

Working with values in evaluation

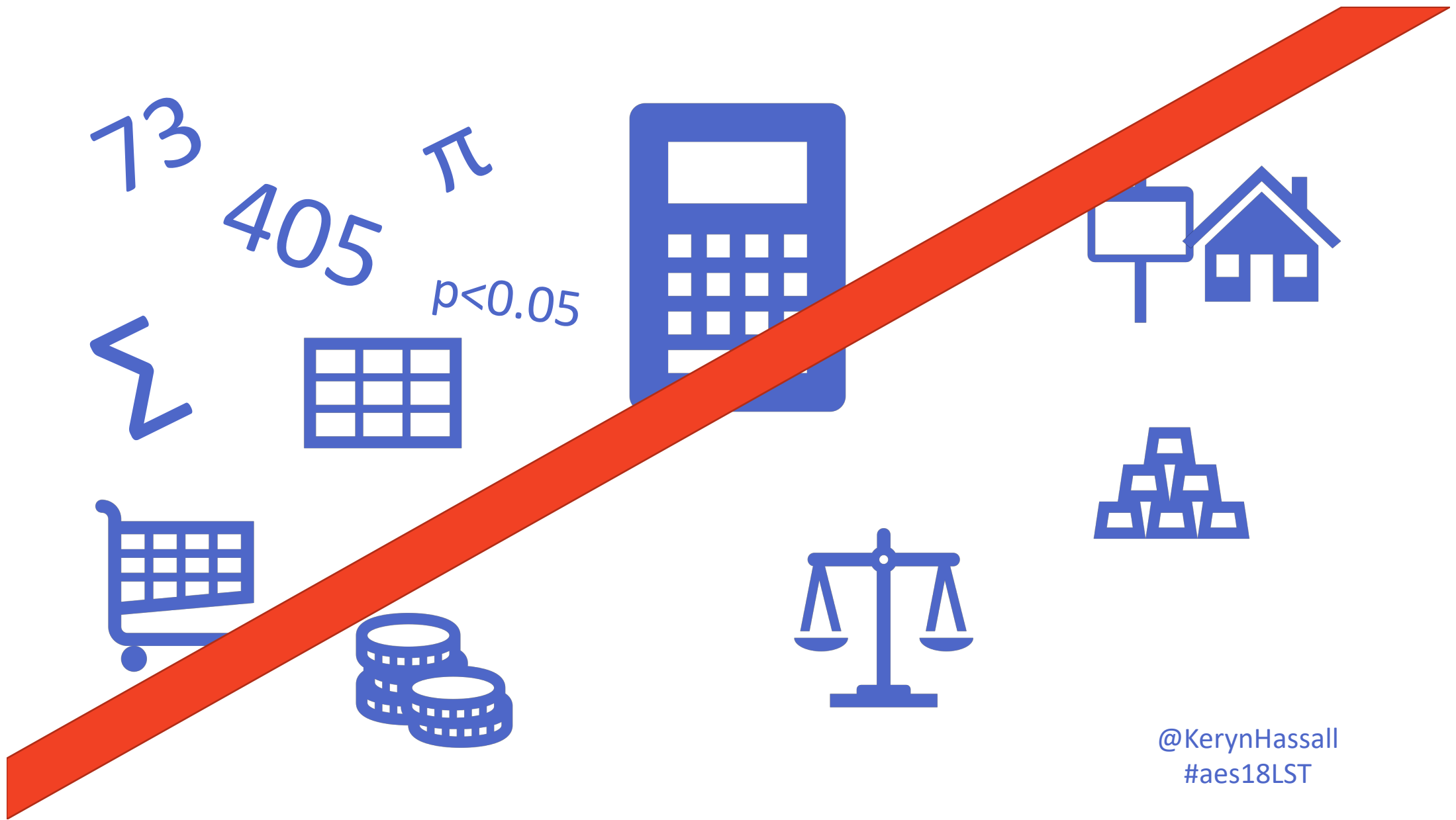
Keryn Hassall



@KerynHassall



keryn@aptavit.com.au



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What were you
taught to think
about values?

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Facts

Objective

Values

Subjective

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*Stalin was a
cruel dictator*
a thick description

