

Values Level Thinking

The concept of Values Level Thinking has come from the work of Clare Graves, Chris Cowan and Don Beck.

These levels, and the themes that go with them, shape the way we look at the world and how we behave. We have some degree of all the levels operating and generally have a preference for a particular level and it is either helpful for us or not helpful. And remember that these values and values level thinking operate at an unconscious level. There are tools which enable us to find out what level we mainly operate at and this is often useful to know.

Here is a summary of each level.

Values Level 1 : Survival mode. This type of thinking is all about individual survival whether it is the person living on the street and is focused on food, water, shelter and warmth or it could be someone who is really ill or even a business that is in meltdown. In this type of thinking the person's time line is very short. It is all about survival and getting through the day.

Values Level 2 : Tribal mode. The even levels are group levels and here there will be a tribe/family/clan/gang where there is a leader and that leader is usually the elder and what he/she says dictates what everyone in the group does. Tradition and rituals such as talking to trees or having a charm that you carry around with you are important to this type of thinking.

Values Level 3 : Aggression. An individual level where results are based on taking what they want. This type of thinking involves a short time line and consequences of actions are not even on their time line. The attitude of winner takes all and kill the competition are prevalent in this type of thinking. I think of the Mafia as representative of this level and even Game of Thrones. It can however be useful in some scenarios.

Values Level 4 : Sacrifice Now for Rewards later. A group level. The majority of people – 40% of the UK population are in this level. It is the basis of the society that you live in. Work all your life to get your pension, be a good person for your life and go to heaven. Rewards follow sacrifice. A rule book is important in this type of thinking and this could be the laws of the land, the bible, the koran, the corporate manual and you MUST follow the rules or you are judged and considered to be wrong.. This level can be very black and white and judgemental.

Values Level 5 : The Entrepreneur. This person does not want to wait for their rewards – they want them now and are prepared to work for them. They don't want to follow the rules anymore and want to have what they want and be the best. However, they do think of consequences to others when taking action and want to form relationships with others that help them on their way. This person wants the best of everything and have what they want. Because people have usually moved from level 4-5, it can be an uncomfortable level to start with as they are still surrounded but VL 4 people and rules.

Values Level 6 :Sacrifice now in order to get acceptance now. This person is focused on their inner world and wants everyone to be happy. Here, the consensus of the group is important and this type of thinking will lead to association into others problems or traumas. People behave in certain ways to protect others and keep themselves and others happy. This often leads to not being able to charge or feedback or break away from unhelpful situations. It doesn't get results. Values level 6 groups find it difficult to make progress because they are keeping everyone happy.

Values Level 7 : Here the thinking revolves around what works. Decisions are made without emotions and are totally dependent on how to get an outcome. Often people at this level are without many friends and are quite happy to do whatever works for them.

It is an independent level

Remember:

1. All levels are useful in particular contexts
2. You have all levels available to you but will show a preference for one.
3. Some levels are not as useful as others in certain contexts.
4. You can change your thinking patterns with NLP & Time Line Therapy.

The last point is particularly important because in the world we live in, many people have “re-packaged” this concept to label people which has little use at all. As far as I am aware NLP & Time Line Therapy is the only thing that the average man in the street can utilise to change the way they think

Adapted from The American Board of NLP's description of Values Level Thinking in the training manual for NLP Coach