundation for the rest of your funnel. It showcases your target audiences which potential solutions you've got for their pains.

## **Step 2. Acquisition: How to convert visitors into potential customers?**

Acquisition is your first funnel-kind-of-step because it allows you to collect data like email addresses from users who are interested in your product/service (i.e., leads). These leads will be used later on when they become customers through conversion optimisation and customer retention strategies.

When you are designing your acquisition strategy, you should think about how to reach potential customers and how to get them interested in your product or service. In this step, you need to create a marketing plan for acquiring customers by using the right channels, such as social media or paid ads on Google.

*But what to offer them?* You could for example offer them a(n) ebook, whitepaper, webinar, micro-learning, online module or newsletter in exchange for their contact details. This giveaway is an essential part of your marketing plan for acquiring new customers.

*Then again, what to measure?* Depending on your strategy, you could measure the bounce rate on your landing page (which serves as the bridge between a visitor and a lead). Other things you could measure would be the amount of free or paid downloads. Or when you make use of ads, you could measure the costs per click and total acquisition costs.

## **Step 3. Activation: How do I win the trust of potential customers?**

Activation is the first step in your customer lifecycle funnel and is critical for increasing user retention. It's defined as getting users to take their first action with your product or service. This can come in many forms: visiting your website, downloading an app from the App Store, signing up for a newsletter or trial account, etc. The key here is that activation will get

users through their initial hurdle and into your product so they can experience its benefits firsthand—allowing them to better understand how it solves their problem—and hopefully develop additional loyalty down the line.

So in short, you convert prospects (potential customers) into active users. You'll facilitate them in realising the added value of your solution outweighs the price they've to pay for it. Usually, this will be done with a trial. That's a good way of giving prospects the opportunity to experience the value before they pay for it. Be aware, the price they've to pay for it isn't always limited to just money. It could also be their time and efforts, like visiting a platform, downloading an app and request an intake.

Some examples for resources you could use in this phase, are the intake (whereas you can measure the amount of requests), a trial for a learning environment (whereas you can measure the amount of requested trials or the first usage) or a preview of your book.

If you're experiencing low engagement rates after performing this analysis (typically less than 20%), then chances are good that there's some work needed on creating more effective activation tactics that encourage users' deeper involvement with your brand early on in the process.

#### **Step 4. Retention: How do I keep delivering value to my customers?**

Retention is the process of keeping customers happy and coming back to your product or service. It's important because it reduces the cost of customer acquisition. Without retention, you have to keep spend money on attracting new customers. According to many studies, it costs up to 10 times more money to acquire a new customer than it does to retain an existing one!

If a company has a high rate of repeat purchases (retention), then they aren't spending as much money on advertising because their existing customers are generating brand awareness through word-of-mouth marketing.

Resources you could consider for giving expression to this step of the funnel, would be an exclusive Facebook group, customer service, an inner circle app group, exclusive monthly updates, etc. You could measure the engagement, time between the most recent visit, the activity of usage and much more.

Retention is not only about keeping customers happy; it's also about providing them with insights into how they can improve their experience using your product or service—and making sure that they know those ways exist for them if they want them. This way, you can ensure that everyone gets exactly what they pay for from you—and nothing less!

#### **Step 5. Revenue: How can I make (more) money from my (potential) customers?**

Revenue is the money you make from your customer. It's what you get in exchange for the value that you deliver to them. It's important to mention that it's not just about increasing profitability. It's also about building strong customer relationships.

To increase revenue, it's important to understand what your customers want and how much they are willing to pay for it. You can do this by analysing their behaviour on your website (using Google Analytics), observing their reactions in person or over the phone and asking questions like *“why did you buy this product?”* or *“why didn't you buy another one?”*

You could measure customer lifetime value (if you for example offer paid subscriptions) or conversion rates (when you're for example selling coaching trajectories with one-off payments).

## **Step 6. Referral: How do I stimulate customers to recommend me to others?**

Referral is the sixth and final stage of your pirate funnel. This is when customers refer your product to others and efficiently grow your business because of it. Referrals are a key part of the pirate funnel, as they help you get more people on board with your business way faster. The easiest way to grow your business is by having happy customers who are willing to tell their friends about how great their experience was, which will bring them back in the future.

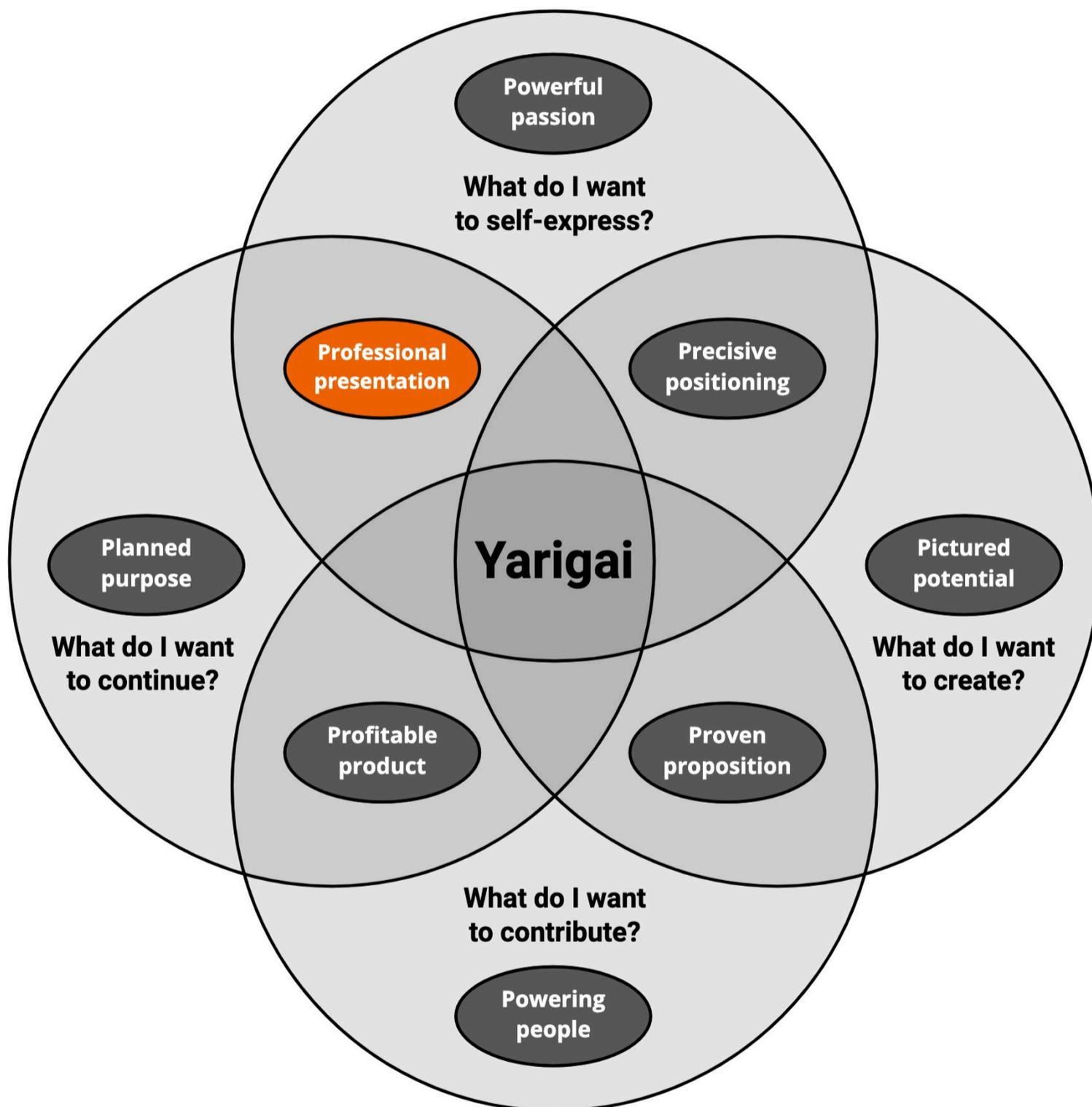
The invitations doesn't have to be limited to your existing customers. It could also come from potential customers, warm connections from your network or affiliate partners.

A metric in this step could be the amount of invitations. This includes both sent invitations (visibility) as well as accepted invitations (newly introduced customers). Another metric could be the viral coefficient. This is about how many new customers a single existing customer generates on average. There are various viral mechanisms which you could build in, like affiliate links, an invitation button, discount vouchers, share buttons, you name it.

There's no such thing as too many referrals; if one referral leads to two new customers, then those two new customers will also be able to refer more people and so on—it's an endless cycle that can help you grow exponentially over time!

You now have a complete framework for evaluating the effectiveness of your marketing strategies. You can use it to measure your progress, plan future campaigns and make sure that nothing falls through the cracks.

# Focus 10. Having a professional presentation



*The professional presentation of the Yarigai diagram.*

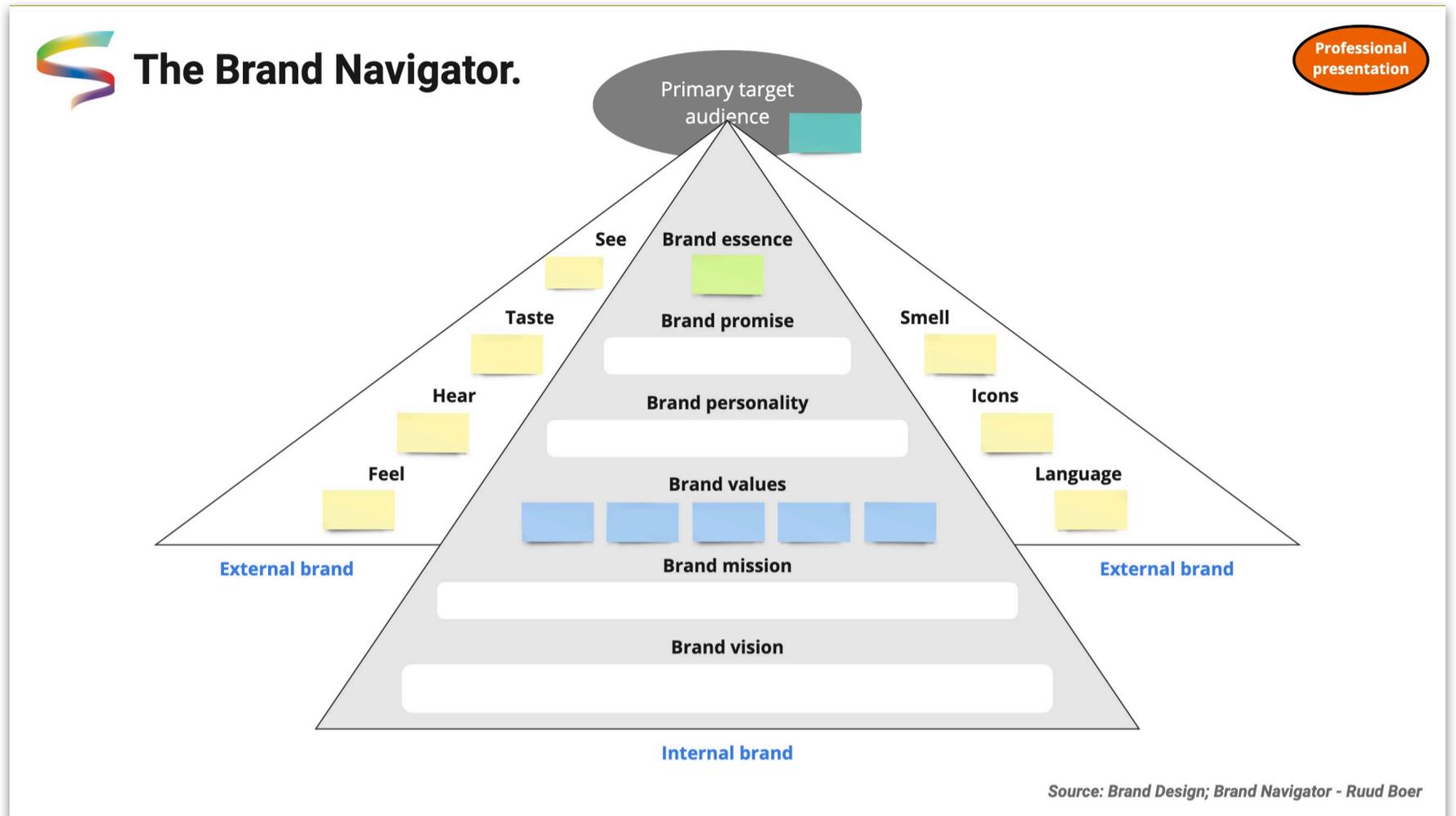
# Introduction

In this fourth result area, all previous result areas are coming together. Having a professional and compelling presentation for your business is crucial as a business owner. A strong presentation can help you attract new customers, partners and investors, and it can also help you retain your existing ones. It helps you establish credibility, build trust and differentiate your business from the competition.

The foundation for a professional presentation is having a clear business mission and vision (BMV). A BMV is a statement that defines the purpose of your business and its goals. It outlines the values and principles that guide your business and sets the direction for the future.

Having a clear BMV is important because it helps you focus on what's most important to your business and its stakeholders. It helps you make better decisions and stay true to your business's purpose. A clear BMV also helps you communicate your business's value proposition to your audience, which is essential for persuading them to support your business. Let's go through the tool that will help you to work out your brand focus.

# Develop a professional presentation



## Introducing the Brand Navigator Canvas

There are different tools out there which help you to gain insight and get overview on your brand. The one we use at SpiralPreneur is the Brand Navigator developed by Ruud Boer (author of Brand Design). It's a tool that makes the connection between marketing (inner brand) and design (outer brand). The goal is to develop an optimal visual brand synergy with a recognizable visual style. This will be better accomplished by using this canvas. That's because it helps to to make your desired brand identify clear, distinctive, relevant and credible. The inner brand is focused on making your brand market ready, whereas the outer brand helps you to bringing your brand to life.

You want to go through 9 steps to fill in the Brand Navigator Canvas. We'll start with the steps connected to the inner brand before covering the steps connected to the outer brand.

## Forming the inner brand

### Step 1. Define your brand vision

Your brand vision is often associated with the WHY from the Golden Circle of Simon Sinek. A proper brand vision contains two parts: your vision on the market (horizon) and the position of your brand within that market (place on the horizon). Your place on the horizon will be determined by the role you fill. Your role can be a leader, facilitator, follower, specialist, generalist, innovator, you name it.

Conditions for a strong brand vision is one that is relevant, standing out from other brands and credible.

To give you an example of a brand vision, let's share the vision of SpiralPreneur:

*The world which we're living in is, as you probably noticed, dysfunctional in just too many ways. We firmly believe that the most sustainable way for making the world more functional, is by matching peoples inner value system to their environment.*

## **Step 2. Define your brand mission**

Whereas the brand vision is often associated with the WHY, the brand mission gives insight in the HOW from the Golden Circle of Simon Sinek. It shows the course towards your vision.

There are also some conditions for a strong brand mission. It has to be clear (short, powerful and memorable. You also want to make your mission vividly and inspiring. But it of course still needs to be achievable. Otherwise it simply won't be believable.