*babies require
care to survive*
a normative fact



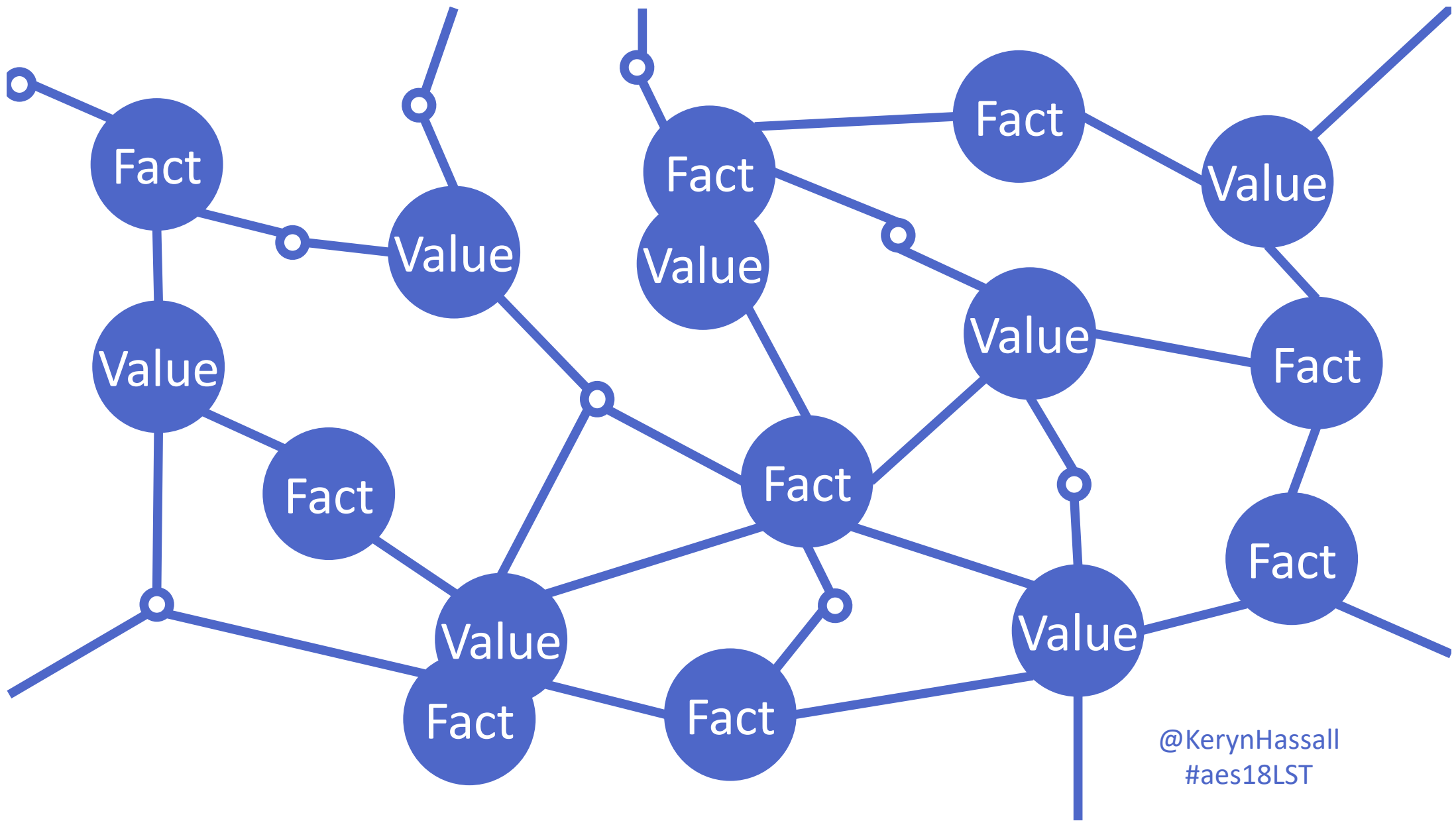
Facts

more objective

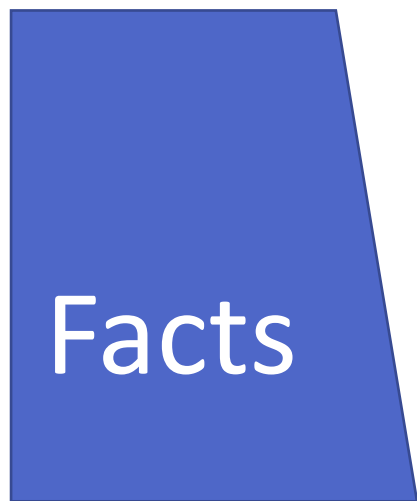
Values

more subjective

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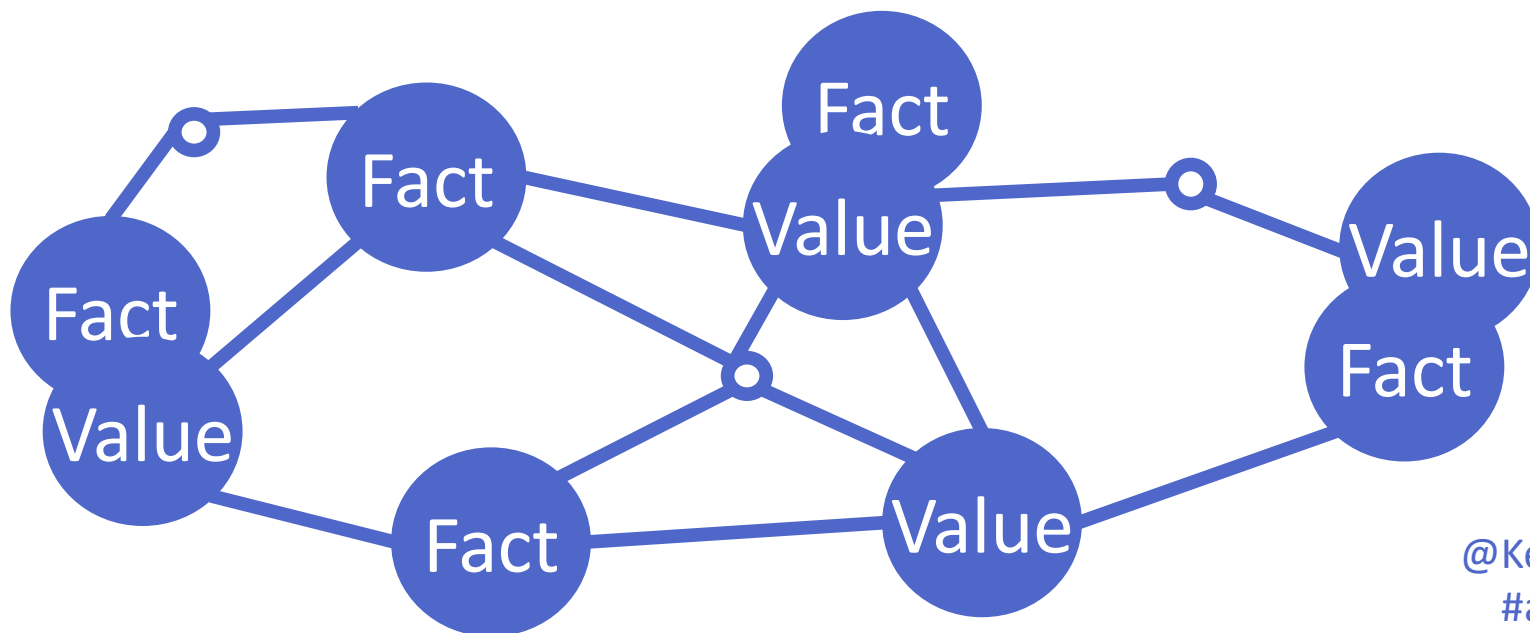


