

# Being Framework™ White Paper

## The Ontological Foundations of Leadership, Human Performance and Effectiveness

Development of the Being Framework™ and its constituent parts:  
The Being Framework Ontological Model, the Being Profile® and the  
Transformation Methodology



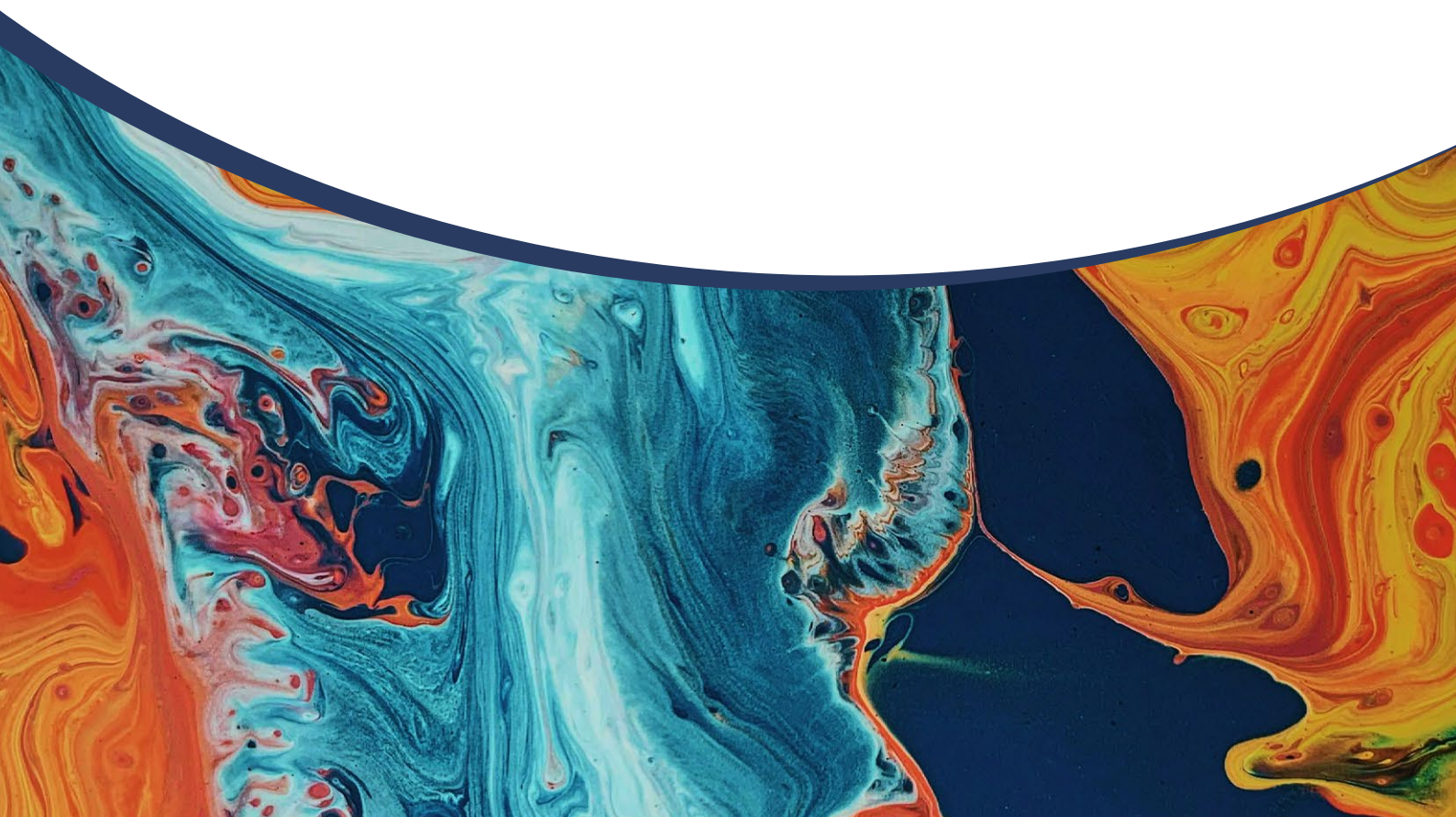
**Document Development Period:** 2022–2026