The mission of SpiralPreneur is as following:

*We are committed to help you better align yourself and your business with the environment. We do this by providing you with the right tools and new insights from many different areas and people. This will contribute to living your life and running your business with more of the 3 F's: flow, fulfillment and freedom.*

## **Step 3. Define your brand values**

You can focus your brand values on different aspects. For example on your product offering or the usage of your products. You can also focus it around the brand experience you're trying to create, like the values involved, nearby and leading from the Dutch Rabobank. Another example on which aspect you can focus on by determining your brand values, are the users, like provocative, sensual and extroverted from deodorant company Axe. Lastly, you can focus it on the positioning compared to your competitors, like being the best or the biggest.

The conditions for strong brand values are unique, valuable, distinctive, relevant and memorable (by picking five brand values at most for your business). At SpiralPreneur we only got three brand values: flow, fulfillment and freedom.

## **Step 4. Determine your brand personality**

Imagine your brand was a person, then how would you describe that person? In this step you personify your brand. While doing this, you want to take into account a few conditions. It has to be written in person-related terms. A clear connection has to be made with your target audience. It should be at aspirational level. And you want to align the definition with your brand values you defined in the previous step.

Let me give you two examples so you'll better understand how to determine a brand personality for your business. A quirky and creative bloke who is always pushing the

boundaries belongs to RedBull. And a true friend who listens to you, informs you and sympathises with you belongs to the Flemish weekly women's magazine Libelle.

### **Step 5. Define your brand promise**

You can aim your brand promise either to your product offering on itself or the effect of using your product. You can best view the brand promise as your brand mission in promotional language. Therefore, it's conditional to formulate it from the point of view of your target audience. The brand promise of Philips for example is 'Innovation and You'. This short promotional slogan is the pay-off. The strategic brand promise of Philips is 'We bring innovation closer to people based on their needs and wishes.' Nike also makes distinguish between two kinds of brand promises. 'Just do it.' is their pay-off. Their strategic promise is a bit longer and more informing: "If you have a body, you're an athlete." and "bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete."

### **Step 6. Come up with your brand essence**

Giep Franzen calls this 'the hook' on which your brand is hung in the consumer's brain. You want to keep this very short, preferably one word or two words max. To give you some examples, KLM claimed the essence reliable, Volvo safe (driving), Page soft (toilet paper), Amstel friendship (beer) and Miele top-quality (devices). When determining your brand essence, you want to limit your options to the words your target audience uses.

## **Sharpening the outer brand**

### **Step 7. Activate your brand through the five senses**

Seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting and smelling. You want to go through each of those senses to check which sense in particular you want to utilise with your brand experience. Let me give you a few examples for each sense to get your inspiration flowing.

With seeing, you can think of the blue envelop which the Dutch tax authority uses consistently to create instant recognition. The feeling sense can be divided into physical (like the unique design of the Grolsch beer bottle), mental (like the clean design from Apple) and emotional (like the Dove commercials in which women with curves and scars are showed). The sense of hearing can be divided as well. It can be aimed at the sound of the product (like crunchy cookies, a silent washing machine and the sound of the motor of a Ferrari). It can also be aimed at the sound of the packaging, like opening a Grolsch beer bottle, the clicking sound of opening a lid of a jar of vegetables or opening a vacuum-packed coffee pack. Hearing can also be aimed at people, like a friendly voice of the telephonist, the business sounding voice of a representative or the calm and reliable voice of the aircraft captain. Hearing can even be a melody. Tasting as a sense can of course only be used if you're selling food and beverages. The famous After Eight has for example a recognisable taste combination of mint with chocolate. Some examples for smelling would be freshly baked bread at Subway or the smell of baby shampoo Zwitsal.

## **Step 8. Determine the use of language**

Language is how we communicate, either verbally or non-verbally. That makes it something you want to put your attention to when activating your brand. This step is very broad. Let's go through some examples so you understand why that's the case.

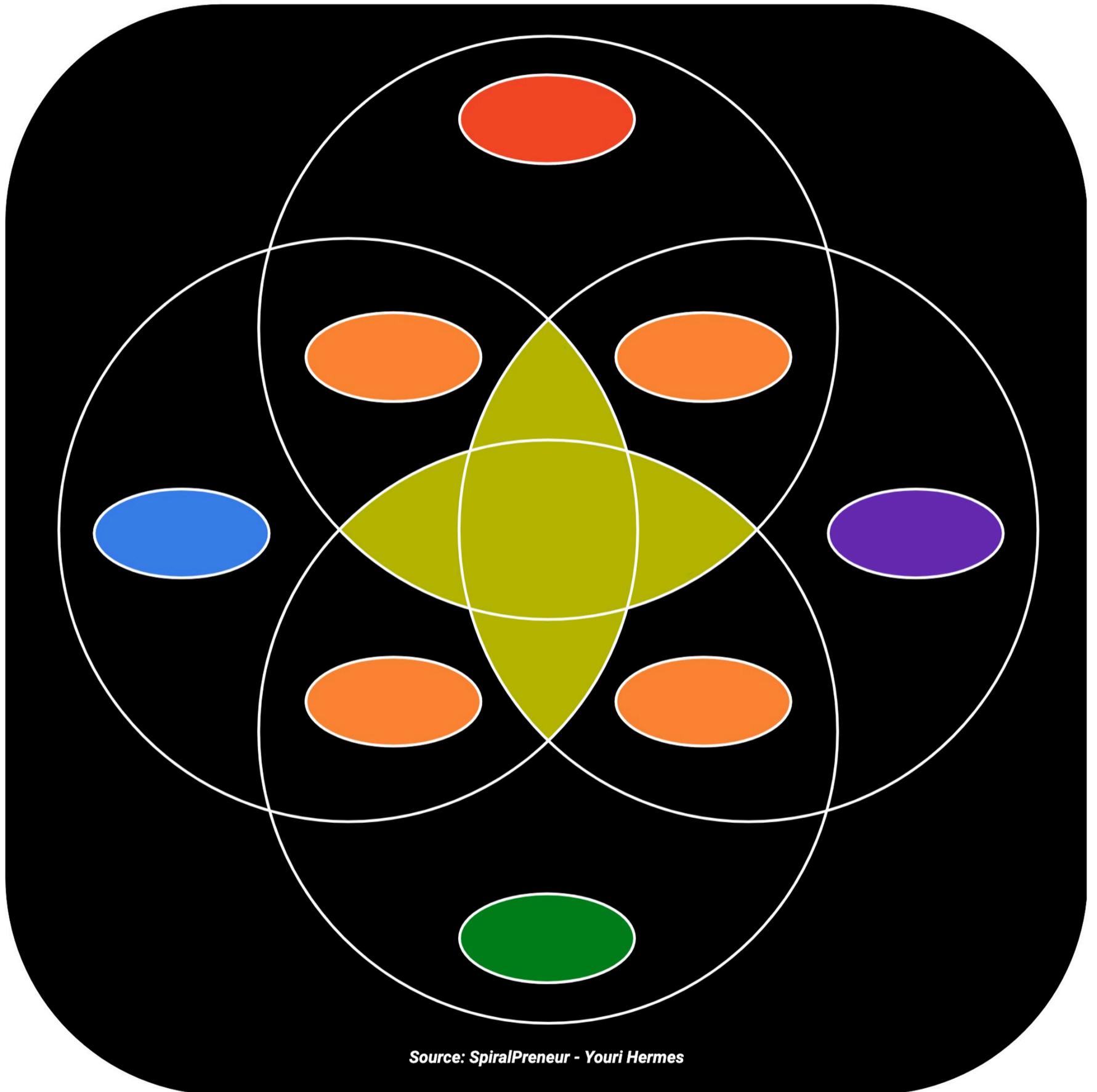
First of all, you've got the pay-off (often called slogan). This doesn't necessarily have to be your brand mission nor promise. As long as it's catchy, relevant and trustworthy it's fine. You also want to develop a consistent tone-of-voice. Things can for example be very short, clear and powerful sentences you use within your promotional materials. The language also includes the typography you use. This can for example be modern, feminine, playful, serious, businesslike or traditional. The way your brand expressions are getting pronounced is also part of this step. This can for example be with a hoarse or cheerful voice. Also, check if and how you want to implement humor into your brand expressions. The used terms can also be thought about, like a brewery rather than a beer factory. You also want to think about the jargon you use looking at your profession. You can also make smart use of the origin of your company, like the Norwegian words Ikea uses. Or for example Opel with their German slogan: Wir leben Autos.

## **Step 9. Determine the brand icons**

You can choose from a wide variety when it comes to resources for your icons. It can come from fantasy characters, image marks or symbols like the seashell of Shell, the letter M of McDonald's or the four intersecting rings of Audi. Your resource could also be human characters, whereas you pretend some person works for your brand. Famous people can also be used to your advantage, like Michael Jordan associated with Nike and Mohammed Ali associated with Adidas. You can also use the entrepreneur of the business as brand icon, like Bill Gates from Microsoft, Tim Cook from Apple, Richard Branson from Virgin and Elon Musk from SpaceX and Tesla.

# Part V -

## Spiral up your marketing



*The 6 value systems (purple, red, blue, orange, green and yellow) that have been intertwined in the Yarigai diagram.*

# Introducing Spiral Dynamics

Spiral Dynamics has eight different stages. Ascending in complexity, you've got the beige, red, purple, blue, orange, green, yellow and turquoise value system. The most complex turquoise and least complex beige value system have deliberately been excluded from the system. That's because turquoise may be too confusing and beige is just too primitive to discuss. The six other stages are being practically covered in this chapter<sup>8</sup>. Those stages are integrated in the Yarigai model. That's why the Yarigai model is so colourful. Each element of the Yarigai model represents the qualities of one of the value systems. Having a powerful passion is for example a typical quality of the red value system. It's not limited to this quality, but it does represent the system.

## Link with the resources

The canvasses in the previous chapters can be seen as blue tools in the light of Spiral Dynamics. That's because blue highly values a structured way of organising information and a systematic approach with clear roadmaps. The covered tools provide you that.

You can give expression to the blue tools through for example a green vision, like your need for meaning, contribution, connection, collaboration and so on. This can result in filling out the canvasses together with different stakeholders and being very transparent about it. Or not limiting the definition of success to just measurable factors only. Maybe you feel the need to go through the canvasses with a yellow approach, in which you're going to draw systemic connections between all those different canvasses. Whatever the case may be for you, you're going to get value out of it either way.

Whereas the canvas itself is blue oriented (due to the structure), our given examples to better understand the canvasses are mainly orange oriented. The orange value system is about moving forward, growing yourself and your business and measuring your progress. We chose for those kind of examples because most solopreneurs will recognise orange the best. This way, confusion regarding how to fill in those canvasses can be minimised.

Entrepreneurship is strongly rooted in orange. That's why it's no coincidence that orange appears up to four times in the Yarigai system, since this is the foundation for spiral entrepreneurship. These results are all about entrepreneurship. The orange value system of Spiral Dynamics best reflects this. That's why those results are being displayed in orange. These results are all about entrepreneurship. The orange value system of Spiral Dynamics best reflects this. That's why those results are being displayed in orange.

The result areas are about giving expression to your entrepreneurial ambitions. You'll do this by having a swift strategy in place and being pragmatic and flexible. To be result-oriented and change only when there is a concrete reason for doing so. You won't settle for less than what you'll be capable of. Your motto is work hard, play hard. You allow yourself to have pleasure through celebrating the achievement of certain milestones.

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<sup>8</sup> If you like to learn more about Spiral Dynamics and get more context for each value system, please consult appendix A.

# Spiral Dynamics applied in marketing

## 1. Purple family-centric marketing approach

With the purple marketing approach, you build a family of ambassadors around you. The brand you build is a warm and safe tribe where people feel welcome and at ease. Not everybody, but the people you deliberately approved. But before this approval, you need to know the customer or business partner first. Otherwise you won't do business with him or her. That's why most of your stakeholders can be traced back to your initial network. You prefer to keep your marketing efforts small-scale. This way, you can use a personal approach as much as possible (like doing 1-on-1 intakes with all leads).

In line with the approach you prefer to work together with your stakeholders to carry out a shared "sacred mission". Along the way, your intuition is your main adviser for determining your marketing strategy. This will be strongly influenced by the opinions from older/senior people who you label as part of your family. Once your marketing strategy is in place, you're committed to work hard on a regular basis.

Typical examples which fall under the purple marketing approach are (un)asked recommendations from your loyal followers and word of mouth.

### Top-3 advantages:

- Strong improvisation skills
- Creating loyalty
- Being social

### Top-3 disadvantages:

- Being closed to the outside
- Limiting to conservative strategies
- Being evasive to certain groups

## 2. Red self-centric marketing approach

This self-centric marketing approach is about finding ways to dominate the market. To crush your competitors and to become the most powerful player in the field. You won't shy away from using marketing tactics which are kind of in the grey area. For example, weakening your competitors just for your own gains. Or making your customers dependent on your services by using addictive elements. As long as the tactics contribute to you and your business, you'll execute those.

For the execution part, you won't first wait to get approval from some external factors. The exception to this is getting approval from a powerful person (like a business partner, advisor

or business coach) you're following. But generally, you won't wait for approval or the right timing. That's because you feel a strong sense of urgency. 'If not now, then never' is your motto. That's why you believe a comprehensive marketing plan is not needed and rather distracting for getting started.

If the marketing results are disappointing, you won't wait until the odds return in your favour. Without any mercy (to the people who were involved), you instantly switch your marketing strategy the moment you see promising results in the short term. Although you can be ruthless in your marketing decisions, you'll still be respectful to your stakeholders.

For your marketing strategy, there are some principles you're following. Clear boundaries you've probably set for yourself. These will prevent you from doing things which are crossing your boundaries. For example, spending a tenth of your time on marketing or excluding a certain audience from your marketing focus.

Examples of commonly used marketing channels are guerrilla marketing, video marketing and public speaking. Guerrilla marketing because this is often in the grey area. And video marketing because you're not shy to show yourself with the world while sharing bold statements without shame. You express your opinion on matters in an unfiltered, honest way. Public events because you don't let fear stop you from sharing your message. You present yourself with courage and passion.

#### **Top-3 advantages:**

- Direct action taking and not waiting for unnecessary approval
- Setting clear boundaries
- Having courage and passion

#### **Top-3 disadvantages:**

- Egoistic decisions
- Destructive capability
- Oversimplified approach

### **3. Blue product-centric marketing approach**

The blue marketing approach is mostly product-centric. You build the product and look for the right audience for that product, instead of the other way around. You set up a comprehensive plan and follow this in a structured and disciplined way. But before building your own marketing strategy, you would first look if there are existing strategies. If certain well-known strategies turn out to work, you copy it for your own business and go all-in with it.

It's important for you to build a marketing machine which is stable. Meaning that it's as little as possible influenced by external circumstances. The marketing channels you use today

would ideally be the channels you still use after years from now. You don't feel the need to change your marketing strategy because your motto is 'Never change a winning team'. If something is working, you'll try to improve it instead. Once you decide you go for a certain marketing strategy, you take full responsibility for it. Also, if it eventually turns out to be a waste of money due to a wrong evaluation.