Values



Facts

Values



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| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| is | ought |
| fact | value |
| science | belief |
| reason | emotion |
| positive | normative |
| objective | subjective |
| descriptive | prescriptive |

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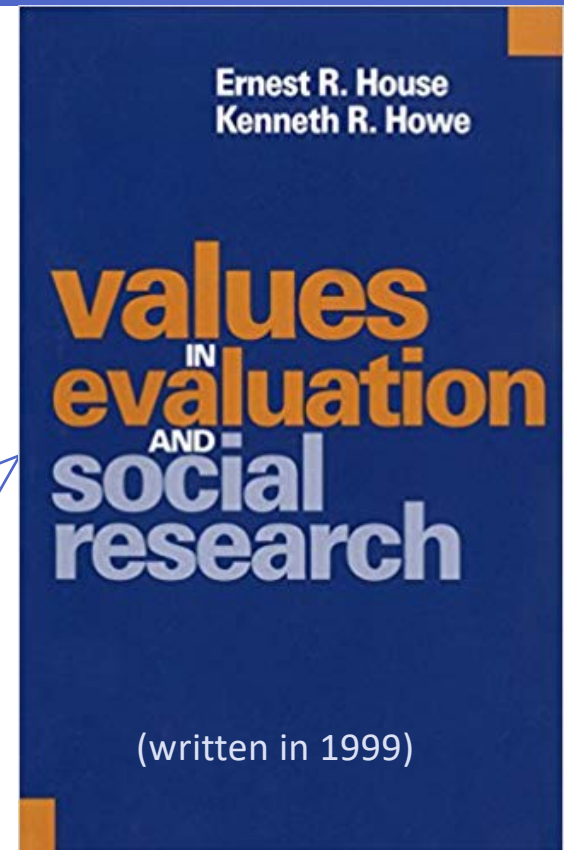
Old-fashioned ideas about
values have shaped our
evaluation practice

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Do we need a value framework?

Evaluation is as good or bad as the value framework that constrains it, in the same way that it is as good or bad as the research methodology it employs. In fact, the two cannot be disentangled.

(House & Howe 1999)



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Evaluation is a process for valuing

- is it (any) good?
- how good is it?
- is it worth doing?

to answer these questions
you need to know
what matters to people,
which means you need to
know about their values

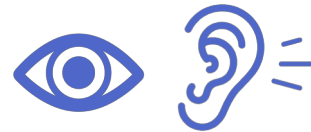
Working with values in 4 steps

- Step 1: How do people think about values?
- Step 2: What values matter here?
 - identify values in the program, the context, the community
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- Step 3: How will we work with values for this project?
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Step 1: How do people think about values?



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Preferences are not values

Preference

I don't like the flavour



Expression of a value

I don't like the way gambling is harmful to people



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Claims about causation are not values

“We shouldn’t teach children about crime because it will encourage them”

“We should teach managers to avoid crime by showing them what life is like in prison”

Not values – these are causal claims that can be tested with evidence

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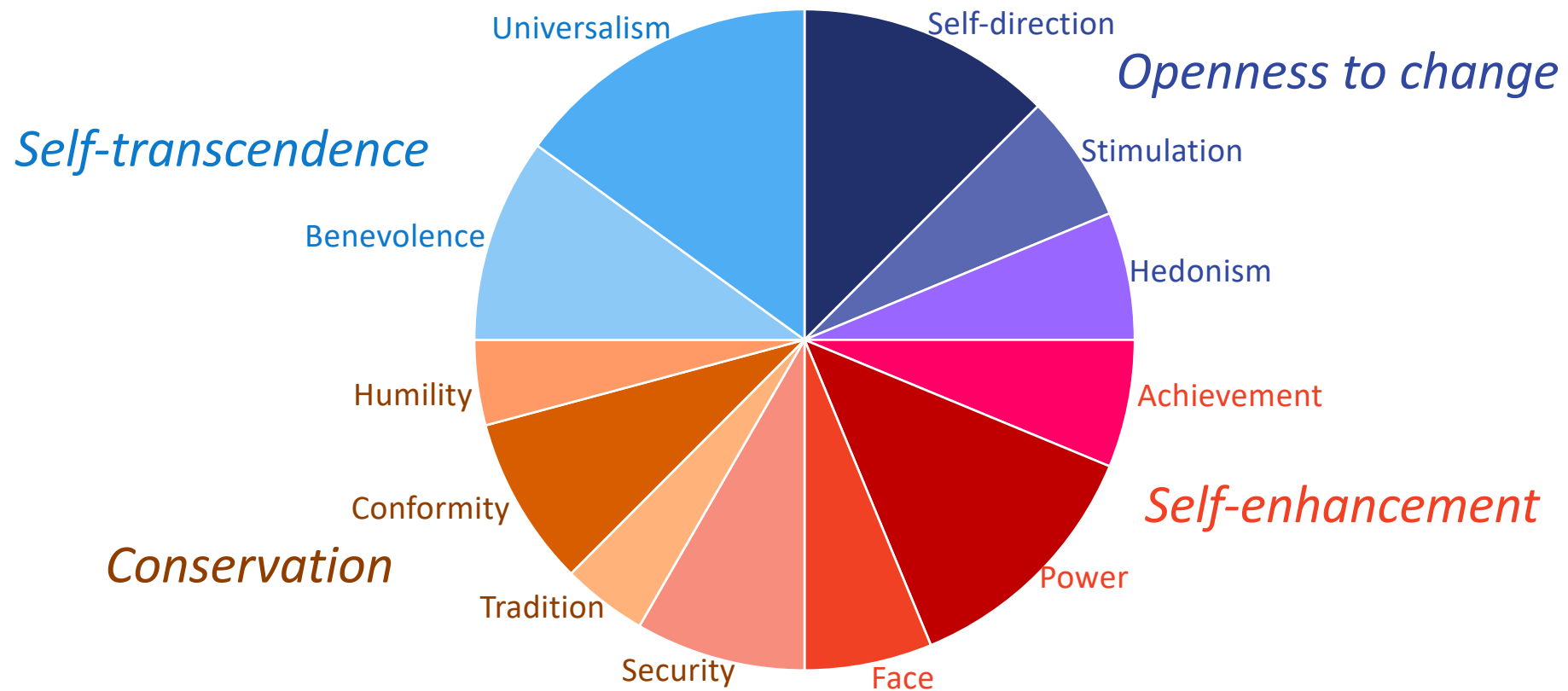
Values

