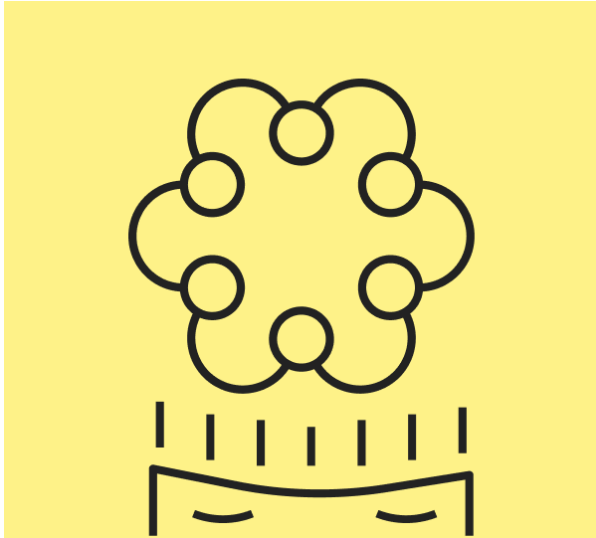




The 6 mindset factors

Mindsets are difficult to describe and are not exactly tangible. They are deep, assumed, often composite and complex, subconscious thinking patterns that shape how we make sense of the world and what we do. A person would usually find it difficult to describe their mindset.

People use the term mindset as something they hold and share. For example, as an individual a fixed or a growth mindset, or collectively the mindset that a certain nationality holds which can also be called 'culture'.

Mindsets are shared and built by combining tangible elements. We call these elements "**mindset factors**".

The 6 most important mindset factors are:

1. Narratives
2. Social norms
3. Emotions and their mental defences
4. Identities
5. Values
6. Environment

The combination of these factors constitutes our mindsets. So, when we are talking about shifting mindsets, what we mean is shifting these factors.

Narratives are the basic ideas behind the stories we tell at a collective and individual level. For example, a typical narrative is "The American dream", or a nation as a geographic identity or the value of money as a trading item.

Social norms are the collective 'rules' that influence people's mindsets and behaviours; since people want to feel accepted by their social group, they follow the mindsets and behaviours the group has deemed 'acceptable'.

Emotions are primary mental reactions (such as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feelings, usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body. They are distinct from **mental defences**. These are secondary mental mechanisms that prevent us from feeling negative emotions like fear or guilt. Examples of these mechanisms are denial and disavowal.

Identity is the label or a description someone gives themselves (or others). People can hold multiple identities. Profession, family, nationality or hobbies (sports or fan clubs can form identities).

Values are guiding principles, drivers, or end goals that motivate different types of behaviours and influence our attitudes, perceptions and beliefs. Values could be the primacy of personal success, benevolence or altruism.

Environment: The legislative or socio-economic frameworks that determine good and bad behaviours, and the physical environment where we live, shop, work and entertain ourselves, can influence the way we think and behave and how we maintain those mindsets and behaviours.

Some examples:

Narratives: "the planet has finite resources", "growth is necessary for our economy", "we need global cooperation to prevent future crisis".

Social Norms: "I wear a mask when I am sick, not to infect others", "a person's value is connected to the work they do".

Emotions and their **mental defences:** anxiety towards or denial of the environmental realities, fear or anger of having to sacrifice things that are important to the individual (dreams).

Identities: intellectuals, parents, sporty-types, left-wing.

Values: benevolence, universalism, hedonism, power, security, control.

Environment: Good public transport and cycle lanes, taxation for negative environmental externalities, easy access to environmentally friendly goods.

Last edit: 29/07/2021