You can best handle marketing tactics which will lead to transparent results. This will give you predictability and certainty regarding the output. You don't mind if your marketing efforts are repetitive. As long as it will generate good results, you continue. You prefer a slow and progressive approach rather than an unpredictable approach.

Examples of commonly used marketing channels are social/display ads and existing platforms. Advertisement because the analytics will give you a transparent overview of the costs and the revenue. This way you can decide whether it's worth it to continue it or to change plans. Existing platforms is about making use of the members of a certain app, like social media platforms as Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest and LinkedIn. These platforms give you access to a reliable user base which you can utilise. It can help you to get new clients in a slow but steady way.

#### **Top-3 advantages:**

- Being consistently with your marketing efforts
- Not giving up too quickly on strategies with potential
- Not trying to reinvent the wheel

#### **Top-3 disadvantages:**

- Wasting time due to inflexibility
- Going all-in on a strategy without having any proof
- Just using mainstream instead of innovate strategies

## **4. Orange customer-centric marketing approach**

This customer-centric marketing approach is about utilising smart (and sometimes manipulating) techniques aimed at increasing your revenue. You're mostly focused on short term results and will convert as many people as possible. Many techniques are supported by theories about neuromarketing. In other words, the techniques are scientifically proven that they help you to sell more. You believe in the getting as much attention as possible. By just showing yourself over and over through all kind of platforms, you increase the possibility for new business.

Your materialistic business goals are determining your day-to-day actions. You're flexible enough to change your marketing strategy if the results are disappointing. You steer on concrete results and set up short experiments for quickly validating your marketing-related

assumptions. Your motto is 'Feedback is the breakfast of champions', a quote often attributed to Ken Blanchard.

You don't believe you have to sit down and wait for the right things to occur. Instead, you create the chances yourself and are constantly seeking even bigger market opportunities. You recognise opportunities after having collected fact-based proof. This is the starting point to further explore it and if it works, exploit it to its fullest potential. In this process, you stay rational and you don't let your feelings determine your actions.

The marketing tactics you use are often charismatic in nature. For example, you energetically and persuasively use your powerful voice to attract customers to you. Convincing other people to do business with you comes naturally for you. That's why you attend and organise speaking events and webinars regularly. You also go to network events because you know how to use effective communication to your advantage. You are the master of influencing others, and actively utilise this to speed up the process of observable achievement.

### **3 main advantages:**

- Strong communication skills
- Strong persuasion power
- Well-thorough strategy

### **3 main disadvantages:**

- Spamming people
- Short-term focus
- Manipulating people

## **5. Green people-centric marketing approach**

The green marketing approach is people-centric. To work together with them, to contribute to others, to be part of communities, you name it. You deeply care about people and adapt your marketing strategy to that. It's a strategy which is focused more on a human approach rather than a commercial approach. If it turns out you earn less money and get less clients, you're fine with that. Because the process of connecting is what counts for you instead of the results.

It's important for you to really listen to what your stakeholders need. After discovering those needs, you'll optimize your marketing strategy according to those needs. This need-oriented approach will be interspersed with intuitive choices. If something within your marketing strategy just doesn't feel good, you just quit it. Even if the strategy is beneficial in a financial way. Your marketing choices are primarily led by your intuition, and directly after that by the needs of others. Your constantly active filter for all of your marketing choices is your brand vision, mission and values. As long as some marketing decisions are not aligned with this,

you won't execute on them. To keep yourself sharp on this, you regularly check in on these essential matters.

You believe that the marketing opportunities which are coming on your path without having taken effort, are often the best things to act upon. Speaking about effort, you'll try to minimise that because you believe this is a sign of resistance. And the marketing actions which are resulting in any kind of resistance, are doomed to be destructive for your business. Even though the reality may say otherwise, you believe clients will eventually come on your path instead of the other way around.

Examples of commonly used marketing channels are community building and business development. Community building because you're in the game for the long term and want to bring people together. You want to build a strong connection with your stakeholders. You believe that's the most sustainable way to grow your business. Business development is about developing connections with individuals. They can eventually become affiliate partners, investors, ambassadors or anything else which is beneficial for both parties. You're likely to not view your competitors as competitors. You team up with them and try to be complementary to each other.

#### **Top-3 advantages:**

- Capable to build strong and ever-lasting collaborations
- Strong intuitive capacity

#### **Top-3 disadvantages:**

- Lack of initiative due to surrendering to external circumstances
- Viewing effort as resistance
- Viewing direct marketing approaches as aggressive and destructive

## **6. Yellow system-centric marketing approach**

This is a unique system-centric marketing approach in itself. Mainly because it requires the capacity to make use of all the previous marketing approaches. But without experiencing the disadvantages of those. You're not averse to use a very direct marketing approach from time to time if the situation asks for it. Or to use certain neuromarketing techniques to stimulate sales. You just do what works best for the environment which you're part of. Your main goal is to have a functional marketing approach. Meaning, you'll match your techniques to the market while taking into account the needs of the other stakeholders.

The marketing approach is not about you. In other words, you're not executing strategies purely for your benefit. It's about the entire market system which you and your business are part of. Meaning that it could be even beneficial to help your "competitor" if this would lead to a more functional system, like a better solved collective problem from the market. This requires an integral approach.

You're likely to see the connections between many marketing-related things. This will allow you to develop new synergetic effects which will further contribute to build a healthy market system. This could for example mean to combine a large variety of marketing tactics and aim them for a specific goal. It could also mean to work together with other people because together you can contribute in a more sustainable way.

Your marketing decisions are consequent. Your motto is 'Everything is good as it is and tomorrow everything must be different'. If something works, you will continue it until something else works better. Although you can be very consequent, you're also very flexible. Once the environment asks for new solutions, you'll adapt to this instantly. But also when the environment doesn't ask for new integral solutions, you'll still innovate new ways to be prepared for future challenges. You'll do this by regularly thinking outside the box.

With the yellow marketing approach, the type and amount of marketing channels can be diverse. You're likely to make use of an omnichannel marketing strategy. According to Marketing Evolution, 'the goal of an omnichannel marketing strategy is to create a convenient, seamless user experience for consumers that offers many opportunities for fulfilment'. You combine different platforms and integrate those for marketing purposes. You make use of marketing channel stacking. This channel stacking approach allows you to build a strong connected marketing channel combination without losing focus. Because the different channels you use are strongly connected to each other. They reinforce each other like for example a three-stage rocket.

### **Top-3 advantages:**

- Creative and innovative
- Be consequent and also flexible
- Move freely between different marketing approaches

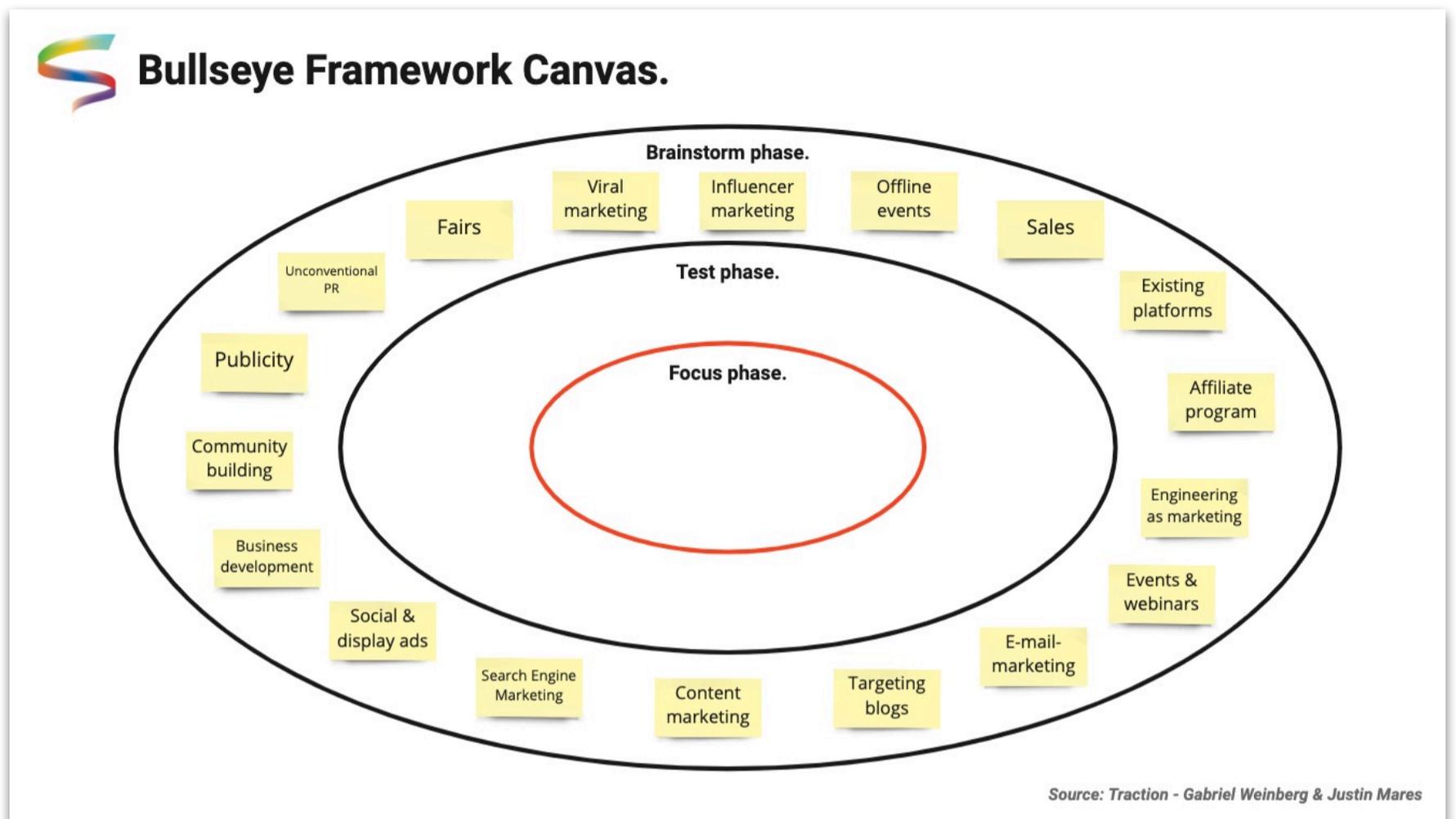
### **Top-3 disadvantages:**

- Overcomplicate your marketing
- Unpredictable approach for most stakeholders
- Inventing non-pragmatic futuristic solutions

## **Time to pick your favourite marketing approach**

Ok, so now you've been introduced to different marketing approaches you might consider to apply. Hopefully, it also helped you to get a better understanding of each value system. You don't have to limit yourself to just one approach. Use different ingredients from different approaches to develop your most resonating marketing approach. And if, after a while, your approach is no longer adequate you just switch it. Determining your marketing approach is after all a dynamic process.

# Putting the approaches into practice



## Introduction

The Bullseye Framework is developed by Gabriel Weinberg and Justin Mares. They introduced their framework in their book *Traction*. The method is about systematically brainstorming, prioritising, testing and executing different marketing strategies. It contains three rings which together represent a dartboard, since it's the goal to hit for the bullseye. Not right away, but after setting up and running some valuable experiments. Eventually you'll know, based on hard data, which marketing strategy works best for your business.

So before reaching the bullseye, you have to go through the outer and middle ring. The outer ring is your starting point. It's the brainstorming and prioritisation phase. After this phase you'll go to the middle ring in which you'll test the most promising strategies. This middle ring is the test phase. The last phase is the focus phase, the bullseye. This phase is all about utilising the value (which you discovered in the test phase) to its fullest potential.

But why should you use the Bullseye Framework to begin with? Entrepreneurs regularly go all-in with the first and best marketing channel they come across. By doing so, you probably miss out bigger opportunities due to a limited brainstorm and research phase. Therefore, you want to go through each of those stages so you ensure yourself to come with a marketing channel which matches your business, your target audience and yourself. Let's go through 6 steps towards finding your best marketing strategy right away.

Before you start with the steps, you want to write down your goal. Different traction goals require different approaches. So before diving right into all different kind of marketing strategies you could choose, let's first clarify your goal. What do you want to achieve and before when? Through the lens of your goal you want to go through the three stages of the Bullseye Framework.

## **Brainstorm phase (outer ring)**

### **Step 1. Brainstorm as many options as possible**

It's very common that entrepreneurs tend to ignore potential lucrative channels. That's because it's:

- Not in their area of knowledge and expertise, for example speaking engagements of engineering as marketing
- Something they have negative associations with, for example with sales and affiliate programs
- Time-consuming or frustrating, for example business development or business fairs

Instead, you want to consider all marketing channels. In the book Traction, they make distinguish between 20 channels. Per channel you want to come up with at least 1 (but preferably more) marketing strategy/strategies. For example a long-tail strategy for SEO as marketing channel. Let me list for you the 20 marketing channels which you can go through for devising strategies:

1. Targeting blogs
2. Publicity (PR)
3. Unconventional PR
4. Search Engine Marketing
5. Social & display ads
6. Offline ads
7. Search Engine Optimization
8. Content marketing
9. Email marketing
10. Engineering as marketing
11. Viral marketing
12. Business Development

13. Sales
14. Affiliate program
15. Existing platforms
16. Fairs
17. Offline events
18. Speaking events
19. Community building
20. Influencer marketing

If you have a hard time coming up with different marketing strategies per listed marketing channel, I'd recommend you to go through this together with somebody else (ideally some kind of accountability partner). You could also draw inspiration from your competitors/colleagues.

### **Step 2. Rank all of your options**

Let's say you came up with 2 marketing strategies per marketing channel, so you have 40 (20\*2) marketing strategies in total from which you can choose from. Now you want to make a first breakdown by the expected success rate. Divide your strategies among probable possible, a long-shot. After having done this, you want to skip all of the marketing strategies which you have put in either the possible or long shot bucket. The strategies you put in the probable bucket remains. Ideally, you reduced your 40 strategies to just 10 strategies which can probably work.

### **Step 3. Prioritise your most promising options**

In this step we'll have a more thorough prioritisation. We'll be using the ICE-score for this. Meaning, you'll rate each of the remaining marketing strategies on a scale of 1 to 10 on:

- I of Impact: if the strategy succeeds, how big is the impact on your goal (identified in step 1)?
- C of confidence: how big is the chance of succeeding in the first place?
- E of ease & time: how much time, effort and money does the preparation, execution and analyzation will cost you? Give a low score with a big investment and a high score with a little investment.

After having given a score per marketing strategy on those three factors, you have to add up those scores per marketing strategy (maximum score = 30; minimum score = 3). Now you can better compare those different marketing strategies. You continue with the marketing strategies with the highest total scores. As an independent entrepreneur, limit yourself to two strategies. The pitfall of focusing on one strategy is that you're more likely to approach it on an all-or-nothing way. That can be dangerous since it's just an experiment. Focusing on

three or more strategies is not recommended either because the test phase in the next step will be time-consuming if done properly. And by executing your experiments partially you'll get doubtful conclusions. But of course it all depends on your capacity. If you have the resources (people, knowledge, money) to test a bigger variety of strategies all at once, it's of course all fine. As long as you can put in the time necessary to get to useful insights.