1. are concepts or beliefs,
2. pertain to desirable end states or behaviours,
3. transcend specific situations,
4. guide selection or evaluation of behaviour, people and events, and
5. are ordered by relative importance.

(Schwartz 1992)

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Personal values



(Sagiv 2017, Schwartz 2012)

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Many types of values



| | |
|-------------|---|
| Personal | guiding human lives |
| Public | guiding the public sector |
| Epistemic | about knowledge, how it is created and used |
| Ethical | about what is right and wrong |
| Ontological | about how the world is, or should be, human nature, etc |
| Pragmatic | about usefulness, effectiveness, etc |
| Aesthetic | about beauty and form |

(modified from Sadler 1997)

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Public values

some examples

- common good
- accountability
- majority rule
- protecting minorities
- equal treatment
- social cohesion
- economic growth

etc

Epistemic values

some examples

- validity
- relevance
- evidence-based
- unbiased
- methodological rigor

etc

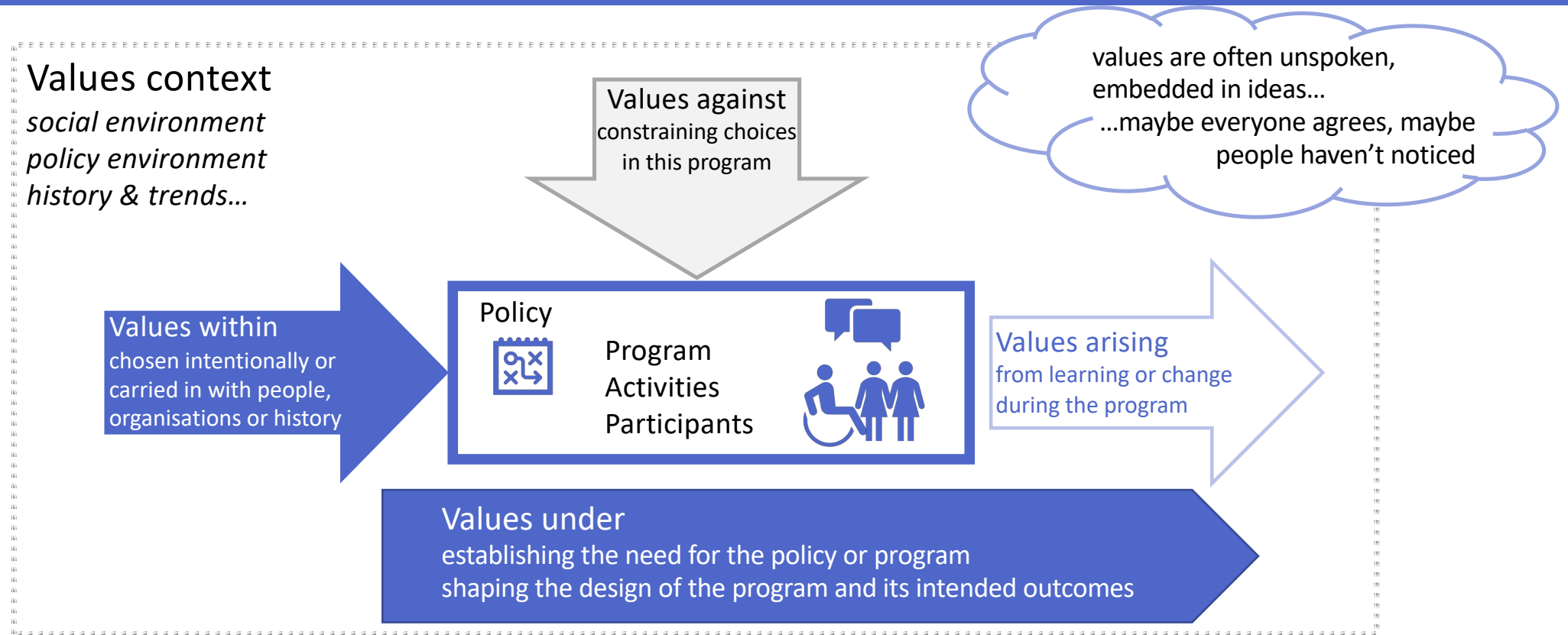
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Step 2: What values matter here?