**Release Date:** 04 May 2026

**Document Version:** 1.0

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First published 2026 by Engenesis Publications



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# Summary

Organisations and institutions across the world are experiencing persistent failures in leadership, collaboration and performance, despite unprecedented access to knowledge, capital and technical capability. These failures are not merely the result of poor strategy, insufficient skills or a lack of behavioural competence. They stem from a deeper layer of human functioning: the ways people are being.

Contemporary leadership models tend to focus on behaviour, personality, competencies or emotional intelligence. While valuable, these approaches do not explain the underlying dispositions that cause individuals to think, interpret, decide and act as they do. Without a causal understanding of these dispositions, organisations struggle to select leaders, develop talent, form effective teams or sustain meaningful transformation. This gap has contributed to chronic dysfunction across private and public systems, from startups and SMEs to large organisations and publicly funded transformation initiatives.

This white paper presents the development, validation and application of the Being Framework: a comprehensive ontological framework that identifies, measures and operationalises 31 core human qualities, referred to as *Aspects of Being*, that causally shape behaviour, leadership effectiveness and performance. The framework comprises three integrated components: the Being Framework Ontological Model, the Being Profile and the Transformation Methodology.

The Being Framework does not reduce individuals to traits, types or categories. Instead, it reveals the underlying architecture of human dispositions and the ways in which healthy or unhealthy relationships with these qualities generate or diminish performance, trust, integrity and collective workability. By making this architecture visible, the framework provides a structurally coherent way to understand how human qualities function and how they influence decision-making, relationships and outcomes across individual, team and organisational contexts.

The framework was developed through an extensive mixed-methods research program. The qualitative phase drew on more than 350 interviews and observational studies of high-performing individuals, cross-cultural analyses of virtues and human qualities, and structured contributions from experienced leadership coaches. These insights were synthesised into a unified ontological model, which was subsequently translated into a measurable form through the development of the Being Profile.

The quantitative phase focused on validating the Being Profile as an ontometric assessment tool designed to measure individuals' relationships with all 31 Aspects of Being. Initially validated with approximately 400 participants and subsequently deployed to close to 5,000 individuals across diverse populations to date, the Being Profile has demonstrated strong reliability, conceptual coherence and practical utility.

Insights emerging from the empirical patterns and developmental trajectories observed through this process informed the continued development of the Transformation Methodology. In this way, assessment findings helped translate ontological insight into targeted developmental pathways designed to support meaningful shifts in individual and collective ways of being.

Emerging from this empirical foundation, the Transformation Methodology integrates ontological insight with structured developmental practice. It supports individuals, leaders, teams and organisations to recognise unhealthy patterns, modulate limiting ways of being and cultivate adaptive, responsive and effective modes of engagement. Rather than prescribing behaviours, the methodology focuses on strengthening integrity at the level of disposition, enabling sustainable change that is internally grounded rather than externally imposed.

Together, the Being Framework Ontological Model, the Being Profile and the Transformation Methodology offer a unified paradigm for leadership and human development. This paradigm moves beyond competencies and behaviours to address the underlying architecture that determines performance, decision-making and leadership effectiveness. In doing so, the Being Framework equips leaders, practitioners and institutions with a rigorous, evidence-informed approach to cultivating the human qualities required for sustainable collaboration, ethical judgement and high performance within complex human systems.

The Being Framework has been developed alongside a broader body of ontological and philosophical work, including the Metacontent Discourse, the Nested Theory of Sense-making and the Authentic Sustainability Framework. While these bodies of work provide extended philosophical context and systems-level insight, they are not prerequisites for understanding or applying the Being Framework itself. Rather, they illuminate complementary dimensions of interpretation, meaning-making and systemic coherence within the wider research program from which the Being Framework emerged. The present work focuses specifically on the causal role of human dispositions within that broader context.