## **Test phase (middle ring)**

### **Step 4. Test the options with the highest total scores**

This step is about building a MVC. It's an acronym for minimal viable channel. Meaning, the most stripped-down version of your marketing strategy so that you can find out if it works in the most efficient way. That's the goal of this step: getting insights as soon as possible with as little resources as possible. Try not to spend thousands of dollars or months of work to it. Also, please remind yourself that this step is not meant to generate growth. It's solely meant to get valuable insights as soon as possible, which can but doesn't need to include growth. The Monthly Experiment Canvas (discussed in chapter 8.1) is a valuable tool you can use for going through this step with the right intentions and in a well-structured way.

### **Step 5. Learn from the insights you got from your experiments**

After running your experiment (with the Monthly Experiment Canvas), you want to carefully analyse the results. So please don't draw conclusions too quickly. Whereas the Monthly Experiment Canvas is the perfect tool for the previous step, the Monthly Insight Canvas (see chapter 8.2) is the right tool for this step. It makes sure you won't miss out important questions you want to answer in order to diligently draw the right conclusions.

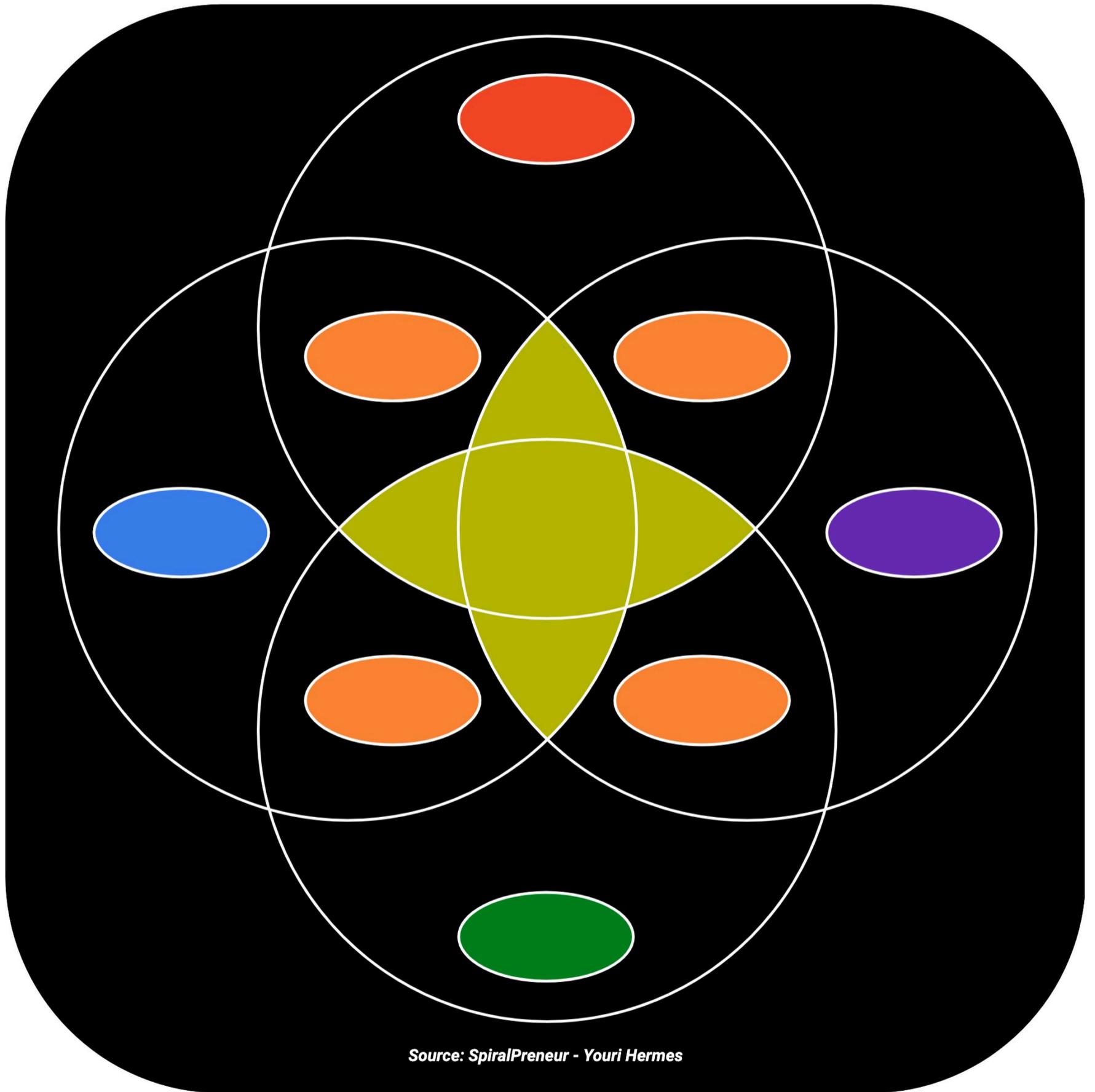
## **Focus phase (inner ring)**

### **Step 6. Wring out the marketing channels with the best results**

Hopefully, a useful marketing strategy came out of your experiments. Now it's time to utilise the strategy. You want to look for ways to get the most out of it. Because at some point, the strategy will get (more) saturated. Meaning, the conversion rate will drop off. That's can be due to the expiration of newness, not being first-to-market anymore or not being able to get sufficient qualified customers anymore in the pool you can reach through your strategy. That's why it's important to continuously go through these steps and look for (even) better marketing strategies compared with your existing ones. It can also be valuable to combine multiple strategies that reinforce each other. For example a so-called three-stage rocket with strategies relating to SEO, content marketing and email marketing.

# APPENDIX A -

## Main connected theory



*The 6 value systems (purple, red, blue, orange, green and yellow) that have been intertwined in the Yarigai diagram.*

# The 6 value systems of Spiral Dynamics

Spiral Dynamics is the only framework that puts both the behaviour of a human system and the drivers behind this in perspective. This makes the model different from other change models. Also, it's a model without a certain holy grail, like self-actualisation as the highest need according to the Pyramid of Maslow. Spiral Dynamics is constantly evolving; it's a living framework and develops over time. We personally haven't come across a more complete model yet that can be used to explain the behaviour of people.

The founder of Spiral Dynamics is Clare W. Graves. He called his starting point the nascent, cyclical, self-evolving double helix model of adult bio-psycho-social system development. In more plain language, you can speak of a framework that helps you better understand and make sense of the world around you. It shows why we as humans do what we do. The model can be applied to individuals, groups of people and even entire societies. Spiral Dynamics provides insight into your most important values at the moment by classifying different collections of values together.

In this guide we use the term value system. But if the term value system doesn't resonate with you, you could replace it with one of the many synonyms for it. You can check which term feels most congruent to you with your current understanding of Spiral Dynamics. Based on somebody else's primary value system, you can use the term that resonates best with the worldview of the person you want to explain it to. This way, your explanation of Spiral Dynamics is more likely to reach the other person. Below you find which synonym generally resonates best with a certain value system.

<b>Synonyms for value systems:</b>	<b>Resonates best with:</b>
Motives	Red
Core motivations	Red
Key/core values	Blue
Truths	Blue
Lenses	Orange
Bubbles	Orange
Realities	Orange
Frames of thought/reference	Orange
World views/visions	Green
Thinking structures	Yellow
Behavioural systems	Yellow
Basic paradigms	Yellow
Complexity levels	Yellow
Inner thinking systems	Yellow
Processing systems	Yellow
Brain systems	Yellow
Biopsychosocial systems	Yellow

Human adaptive intelligences	Turquoise
Levels of existence	Turquoise
Inner states of being	Turquoise
vMememes systems	Turquoise
Stages/levels of consciousness	Turquoise

The colour system was (along with the term Spiral Dynamics) introduced by Christopher Cowan and Don Beck. That's not surprising considering Clare W. Graves (as the initial founder) was colour blind himself. The advantage of using colours is that, unlike numbers, one value system is not higher (which is often associated with "better") than another system. They are just different in terms of complexity.

The first stage is very basic and primitive (like first humans and babies) and the eighth stage is holistic and multidimensional. Because of the nascent nature of Spiral Dynamics, there is no such thing as the highest attainable or most valuable value system. However, yellow and turquoise are the most complex systems that we have recognised so far. Each stage of the model consists of a collection of values. A healthy transition to the next value system solves the pitfalls from your previous system. It also develops new qualities on top of the qualities from the previous system. Together with those new qualities, new pitfalls of a higher order will emerge. Meaning, not one value system is exempt from pitfalls.

There are plenty of articles and books written and videos and courses made about the general characteristics for each value system. Each value system contains both positive manifestations (qualities) and negative ones (pitfalls). To make the theory more relevant and practical, we apply it on marketing in paragraph 5 of this chapter. But before doing so, some general context for each system will be given through tables in this paragraph. Those tables contains the main values and connected to that some healthy and unhealthy expressions of that value.

## Purple value system

At this level, people begin to develop a sense of community and connection with others. They may form small tribes or clans, and may have a belief in spirits or a higher power.

Purple values	Healthy expressions	Unhealthy expressions
Tradition	Connecting	Lingering in the past
Continuity	Regularity	Boredom
Trust	Trusting to acquaintances	Biased, distrustful of others
Security & safety	Warm, caring	Too overprotective, oppressive, reactive, expectant, careful
Proud	Positivity	Disappointment
Remembrance	Good memory	Old grudges, guilt
Authenticity	Unsophisticated	Disaffected
Discretion	Humble	Inconspicuous, inhibited
Feeling	Sensible	Oversensitive, anxious

Certainty	Thriving	Too conservative, evasive, reserved
Sharing	Spreading necessities	Gossiping
Improvisation	Improvising	Insufficiently prepared
Community, brotherhood, kinship, belonging	Connecting, uniting	Bullying, excluding, closed to the outside, polarising

## Red value system

This value system is characterised by a focus on power and self-interest. People at this level may be driven by their own desires and may not be concerned with the needs or feelings of others.

Red values	Healthy expressions	Unhealthy expressions
Passion	Passionate	Obsessive, neglectful
Confidence	Self-confident, self-assured	Shameless, arrogant, self-righteous, macho behaviour, boastful, self-centred
Assertiveness	Decisive, setting & monitoring boundaries	Aggressive
Power, dominance, autonomy	Leading, motivating, independent	Bossy, exploitative, destructive, domineering, unreasonable, manipulative, opportunistic, cynical, demanding, insolent
Strength	Strong	Unable to dose
Speed, urgency	Fast-shifting, alert, direct	Impatient, restless, pushy, impulsive
Courage	Brave, courageous	Overconfident, reckless
Clarity, honesty	Straightforward, honest	Superficial, clumsy, unsubtle, linear, offensive

## Blue value system

At this level, people begin to develop a sense of order and structure. They may adhere to strict rules and regulations, and may have a strong belief in tradition and hierarchy.

Blue values	Healthy expressions	Unhealthy expressions
Accuracy, detail-orientation, perfection	Careful, excellent	Squeamish, narrow-minded, stingy, obsessive, compulsive, tunnel vision
Discipline, determination, persistence	Disciplined, determined, persistent	Obsessed, compulsive
Morality, sense of duty	Righteous, honourable	Sober, polarising, guilt-ridden
Order, structure, stability, security	Clear, concrete, punctual, consistent, stable, organisational	Dogmatic, fundamentalist, rigid, controlled, inflexible, steadfast, immobile, insecure
Trust	Reliable, loyal, honest	Blind following & obedience
Responsibility	Responsible	Over-responsible
Safety	Not reckless	Anxiously
Directness	Straightfoward	Harsh, cold, severe, hurtful

## Orange value system

This value system is focused on achievement and success. People at this level may be driven by their desire to excel and may be competitive in nature.

Orange values	Healthy expressions	Unhealthy expressions
Ambition, status, prestige	Goal- & result-oriented, entrepreneurial	Calculating, opportunistic, self-interest
Excellence	Strategic, specialism	Abusive, destructive, jealous, obsessed with growth
Competition	Entrepreneurial, strategic	Self-interested, manipulative
Financial success & freedom	Financially healthy	Obsessed with money
Luxury, beauty	Well-groomed, engaged in life	Materialistic, greedy
Renovation	Progress	Unsustainable solutions
Productivity	Efficient	Too busy, single-minded focus
Rationality	Logical & analytical thinking, inquisitive	Numb, insensitive
Efficacy	Pragmatic	Linear approach

## Green value system

At this level, people begin to focus on social and environmental issues. They may be concerned with issues such as equality, sustainability, and social justice.

Green values	Healthy expressions	Unhealthy expressions
Consensus, (world) peace	Idealistic, pacifistic, compliant	Conflict-avoiding, soothing
Equality, equivalence, tolerance, egalitarianism	Accepting differences, tolerance	Indifferent
Community spirit, group spirit	Collaborative, social, communitive	Seeing collaborating as an end rather than a means, get caught in a bubble worldview, loosey-goosey
Helping, sharing, caring, love	Helpful, caring, loving	Patronising, meddling, too concerned
Environmental awareness	Sustainable	Turmoil
Intuition	Intuitive	Floaty
Connection	Empathic, sensitive	Oversensitive
Openess	Vulnerable	Expecting vulnerability from others
Relativity	Relativistic	Generalising

## Yellow value system

This value system is characterised by a focus on systemic thinking and integration. People at this level may seek to understand the interconnectedness of all things and may be open to new ideas and ways of thinking.

Yellow values	Healthy expressions	Unhealthy expressions
Autonomy	Interdependent	Stubborn, too self-reliant, distant
Spontaneity, personal freedom	Spontaneous, enthusiastic	Unfathomable, unpredictable,
Complexity	Multi-faceted, integrated, analytical	Overcomplicate, chaotic
Innovation, synergy	Innovative, visionary	Impractical solutions
Knowledge, knowing, truth	Critical, curious, intelligent, open-minded	Too critical, stubborn, cold

# The 6 key features of Spiral Dynamics

Acquiring knowledge about Spiral Dynamics precedes taking advantage of its value. The better you can distinguish the different value systems of Spiral Dynamics from each other, the sooner you can recognise it in yourself and others. Before covering the value systems, let's go through 6 key characteristics of Spiral Dynamics so you will take the first step towards utilising its tremendous value.

## **Feature 1. The underlying drivers behind behaviour**

Spiral Dynamics is a model which can be used to better understand situations. It does so by providing you insight into the deeper motivations of human behaviour, both on an individual and collective level. The collective level includes teams, organisations, communities and the society. Clear insight in the motives behind certain behaviour will help you to better change and embrace situations. Without the approach of getting down to the key drivers, these situations would be confusing otherwise. And may lead to destructive behaviour, ranging from infertile discussions all the way to deeply hurting others and yourself.