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Values in and around a program



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Values will influence...

- the reasons for the program
- the intended outcomes
- how the program will be delivered
- who is involved, and who benefits
- what is prioritised
- what accountability is expected

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Values can be expressed in different forms

value commitment direct statement

value entailment embedded in a discipline,
worldview or practice

value consequence effects that may have
significance

embedded
in ideas, or
language, or
risks, etc

(Sadler 1997)

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Example.... 1. Scheme overview



The Scheme is a once in a generation social and economic reform. It is a new way of providing support for people with disability, their families and carers. The Scheme is estimated to support about 460,000 Australians with disability to live an ordinary life.

The Scheme is insurance, not welfare. It is based on four insurance principles:

1. The Scheme will be sustainable because its funding base will be driven by an actuarial estimate of the reasonable and necessary support needed for participants.
2. The Scheme will minimise costs by focusing on the lifetime value for Scheme participants.
3. The Scheme will invest in research and encourage innovation.
4. The Agency will support the development of community capability and social capital.

(from the NDIA Corporate Plan 2016-2021)

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Template for logging the values you find



...value commitments...

...values embedded in ideas and language...

Personal

guiding human lives

Public

guiding the public sector

Ontological

about how the world is, or should be

Ethical

about what is right and wrong

Epistemic

about knowledge, how it is created and used

Pragmatic

about usefulness, effectiveness. etc

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about beauty and form



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(from the NDIA Corporate Plan 2016-2021)

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Example.... 1. Scheme overview



(continues...)

Together, these principles enable the Scheme to fund people with disability to have an ordinary life. It is being built on evidence and experience. The Agency has an outcomes framework that it is using to measure and track improvements to the lives of participants, their families and carers.

In its first three years of trial, the Scheme has already transformed thousands of lives. The Agency is proud of the progress it is making. It is creating a disability system that is based on greater choice and control while being equitable, efficient and sustainable. The Scheme will transition from the original trial phase to the full scheme over the next three years (1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019) and will incrementally transform a rapidly growing number of lives.

(from the NDIA Corporate Plan 2016-2021)

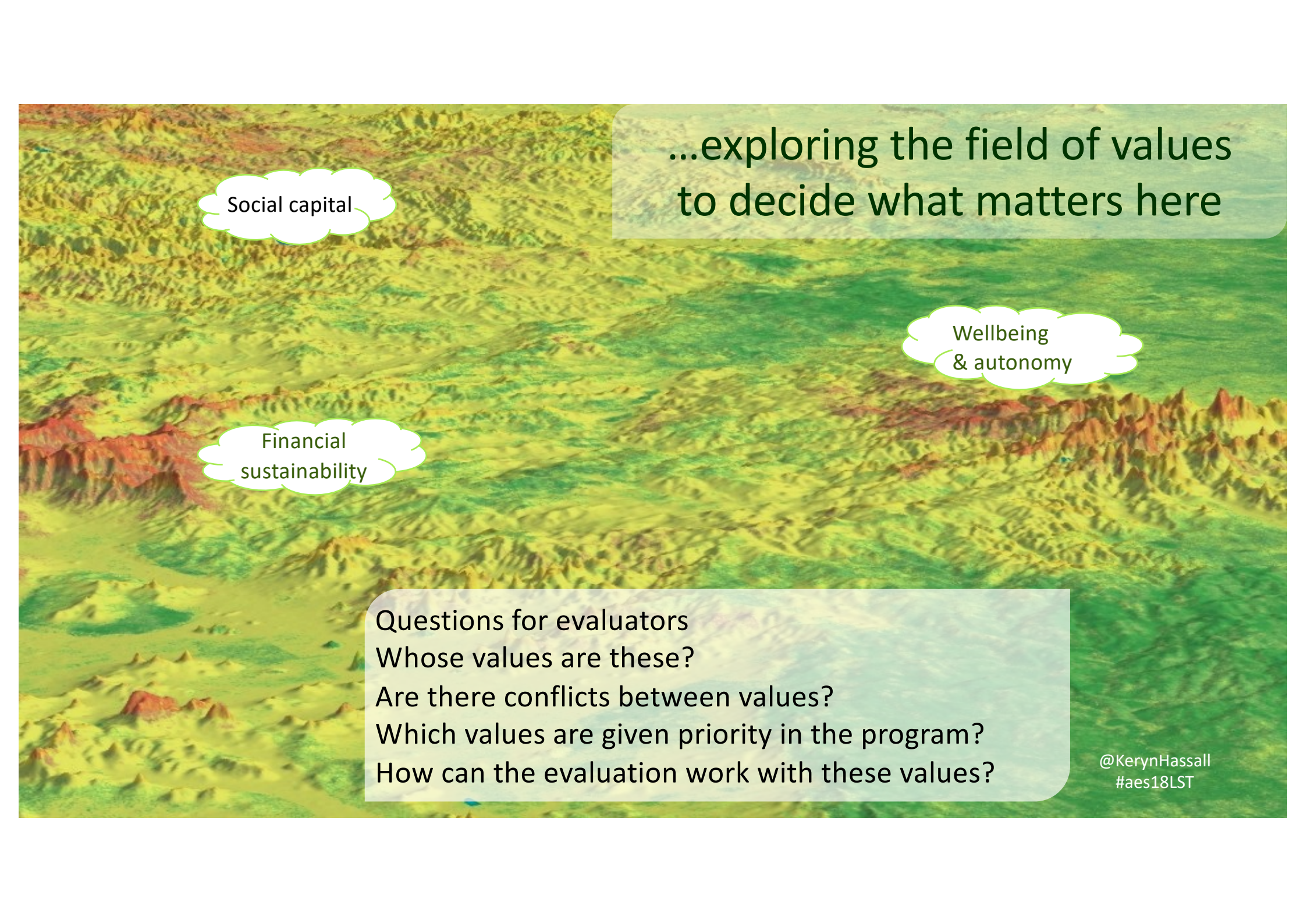
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Template for logging the values you find