## **Feature 2. The continuous interaction with the environment**

Spiral Dynamics shows how human systems interact with their environment. It reveals the continuous interaction between your changing self and the changing environment. That's why Spiral Dynamics is a double spiral model. One spiral reflects your inner world (driven by your core values) and the other one the outer world (your life circumstances). The goal of Spiral Dynamics should be to align the inner world (of an individual or organisation) with the outer world. So that friction will be solved and the person or business will become functional in its environment again.

## **Feature 3. The emergent nature of development**

Spiral Dynamics doesn't have a holy grail. In the Pyramid of Maslow for example, self-actualisation is the highest need. But in Spiral Dynamics, the highest need is constantly evolving. By now, Spiral Dynamics contains 8 different well-known value systems. There are already new value systems emerging. About these value systems (like the very complex coral value system), very little is known yet. That's because there is little collective experience to draw reliable conclusions about the newly formed value systems. Although it can be interesting to dive into the mysterious lesser-known value systems, it will be more functional to better understand and live the well-known value systems. That's where the biggest impact can be made.

## **Feature 4. The ascendancy of complexity**

As already mentioned, Spiral Dynamics consists of 8 value systems. A value system can be seen as a specific collection of values which can be dominant in someone or some business. To make a distinction between those value systems, each system has a different colour. Ascending in complexity, you first got beige (the least complex value system), then purple, red, blue, orange, green, yellow and lastly turquoise (most complex value system).

You may ask yourself, 'What does the ascendancy of complexity mean?' Once you're developing a new value system within yourself, you're basically developing more complex capacities to better grasp the complexity of your environment.

### **Feature 5. The include-principle**

A newly developed complex capacity in a person or organisation would be unstable if it doesn't include the previous less complex value systems. Those are laying down the foundation for the new complexity. A more complex system includes the healthy expressions (qualities) of the less complex systems, but it excludes the unhealthy expressions (pitfalls).

Because of the nature of inclusion, it will never be sustainable to just skip a value system altogether. That's why it's useful to understand the order of the value systems. It will help you to identify your personal dominant value system and shows you the next stage after transformation. In other words, it gives you a map on where you are now and what your next destination could be.

Let's give you an example so that you'll better understand the include-principle. The blue value system (which is more complex than the purple and red value system) includes the purple and red value system. Next to the include-principle, there's also the transcend-principle.

### **Feature 6. The transcend-principle**

Let's get back to the previous example. The blue value system transcends the previous red value system because it develops a new way of looking at the world. The red value system views the world as a jungle, whereas the survival of the fittest takes place. In the more complex blue value system, the world is being seen as a divinely controlled and orderly, purposeful place. Kind of a different world view, right? In a nutshell, the more complex the value system, the more value systems it includes and the bigger the transcendence is.

# The 6 common pitfalls with Spiral Dynamics

## **Pitfall 1. Paint an overly simplistic picture of a complex entity**

To get more familiar with Spiral Dynamics, you want to apply it. The easiest way to do so is to label situations and behaviours with a certain value system, like typical red or green. This brings me to the first pitfall, which is to label complex systems (including humans, let alone companies) with many components in just one way. Each component is even tough to label with just a single value system. So don't even mention complex human systems. You want to add nuance where necessary.

A human for example could also show different motives in different situations. Someone may be dominant blue within family dynamics and strongly orange within a business context. I deliberately use the word 'dominant' because somebody mainly operating from a certain value system certainly doesn't exclude the existence of other value systems within that person. All value systems exist to a greater or lesser extent within a person in Western society. Some value systems will for example show up under pressure whereas other are mainly linked to one's aspirations.

## **Pitfall 2. Draw conclusions too quickly from looking at the surface**

Something else you want to watch out for is to label a human system too quickly. I get it, after being able to properly distinguish all different value systems you may label something in no-time. The pitfall here is that you judge a book by its cover. You experience the cover (behaviour) and label its actual content (motives behind its behaviour). That's why it's important to not draw conclusions too quickly. Behaviour can tell you something about someone's motives but this doesn't have to be the case. If you get the chance, you want to do further research. For example by repeatedly asking someone why someone does what she or he does. In line with this pitfall it's smart to keep reminding yourself that Spiral Dynamics is not a tool to categorise behaviour nor a tool to classify people. It's a tool that identifies the invisible, living value systems operating at a deeper level in human systems.

## **Pitfall 3. Not taking into account the possible limitation of your personal world view**

Another pitfall is the assumption that you see the world as it is. That your world view is (close to) objective. There are countless of ways of looking at the world. Nobody is capable to experience the world as it is, unless you're capable of fully transcending the "limitation" of being human. If you're mainly looking at the world from for example a yellow lens, you'll look at other value systems very differently in comparison with dominant green people. Once you assign yourself a dominant value system, it's also good to be aware of your confirmation bias. Meaning, the unconscious human need to focus on the evidence and ignoring counter evidence.

It's important to acknowledge the limitation of your personal world view. For this, you first need to identify the type of lens from which you're looking at the world. This can be more tricky and challenging than you might think.

People tend to overestimate their capacity to see things objectively. And with this, their capability to deal with complexity. The incapacity to deal with big complexity could result in conspiracy thinking, bold statements with little foundation and the 'just because I feel it'-remarks.

Dominant orange people usually think of themselves as mainly yellow, whereas dominant green people often label themselves as turquoise. I've seen this over and over. To prevent yourself from this common behaviour, I'd recommend you to fill out an assessment. I'm certified to facilitate those value assessments. [Click here](#) if you're interested in learning more about this.

#### **Pitfall 4. Having the conviction it's better to be higher in the spiral**

People who very much operate from an orange value system, will be most likely to fall in this pitfall. That's because orange tend to aim for the highest possible outcome. They generally also try to satisfy this deep-rooted need when using Spiral Dynamics. This often includes the need to compare yourself to others in the light of your place on the spiral. And giving yourself credit for your place instead of the society which influenced this big time. The problem is that Spiral Dynamics doesn't show the map from bad and worse to good and better. On the contrary, it shows the capability of a human system to deal with its environment. For example, a red person thrives best within a red direct environment. As soon as your direct environment asks more complex capacities from you, you develop a more complex system if you have the capabilities. Not because you tried to move up your place in the spiral, but because your life circumstances enforced this development within yourself.

#### **Pitfall 5. Believing certain factors influences your place in the spiral**

Some people tend to think the somebody's age, gender or race influences the dominant value system. But these factors can be mostly disconnected as they do not affect where you are in the spiral. The factors which do influence your value system is your neurological wiring (from nature and nurture) and your perception of your living conditions. Your neurological wiring you owe or owe to, among other things, the society you grew up in.

#### **Pitfall 6. Limiting the application of Spiral Dynamics to individuals**

The major advantage of Spiral Dynamics is the variety of possible applications. As long as it relates to a human system you can apply it. An individual is of course the most obvious example, followed by groups of people (like teams within companies). But it can also perfectly be applied to organizations and societies. This makes Spiral Dynamics a valuable, versatile and relevant tool for our collective challenges we currently face.

# APPENDIX B -

## Other connected theories



*A drawing of a spiralphreneur, generated by AI tool Dall-E from OpenAI.*

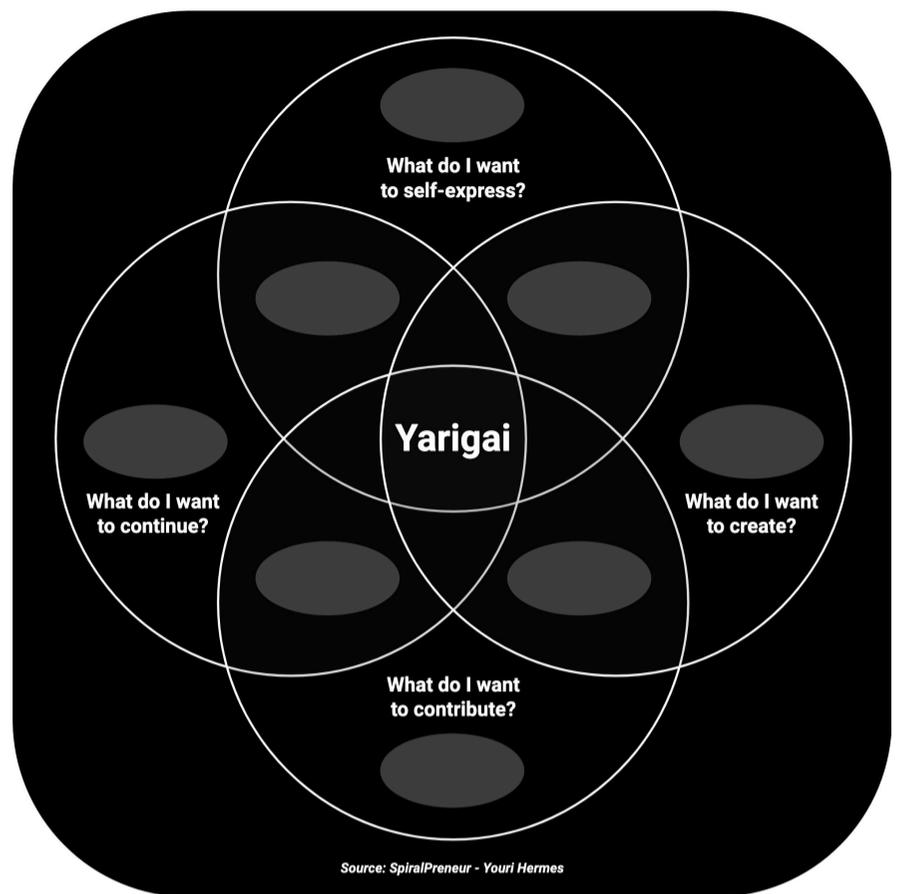
# The 1 'sweet-spot' - Ikigai theory

## Introduction

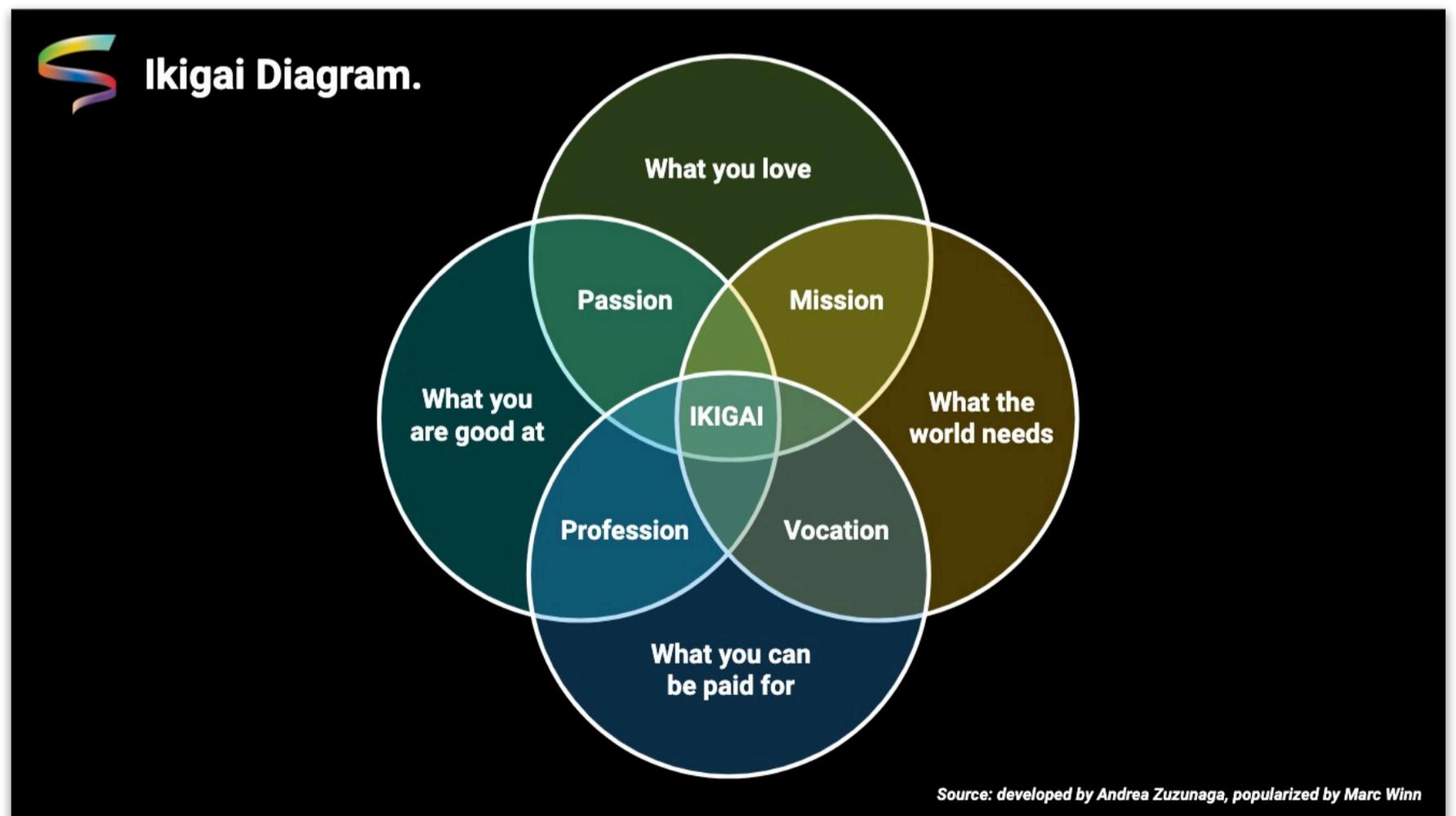
When I'm bringing up the not so famous concept Yurigai, people often confuses it with Ikigai (value of being). Before diving into the main similarities and differences between those concepts, let's first introduce Ikigai and Yurigai.

## How Ikigai became popular

The Japanese translation of Ikigai is the value of being. You may have heard about the Ikigai diagram before. That's because Marc Winn created a viral blog article about it back in 2014. He combined two existing concepts: the Japanese Ikigai concept and a diagram about finding your life's purpose, which has been developed by Andrea Zuzunaga.



*The Yurigai diagram shares the same Venn-diagram structure and also contains a 'sweet-spot' in which everything comes together. The content however is very different.*



Even though it consists the word Ikigai, it has little to do with the original Japanese concept. At least, according to the Japanese people. Only one of the four leafs of the Ikigai diagram comes close to the meaning of Ikigai, which is 'what you love'. Especially the leaf 'what you can be paid for' breaks the connection with the original Ikigai concept. This leaf makes it Western oriented. By giving this materialistic touch on the mysterious word Ikigai, Marc Winn made it go viral.

## **The Yarigai concept**

Yarigai is Japanese for the value of doing (instead of being). In contrast to Ikigai, it may be a new Japanese concept to you. Just like Marc Winn connected somebody else's diagram to the existing Ikigai concept, Youri connected his developed diagram to the existing Yarigai concept.

Although Yarigai sound a bit similar to Ikigai, the meaning is very different. That's why it's important to make a clear distinction between those Japanese expressions. In order to prevent yourself from confusing Ikigai with Yarigai, I summed up the three main similarities and differences. Let's go through them right away.