| | ...value commitments... | ...values embedded in ideas and language... |
|--|--|--|
| Personal guiding human lives | providing support for people with disabilities greater choice and control | an ordinary life social capital |
| Public guiding the public sector | sustainable funding base minimise costs equitable efficient | social and economic reform invest in research innovation |
| Ontological about how the world is, or should be | reasonable and necessary support | |
| Ethical about what is right and wrong | | <i>not welfare</i> |
| Epistemic about knowledge | built on evidence and experience | actuarial estimate outcomes framework |
| Pragmatic about usefulness, effectiveness. etc | community capability | <i>improvements to the lives of participants</i> |

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...exploring the field of values
to decide what matters here

Social capital

Wellbeing
& autonomy

Financial
sustainability

Questions for evaluators
Whose values are these?
Are there conflicts between values?
Which values are given priority in the program?
How can the evaluation work with these values?

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Talk about values

1. Identify the range of values
 - gather values from documents and conversations
 - look broadly, whose values are missing?
 - map these out and see what it tells you
2. Discuss and prioritise values with...
 - who you include is a value choice!
 - what are the values that matter most to this program, to these people, to this evaluation?
 - choose deliberative methods for dialogue on topics that are harder to talk about

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Working with values in 4 steps

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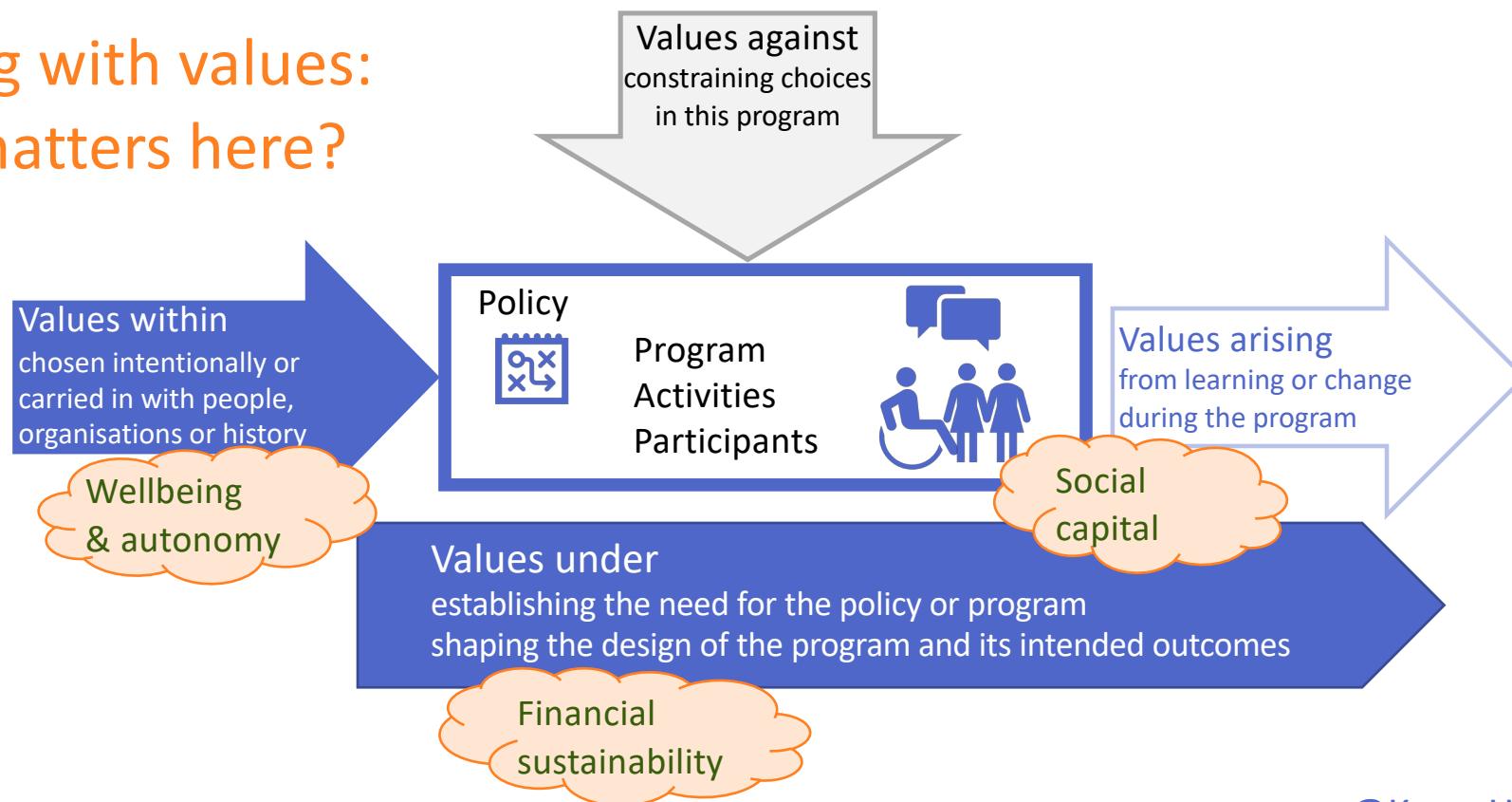
Step 3: How will we
work with values
for this project?

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Values in and around a program

And the evaluation

Working with values:
What matters here?



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How will we work with values for this project?

3 types of approaches from the existing literature

values-explicit

Jane Davidson
Amy Gullickson & Kelly Hannum

values-guided

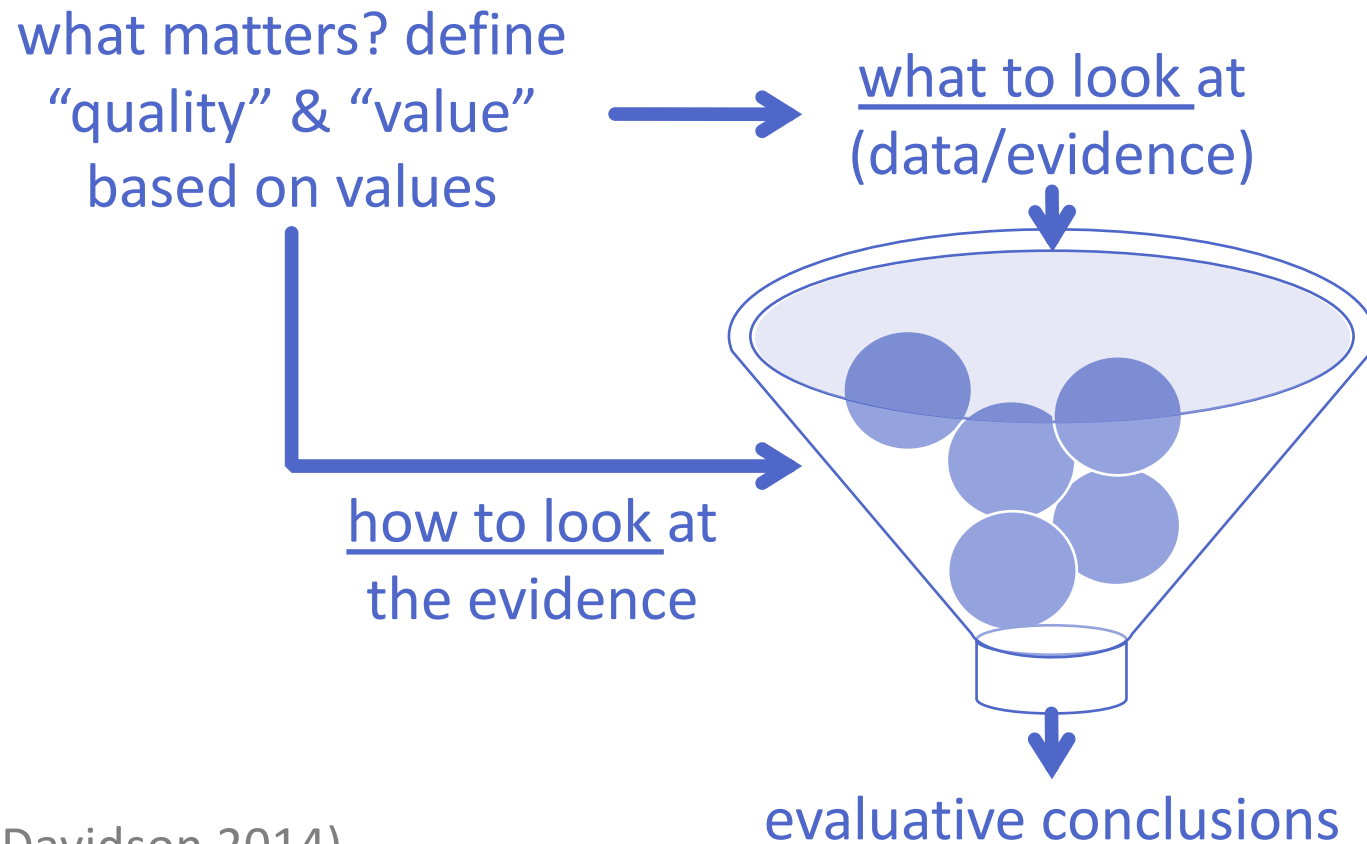
Jennifer Greene
Donna Mertens
Ernie House & Ken Howe
Eleanor Chelimsky
Elizabeth Anderson (philosophy)

assisted sense-making
appreciation

Mark, Henry & Julnes (evaluation)
Vickers (philosophy)