## **The 3 main similarities between Ikigai and Yarigai**

### **Similarity 1. The origin of the words**

Ikigai and Yarigai are both sharing Japanese roots. The reason why the residents in the Japanese village Ogimi in Okinawa die very old, boils down to living upon the Ikigai (living passionately) and Yarigai (always being busy) concepts. In this village of centenarians, their fire does not extinguish from retirement age. They even don't have a word for going with retirement in their Japanese vocabulary! They share a strong passion for work (like gardening, preparing food, etc.), family and friends, nutrition and exercise.

### **Similarity 2. The value of something**

Both words are sharing the same suffix, which is *gai*. The English translation of *gai* is value or worth. It can also mean reason, purpose, art, effect or result. The etymology of *gai* became clear after the publication of Akihiro Hasegawa's research report in 2001. Hasegawa is a clinical psychologist. Among other things, he specialises in the evolution of Ikigai. His study revealed that *gai* is derived from *kai*, which means shell in Japanese. The word was first used in the Heian period (794-1185). In that period, shells were of great value. So that is where the modern meaning ("value") derives from.

### **Similarity 3. The way of using it**

Both words are colloquial expressions. They're being commonly used in everyday life. Because of this, most Japanese people won't associate the expressions with the Ikigai diagram and Yarigai diagram. Many Japanese people don't even know the existence of this Western touch of putting Ikigai and Yarigai into a model.

## **The 3 main differences between Ikigai and Yarigai**

### **Difference 1. Being versus doing**

Whereas the suffix is the same in both words (*gai*), the verb differs. *Ikiru* (connected to Ikigai) means to live. And *Yaru* (connected to Yarigai) means to do. So ikigai means the value of being whereas yarigai means the value of doing. Ikigai is a feeling of satisfaction for something you already possess. Yarigai could be better seen as a feeling of fulfilment for something you're working on to accomplish.

### **Difference 2. Passion versus potential**

Yarigai can be nurtured by the accumulation of a sense of fulfilment, which represents the sense of satisfaction and achievement arising from having been able to fulfil one's potential. If it's your passion to constantly challenge yourself, the Yarigai is definitely a part of your Ikigai. But your Ikigai is not limited to becoming the best version of yourself. In fact, your Ikigai doesn't necessarily have to do anything with satisfying self-actualisation needs.

### **Difference 3. Life versus work**

Yarigai is widely used when one refers to a job. Ikigai on the other hand refers to anything which gives you meaning in life. This means that any Yarigai could be part of your Ikigai but not always the other way around.

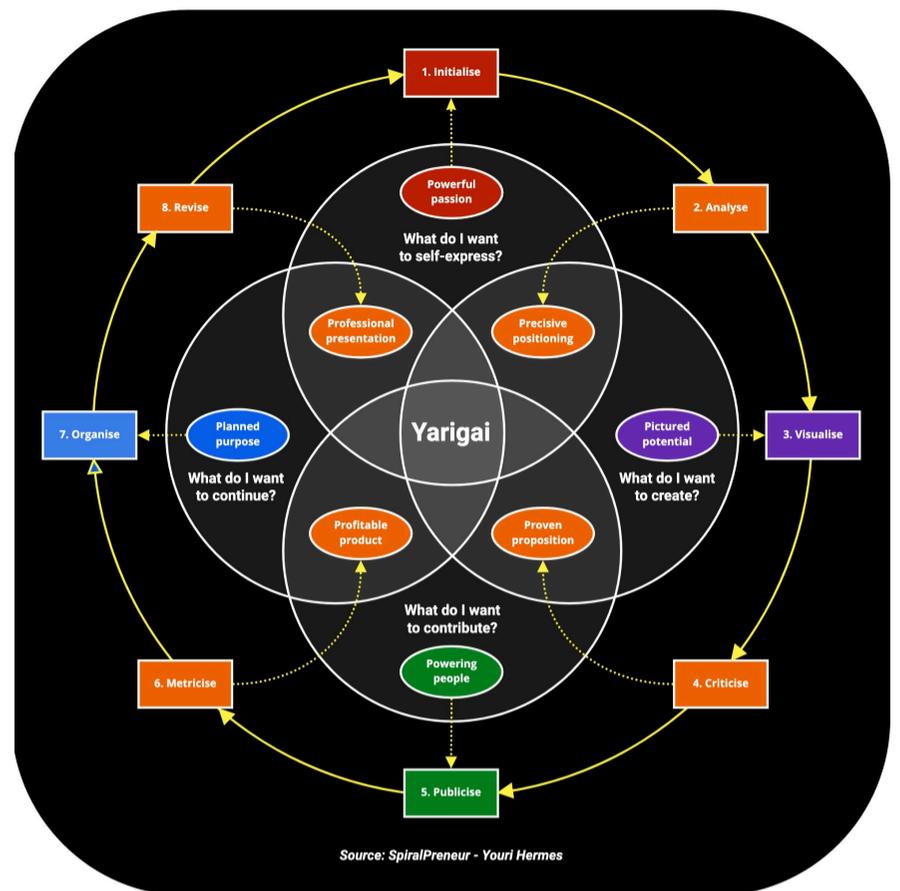
Even though Ikigai and Yarigai share a few important traits, they are still different in multiple ways. Yarigai is focused on doing (instead of being), potential (instead of passion) and work (instead of life). Because of it, the Ikigai and Yarigai diagram are also different.

# The 2 types of the spiralpreneur theory

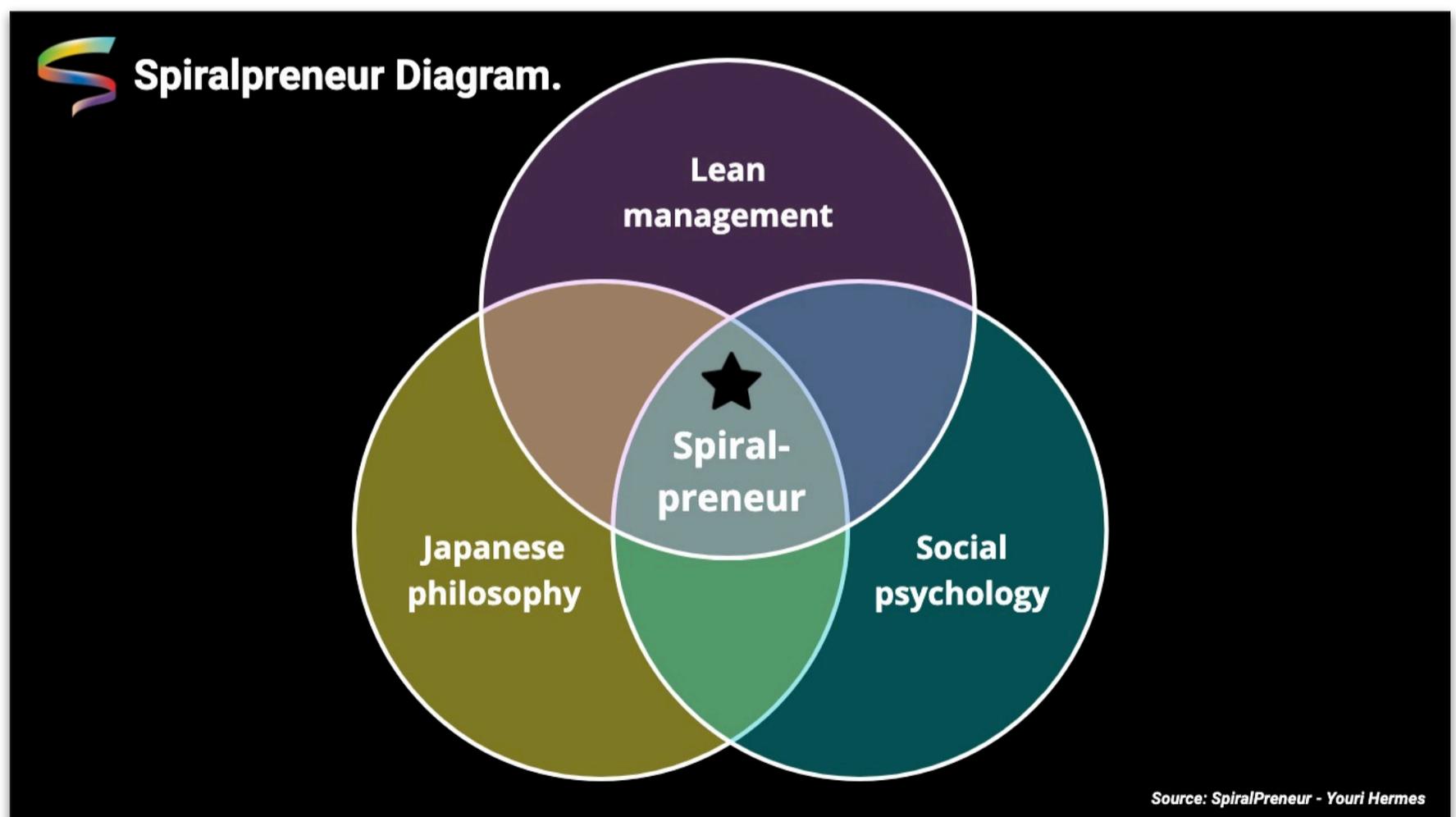
## The definition of a spiralpreneur

The name of the authors business is SpiralPreneur (with two capital letters). Because it's our mission to transform as many entrepreneurs into spiralpreneurs as possible. But what does a spiralpreneur (without capital letters) mean?

It consists of two words: *spiral* and *preneur*. The spiral reflects the movement of sustainable development, which doesn't move linearly but gradually improves with unpredictable jumps. Spiral can also be associated with Spiral Dynamics, which is the central framework within our SpiralPreneur solutions.



The spiralpreneur runs business through the systemic approach of the Yarigai system.



Preneur is derived from the Latin word “prendes”, which means understanding. The definition of a spiralpreneur is someone who understands how sustainable change can be realised and acts upon this knowing. In other words: a purpose-driven entrepreneur who uses the Spiral Dynamics framework to bring positive change to others and themselves in the most sustainable way.

At SpiralPreneur, we make distinguish between two types of entrepreneurs: the linearpreneur and the spiralpreneur. There is no better/superior or worse/inferior type. Both types exist in today’s world, linearpreneurs in particular. The black-and-white kind of distinction is not made to polarise nor to be judgmental about it. It’s purely made for clarification purposes only. Between the black-and-white there is a large grey area. Meaning, entrepreneurs in Western society usually fall into both the bucket of a linearpreneur and spiralpreneur. Either way, a leap in development is conditional to bridge the gap between a linearpreneur and spiralpreneur for good. This leap is triggered by a gradual or sudden change of certain life circumstances.

The distinction between a linearpreneur and spiralpreneur is inspired from the distinction between the 1st and 2nd tier value systems of Spiral Dynamics<sup>9</sup>. The spiralpreneur possesses more complex capacities than the linearpreneur. That is, moreover, conditional to contribute to today’s collective challenges, such as climate change.

## **The 6 secrets behind the spiral**

Let’s take a moment to reflect on the intelligence behind the spiral. The spiral beautifully represents a living view on change. Below you’ll find 6 secrets behind the spiral.

### **Secret 1. The leaping spiral**

The opposite of a spiralpreneur is a linearpreneur. A linearpreneur beliefs change follows a predictable linear path. That you’re working step by step towards a certain outcome. A spiralpreneur on the contrary believes change is often something unpredictable. All you can do is to guide and facilitate it. Because all of the sudden, an unexpected circumstance can turn your plans a 180 degrees. That’s why you can better put your attention in changing the initial plan instead of sticking to it from A to Z. This last way leaves no room for uncertainties. That’s a pity. Because transformative change contains uncertainty.

### **Secret 2. The including spiral**

Spiral development states that it’s not sustainable to skip a part of the spiral. For how else can you develop from point a to point b on the spiral? Skipping would split up the spiral in a developed and undeveloped part. This will leave you without a solid foundation needed for further development along the spiral. It’s necessary to consolidate new change into the foundation you already have. This will make development sustainable. Meaning, you won’t get thrown back for the slightest trigger. That’s why you don’t want to rush through your development. Even though you can make big leaps from time to time, you’ll still need to go through the full process of change to prevent fallbacks as much as possible.

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<sup>9</sup> Spiral Dynamics will be covered in the next chapter. It’s already good to know that the framework contains eight different value systems. The two most complex systems are belonging to 2nd tier, which are unlike the other systems not restricted to survival mode.

### **Secret 3. The oscillating spiral**

A spiral not only moves up or down. It also moves back and forth if you're looking at it from above. Personal change will affect your personal values. Transformative change can even replace your key values. Although your values may look static, they are like everything in life variable in nature. But less changeable if you'd compare it with your behaviour or skills. The Logical Levels of Dilts and Bateson makes your identifications, ascending in variability<sup>10</sup>, visual. This model has been covered in chapter 4.4.

Now that you're aware of the oscillating nature of the spiral, you may be wondering between what it swings. The spiral of human development is oscillating between the focus on yourself and a focus on the group. Your key values can therefore be subdivided. This subdivision is self-expression<sup>11</sup> and group-cohesion<sup>12</sup>. We have covered this distinction<sup>13</sup> in more detail in chapter 1.2 (theory) and 4.1 (practice).

### **Secret 4. The transcending spiral**

A shift of focus to either self-expression or group-cohesion usually reflects a personal transformation you made. It makes you more sophisticated. Meaning you'll develop more complex capacities. You'll develop a stronger compassion as a by-product. The ascendance of complexity and compassion moves upward in the spiral. A higher place in the spiral reflects a more complex worldview compared with the lower side in the spiral. But the location in the spiral doesn't say anything about what's best. In some environments, it can be better to operate from a lower place in the spiral whereas other environments asks you to be higher in the spiral instead.

Viewing the spiral from above may conceive you in thinking like you're just moving back and forth between self-expression and group-cohesion. But by taking into account the dimension of the development of complex capacities, it's in fact an upward moving spiral with a dynamic nature (meaning regression is also possible).

### **Secret 5. The open-ended spiral**

There are quite some models out there that shows the evolving human needs. Those models have one thing in common: it states that there is some kind of holy grail. This holy grail is basically limited to the extent the founder of the model can see into the future. A good example for a model with a final destination regarding human needs is the pyramid of Maslow. It shows that the need for self-actualisation is the highest need.

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<sup>10</sup> The lower in the pyramid of the Logical Levels, the more dynamic it is. Changing for example something tangible in your environment generally takes less effort than changing a deep-rooted belief about yourself or the world.

<sup>11</sup> If the centre of gravity within your key values are mostly on yourself, you can tell that the accent within your values is mainly self-expression. Values that fall under this bucket are for example passion, autonomy, ambition, excellence and self-reflection.

<sup>12</sup> The main accent would be group-cohesion if your key values are for example harmony, family, connection and patriotism.

<sup>13</sup> There is a large grey area between the extremes of either fully self-expression or group-cohesion. But usually, one of those overarching needs are dominant. The primary need for either self-expression or group-cohesion can change many times during a lifetime. Once you develop yourself, you'll eventually move the centre of gravity towards the opposite need. Which is self-expression if the need for group-cohesion was dominant before. And if you're coming from a stronger need of group cohesion instead, you'll move back to a stronger attraction for self-expression. Although this dynamic may seem that it just swings back and forth, the transcending character adds more depth to it.