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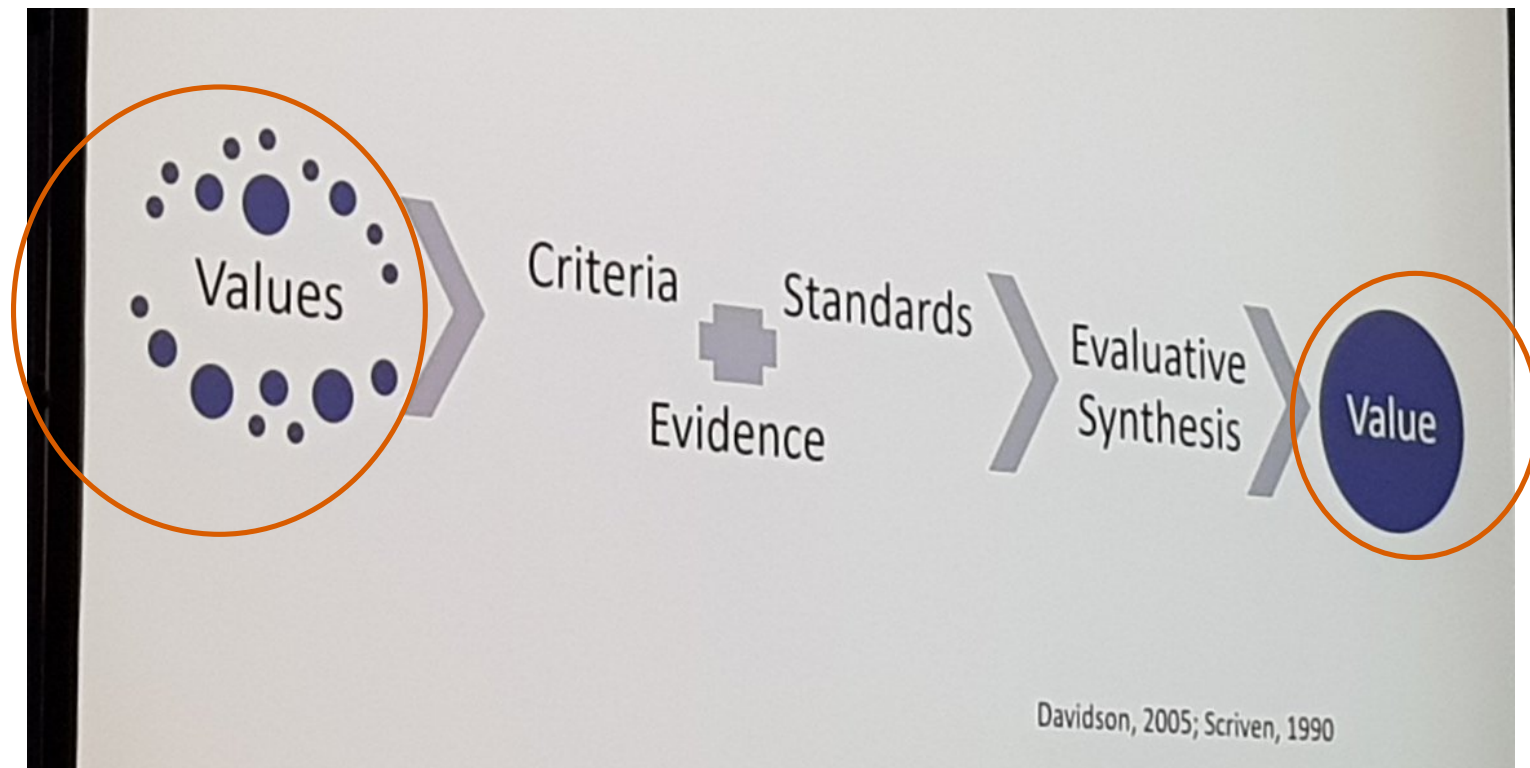
Values explicit: Evaluative interpretation funnel



(Davidson 2014)

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Values explicit: Values-infused criteria and synthesis



(Gullickson &
Hannum 2018)

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Values-guided inquiry

Fruitful use of values

- reveal what matters
- overturn biases
- choose suitable methods
- refine values based on evidence
- more relevant findings
- richer evaluative judgements

(Anderson 2004)

Improper use of values

- dogmatic
- unbalanced
- opaque
- euphemistic

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Values-engaged evaluation

We aspire to inclusively describe and engage the perspectives, concerns, and values of all legitimate stakeholders in the evaluation, with particular attention to ensuring inclusion of the interests, perspectives, and values of those traditionally unheard or underrepresented

(Hall, Ahn & Greene 2012)

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Transformative evaluation

The transformative paradigm is a philosophical framework that helps organize thinking about how evaluators can serve the interests of social justice through the production of credible evidence that is responsive to the needs of marginalized communities.

(Mertens 2016)

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Deliberative democratic evaluation

...evaluators should be advocates for democracy and the public interest, and should not permit clients and sponsors alone to determine whether and what values are considered in evaluation

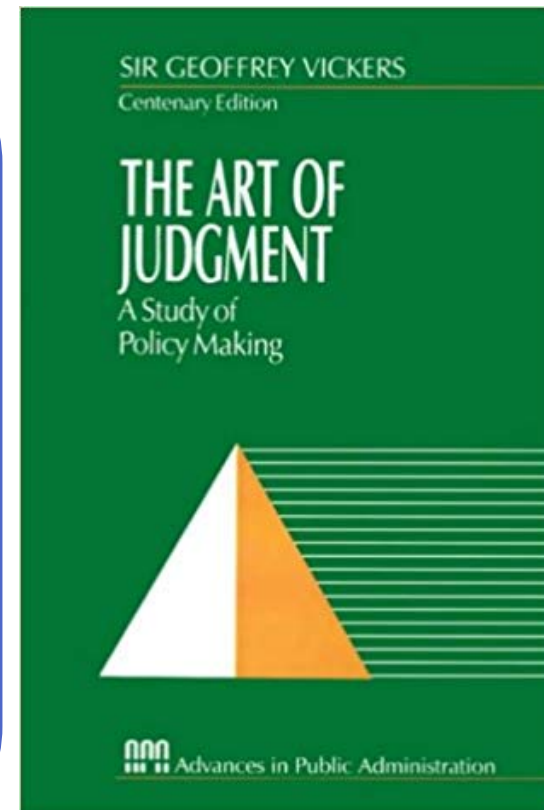
(House & Howe 1999)

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Developing an appreciative system

The relationship between judgments of fact and of value is close and mutual; for facts are relevant only in relation to some judgment of value and judgments of value are operative only in relation to some configuration of fact

(Vickers 1965)



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Step 4: How do we integrate
values into our
evaluation practice?

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