Spiral Dynamics is a framework that shows development is a never-ending quest. New value systems keep being added to the model. This makes it a living model instead of just another snapshot of somebody's experiences complemented by philosophical ideas about life. The spiral continues to grow without human boundaries. Because development itself has no boundaries, only humans themselves. Why should something variable in nature suddenly not change anymore? Even though you may not be able to conceive a new worldview yet, doesn't mean a new worldview cannot emerge within the generations yet to come!

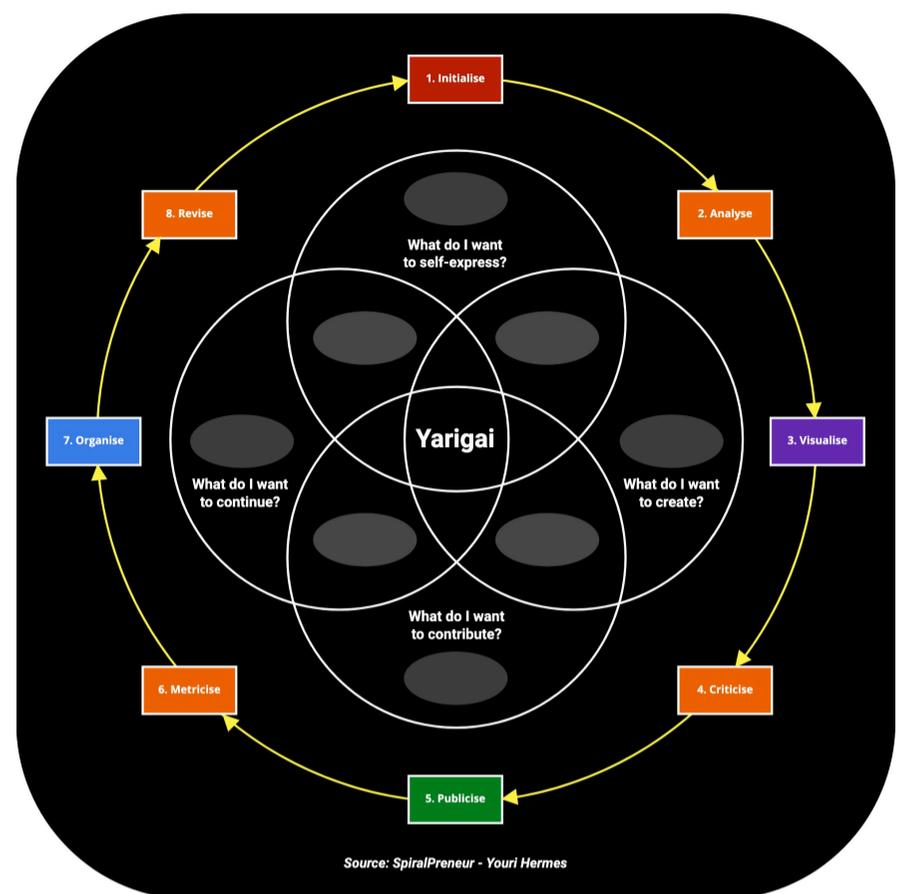
### **Secret 6. The double spiral**

When thinking about human development, it will be helpful to add another spiral to it. That's, more over, also the case with the Spiral Dynamics framework. Spiral Dynamics is and have been our main inspiration for determining our company name. Spiral Dynamics is about getting insight in the interaction between humans (or other human systems like organisations and societies) and its life conditions. This short explanation contains the answer for why we should add an extra spiral to better understand human development. Because to get a good picture of how change occurs, we both need a spiral representing the human system (core values) and a spiral representing the life circumstances. Those spirals are mutually influencing each other. This double helix reminds you to be aware of the constant interactivity between your inner world and the outer world. It will help you to better understand and fathom change.

# The 3 main phases of Change Dynamics

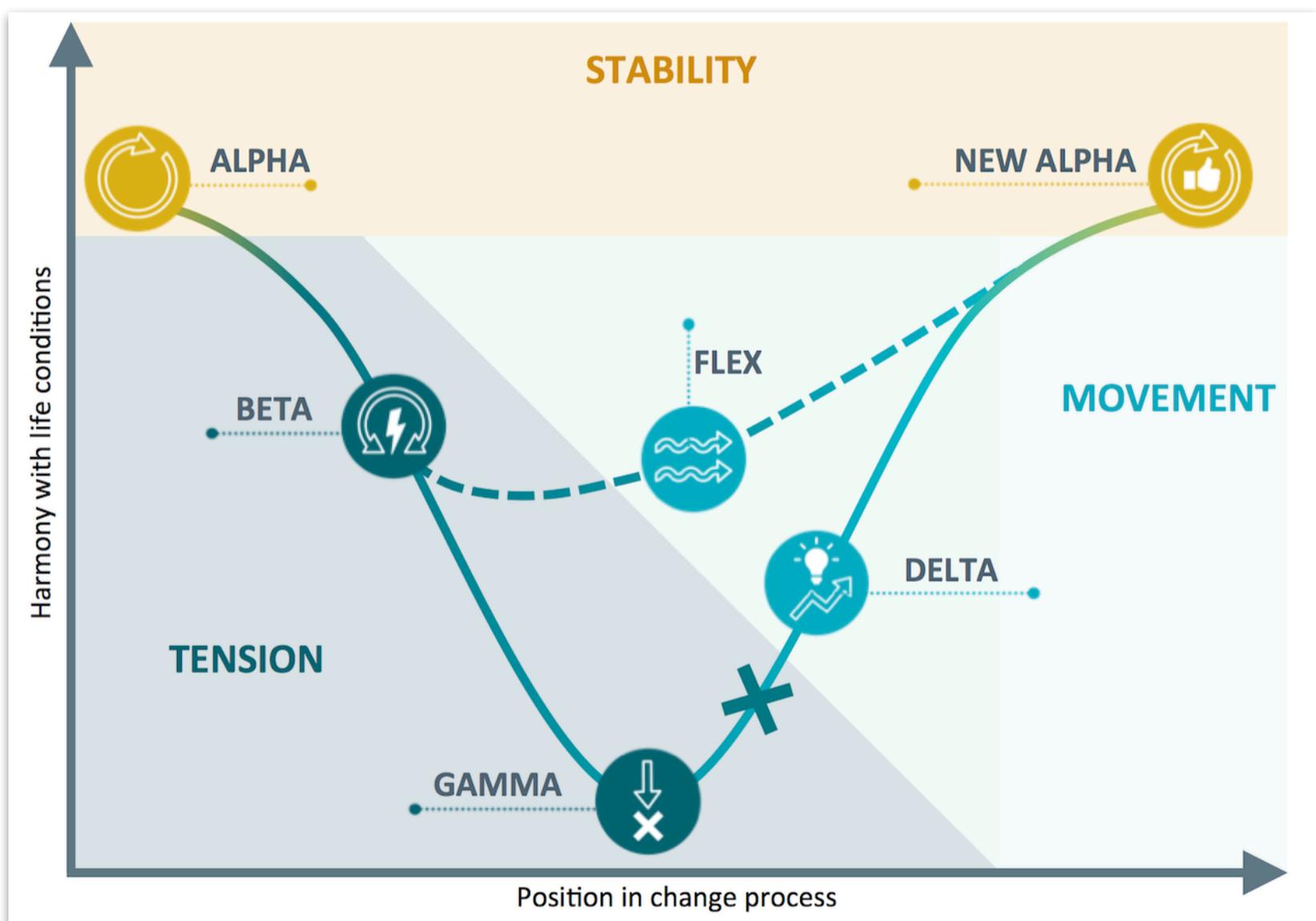
## Introduction

The Change Dynamics framework is developed by Clare W. Graves and elaborated on by Christopher Cowan and Don Beck in their book *Spiral Dynamics*. It distinguishes 6 different change phases. Graves gave each of those stages a different letter of the Latin alphabet: Alpha, Beta, Flex, Gamma, Delta and New Alpha. Let's go through each of those phases by covering the three main phases.



Source: SpiralPreneur - Youri Hermes

*The Yarigai steps are all about continuous change.*



Source: *Change Dynamics* - ValueMatch

## **Main phase 1. Stability**

### **Alpha**

In this phase, the entrepreneur and his or her life conditions are mainly in harmony. It's a stable situation. It's the initial phase of change where you become aware that a change is needed or desired. At this stage, you may be resistant to change and may need to be convinced of the benefits of the proposed change.

### **New Alpha**

The New Alpha phase is the final phase of change dynamics and comes after movement (through the Flex or Delta phase). At this point, the change has become the new normal and individuals or groups have fully adjusted to the new way of doing things. When the new way of being is in sync with the new life conditions, the situation becomes stable and a New Alpha emerges. This phase reflects the consolidation of ideas and insights from previous phases by means of a Delta wave. The individual gradually evolves to a stable state and their world moves toward balance. The new balance between external conditions and inner value system begins to consolidate. Many believe that their highest goal has been reached. Happy days are here again, but behind the horizon, the seeds of the next Beta phase are already being sown.

## **Main phase 2. Tension**

### **Beta**

Change often begins with a disruption or crisis in an individual's life. This disruption forces the person to see their current situation from a new perspective, which then leads to Alpha being replaced by Beta. The current situation can be made more stable again by relatively minor changes in behaviour, thinking or external life conditions. If you are still stuck in Beta, you may need to make larger changes. Former ways of coping are no longer suitable. There are a few common responses to Beta conditions: ignore them; make some changes; or make major changes. When people are hesitant to try new things, they can sometimes be hit in the head with a feeling of nostalgia for the past. If people don't open themselves up to change, they tend to double-down on their current behaviours. Often in the hope that these behaviours will solve their problems and get them back to normal. However, when conditions change, this strategy won't work because it is based on old assumptions that no longer apply. In the beta phase, you actively explore and consider the proposed change. You may gather information and ask questions to better understand the change and how it will impact you.

### **Gamma**

The gamma phase is when you start to plan and prepare for the change. You may develop strategies and take actions to help them implement the change successfully. Gamma is a time of transition, during which a person adjusts to living in disharmony and increasing tension with their surroundings. In this phase, energy is being used to keep oneself going,

so there's little left over for other concerns. Internally, tension can continue to rise, along with feelings of despondency that no change is possible. A gamma trap is difficult because it can feel like (almost total) powerlessness in the face of perceived barriers. The barriers vary widely in shape and size, and they can be perceived internally as well as externally. In order to overcome a blockage, we must either change the outside world or change ourselves. When we change ourselves and move forward, it results in a feeling of energy and hope.

## **Main phase 3. Movement**

### **Flex**

Flexibility means you adapt to changes in quick succession, like a roller coaster. It involves emotional detachment from the previous situation while embracing the new circumstances. It's about making any necessary adjustments to your (work) processes or routines. This is often called the evolutionary path compared to the revolutionary path of Gamma. This reduces the sense of disharmony and larger changes become possible. However, people rarely achieve this where drastic changes are concerned and it basically never happens when transiting between value systems<sup>14</sup>. In drastic change processes you will therefore also encounter Gamma.

### **Delta**

When a person moves from Gamma to Delta, it feels like they are suddenly seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. They can face the future with growing confidence again, and with this renewed zest they either shape new life circumstances (external change) or accept the circumstances as they have evolved (through inner change). This is often a chaotic period of rapid change in which the barriers are overcome and former limitations fall away. The surge of Delta energy is often a wave of enthusiasm and there is a sense of liberation. Breaking through Gamma barriers does not always directly lead to new harmony (new Alpha). Often there is anger at the old system which held back change for so long, and there is a backlash and desire to destroy that which may be useful or necessary to build the new system. In this phase, experimentation is the norm and failure can be expected as new ways are tried. All while the change has been fully implemented and you are working in the new system or way of doing things.

It's important to note that the process of change is often not a linear one. You may move back and forth between phases as they work through the change process.

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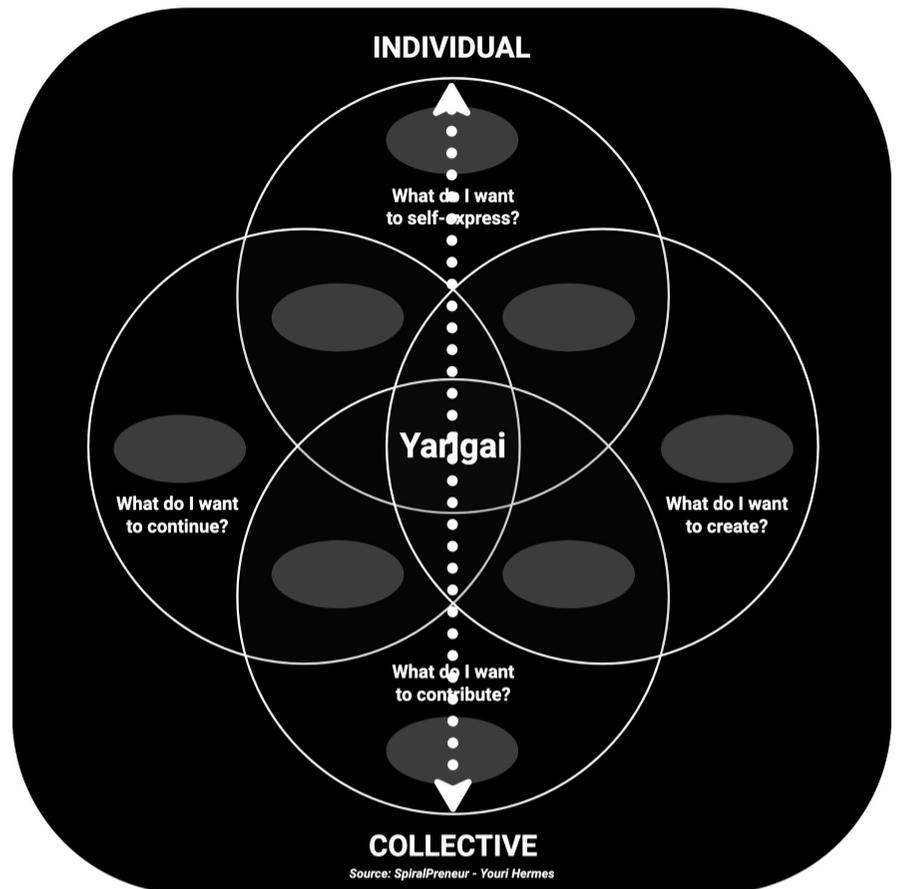
<sup>14</sup> A change between value systems refer to a development of a new world view described in the Spiral Dynamics framework.

# The 4 dimensions of the Four Quadrants

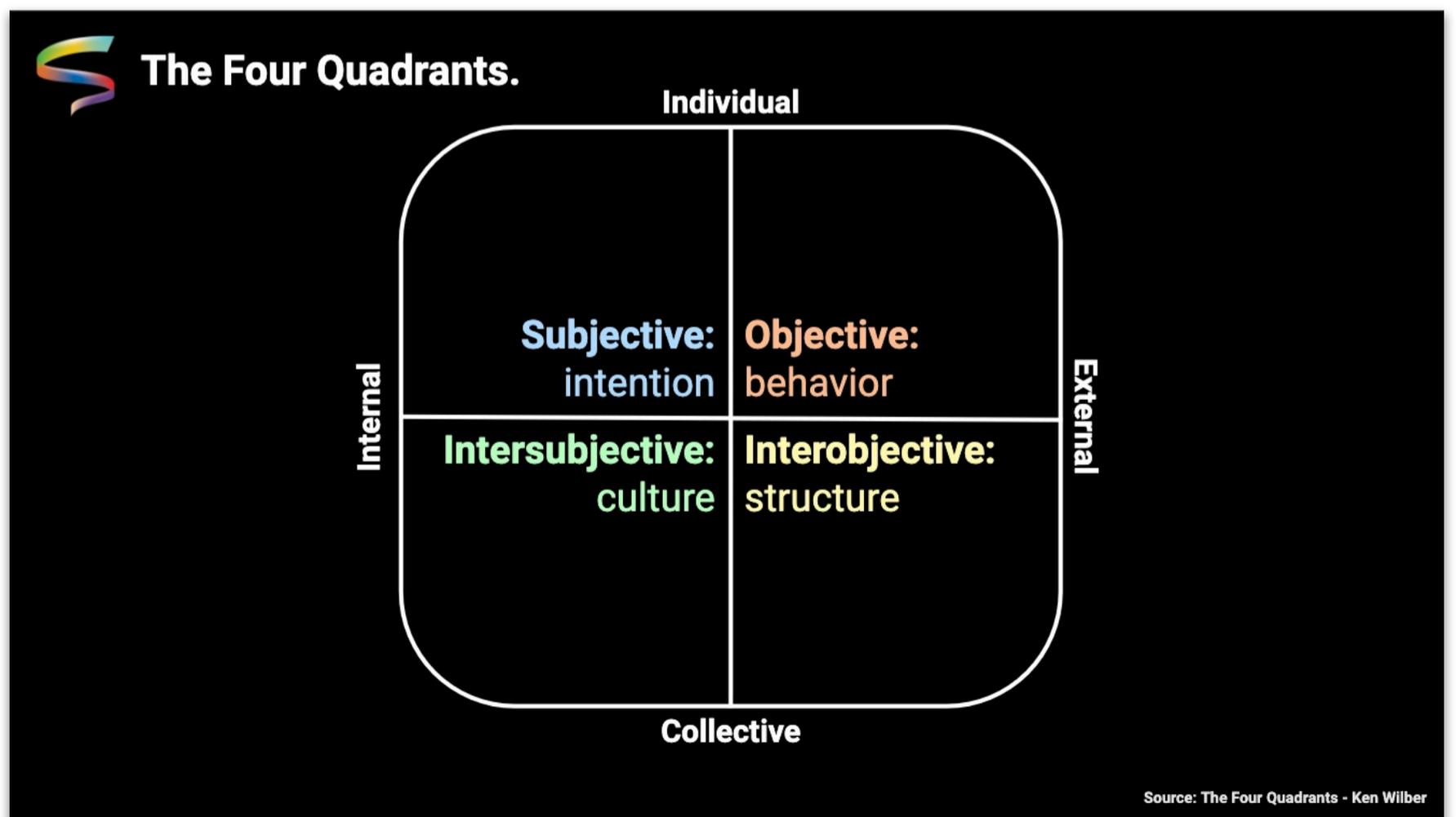
## Introduction

The Four Quadrants framework has been developed by Ken Wilber and is part of his Integral Theory. The framework shows you the different angles you can take on anything. Each of those angles are just one part of the truth. Everything which is happening, from unmentionable changes to noteworthy changes, can be seen from each of those four angles. If you focus on just one perspective only, you're more likely to neglect important areas for successfully guiding a change. This will slow down your change. This unnecessary delay leads to frustration.

Wilber makes distinction between four different angles: the subjective ('I'), intersubjective ('we'), objective ('it') and inter-objective ('its'). The subjective and objective quadrants are both individual from nature, whereas the intersubjective and inter-objective quadrants are focused on a collective level.



*In line with the Yarigai questions, you both want to go through the individual as well as collective part.*



Next to the individuality and collectivity, there is another distinction which can be made. The subjective and intersubjective quadrants are focused on the interior side. On the opposite you've got the objective and inter-objective quadrants which are exterior focused.

Every change manifests in different dimensions. The spiralpreneur is aware of this and takes into account the collective part (the inter-subjective and inter-objective) of change as well. By activating this integral approach on change, you're more likely to successfully guide sustainable change. Especially those kind of changes that doesn't necessarily benefit just you, but which are also contributing to the collective.

Now that the distinctions between the four way of looking at things are clear, let's go through some examples to get a better understanding of each quadrant.

## **1. Interior Individual**

This quadrant refers to subjective experiences and mental processes that take place within an individual's mind. Examples of this quadrant might include thoughts, feelings, values, and beliefs. For an entrepreneur, this might include their personal goals and motivations, their vision for their business, and their decision-making processes.

## **2. Exterior Individual**

This quadrant refers to objective phenomena and physical actions that can be observed and measured. Examples of this quadrant might include behavior, speech, and physical artifacts. For an entrepreneur, this might include the products or services they offer, their marketing strategies, and their financial performance.

## **3. Interior Collective**

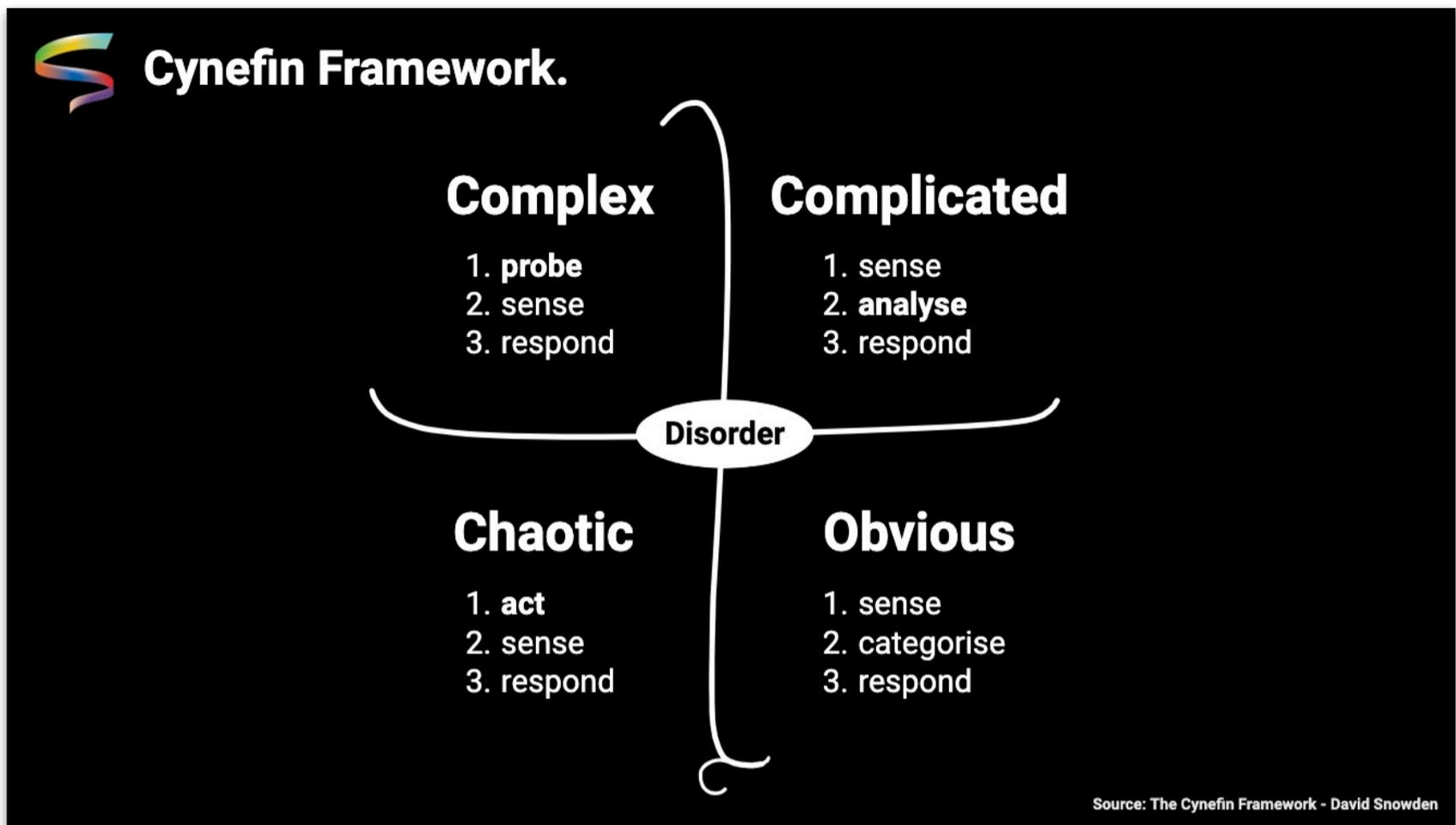
This quadrant refers to the shared subjective experiences and mental processes that take place within a group or organization. Examples of this quadrant might include group dynamics, culture, and shared values. For an entrepreneur, this might include the company's culture and values, team dynamics, and the shared goals and motivations of the team.

## **4. Exterior Collective**

This quadrant refers to objective phenomena and physical actions that take place within a group or organization. Examples of this quadrant might include organizational structures, systems, and policies. For an entrepreneur, this might include the legal structure of the company, the systems and processes in place to run the business, and the policies and procedures that govern the company.

Overall, the Four Quadrants Framework can be a helpful tool for entrepreneurs to understand the various factors that influence their business and to make more informed decisions. By considering all four quadrants, entrepreneurs can gain a more holistic understanding of their business and the world around them.

# The 5 situations of the Cynefin Framework



## Introduction

The Cynefin framework<sup>15</sup> is developed by David Snowden in 1999. It helps you to analyse which decision making process is most appropriate for any situation or problem. It distinguishes four decision making processes in the following order: obvious, complicated, complex and chaotic. In the center there is the situation of disorder.

The right part of the matrix (obvious and complicated) belongs to the predictable side. The left part on the other hand belongs to the unpredictable side instead. Using predictable techniques in the unpredictable side (like a complicated approach in a chaotic situation) is very counter-productive.

The spiralpreneur is able to handle bigger complexity than the linearpreneur. That comes to handy when dealing with organisational transformation. This messy and complex process falls under the unpredictable side due to the many facets that should be taken into account. Handling the unknown and uncertainty requires a sensitive and adaptive approach. Let's shortly go through the different possible situations so you better understand when to use which strategy.

## Situation 1. The obvious

Obvious situations include those that are easy to explain and understand. They have a predictable outcome with an obvious conclusion that could be reached by following a set of

<sup>15</sup> The explanations and examples in this paragraph are mainly borrowed from Marc Mathys, expert in organisational transformation.

rules or guidelines. We can talk of an obvious situation when something is repeatable. Tic-tac-toe can be used as analogy for this. That's because you always know it's best to start your piece in the corner. The process that belongs to obvious situations is to first observe, then categorise your observations and directly respond upon this. You can speak of best practices in this situation, like washing your hands during the covid outbreak to avoid contamination.

Centralised organisations can generally use obvious strategies when making decisions and getting faced with challenges. That's because in this situation the business owner possesses all needed experience and skills for doing so.

## **Situation 2. The complicated**

Complicated situations require us to look at several factors before we can achieve any clear conclusions about what is happening or what should be done about it. It takes in-depth analysis to understand these types of problems because there are many variables involved and they may not behave in ways we expect them to behave. This situation requires much finer analysis. Experts are needed and relationships need to be made. A fitting analogy with the complicated situation is chess. The process is to first sense the situation. But now, instead of directly categorising your findings you'll analyse those instead. That's where the advice of experts come into play. Instead of best practices in obvious situations, you now need a series of good practices instead. Those practices are based on your past experiments. To bring in the earlier example of chess, you assign a value to each of your pieces and those of your opponents as just one of the many good practices.

A centralised organisation isn't sufficient for this approach anymore. That's because you need different kind of experts and therefore different teams. In other words: a decentralised structure. To make the connection with centralised organisations, you can best view a decentralised structure as centralised units networked together. But as soon as there is a need for innovation and competition, the complicated situation isn't sufficient anymore for the decentralised organisation. The big issue of decentralised organisations operating from a complicated situation, is that they tend to downgrade people as resources, resulting in brown-out, quiet-quitting, burn-out, bore-out and so on.

## **Situation 3. The complex**

A complex problem requires creative thinking and multiple approaches before you get an answer out of it; however, you know when your answer is wrong because it doesn't seem right or something feels off. It might take time before you figure out exactly why this is happening! In this situation you require really careful observation and experimentation. It's not possible to learn from the existing knowledge. You need to test and get responses back. To stay consistent with game analogies, poker is something that requires a process belonging to the complex situation. That's because different factors (probability calculations and luck) and many signs (from verbal to non-verbal ones) influences the way you play the game. You need to be able to think and feel right on the spot. The process for complex situations is to first probe, then sense and then to respond according to this. It's an emergent practice that makes doing analysis alone no longer sufficient. The probing part

applies a form of action, like doing a bet in poker. Your opponents can then call, fold or outbid you. You sense their reactions during this process, like carefully observing their body gestures.

The distributed type of organisation generally has to do with the complex situation. The process of probing, sensing and responding according to that is necessary to stay agile for those type of organisations. To properly give expression to the process of the complex situation, there are a few conditions. Humans need to be put of the center of the organisation, risks need to be taken and continuous experiments need to be done.

## **Situation 4. The chaotic**

Chaos refers to situations where things happen randomly without any discernible pattern or reason behind them at all- they just happen! There's no observable relationship with its cause. The observations and (your perception of) the rules are constantly changing. An example for a game that belongs to the chaotic situation is a typical game developed by children. Rules change along the game which makes analysis not possible. In this situation a novel practice (action) is required. Action without having any indication whether it will work out or not. But there is no other way to progress. You just need to get yourself moving by doing something. That makes acting the first necessary step of the process belonging to chaos, followed by sensing and responding. To return to the given example of a children's game, you can only know what to do next by participating.

## **Situation 5. The disorder**

The dark space in the centre represents disorder. The dysfunctional centre attracts you when there is a discrepancy between the amount of complexity of the situation and the way you deal with it. The first step in applying Cynefin is to understand the current situation. In disordered situations, there is no single correct approach. Instead, you must take a small step toward imposing order on the situation and see what happens. When trying to create order in a disordered situation, it's important to understand:

- The context of the problem: what are you trying to accomplish?
- Your objectives: why do you do what you do?
- Your constraints: what limits your options?

This goes back to knowing your environment. Having an idea of what will work in your particular context can help you make better decisions when things start getting complicated or frustrating. Understanding the context of a situation involves understanding context at multiple levels:

- Macro level: the world in which your business exists
- Meso level: the organisational functions and relationships within your organisation
- Micro level: the individuals that make up your organisation or project