As a result, the Being Framework establishes a unified and multi-dimensional approach that connects qualitative insight, quantitative measurement and practical intervention. It advances leadership thinking by shifting attention away from traits and behaviours towards the deeper relational patterns that shape them, and provides a structured foundation for developing more coherent, adaptive and integrity-driven individuals, teams and organisations.

This white paper provides a transparent account of the research foundations underpinning the Being Framework and articulates its relevance to contemporary leadership challenges. By grounding leadership development in a causal understanding of human dispositions, the Being Framework contributes a distinctive and necessary perspective to leadership theory and practice, offering a structured approach for addressing the persistent human factors that undermine performance and transformation.

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# Introduction

**A**cross sectors and geographies, leadership development and organisational transformation remain areas of sustained investment yet inconsistent return. Despite advances in strategy, technology, analytics and behavioural science, human systems continue to underperform in predictable ways. Leaders struggle to navigate complexity, teams fracture under pressure, trust erodes, and well-intentioned transformation efforts fail to embed or endure. These patterns persist not because organisations lack tools or expertise, but because the deeper human factors shaping decision-making, behaviour and collaboration remain insufficiently understood.

This white paper advances the proposition that many of these persistent challenges cannot be adequately explained or resolved within the dominant paradigms of leadership development. Prevailing approaches tend to focus on behaviour, competencies, personality traits or psychological constructs. While each offers valuable insight, they largely operate at the level of description rather than causation. They describe *what* people do, but not *why* they do it, nor how the underlying human dispositions that shape perception, interpretation and action are formed, sustained or transformed over time.

The Being Framework was developed in response to this limitation. It is grounded in the premise that leadership effectiveness and human performance are not determined solely by skills, behaviours or situational factors, but by the ways individuals and groups are *being* in relation to fundamental human qualities. These relationships operate beneath observable behaviour and exert a causal influence on how people respond to pressure, uncertainty, responsibility, authority and change. Without a clear and coherent way to understand and work with this ontological layer, leadership development remains fragmented and transformation efforts remain vulnerable to recurring failure.

The purpose of this white paper is to provide a transparent and rigorous account of the research foundations underpinning the Being Framework and its constituent components: the Being Framework Ontological Model, the Being Profile and the Transformation Methodology. It documents how the framework was developed, how its core distinctions were derived and refined, and how they have been empirically tested and operationalised across diverse real-world contexts. In doing so, the paper seeks to bridge a gap between philosophical inquiry, empirical research and practical application in leadership and organisational development.

This paper also clarifies the epistemic stance that underpins the Being Framework. Rather than drawing solely from psychology, leadership theory or behavioural science, the development of the framework integrates philosophical inquiry, qualitative field research and quantitative validation. This triangulation ensures that the distinctions are not speculative or abstract but grounded in observable human functioning, refined through practitioner engagement and corroborated through

empirical patterns across diverse populations. By making the developmental reasoning explicit, the paper enables readers to understand not only what the framework asserts, but *why* it asserts it, and on what evidential and conceptual foundations those assertions rest.

The document is intended for leaders, leadership practitioners, organisational consultants, researchers and institutional decision-makers who are grappling with the limitations of existing approaches and seeking a deeper, more causally grounded understanding of human effectiveness. While it engages with academic literature and empirical validation, it is not positioned as a purely theoretical work. The paper takes an applied approach, offering a framework that can be used to observe, assess and develop the human qualities that enable sustainable performance, ethical judgement and collective workability.

The paper proceeds as follows. The next section articulates the core problem the research addresses, outlining the systemic shortcomings of current leadership models and the absence of a coherent ontological foundation for understanding human effectiveness. This is followed by an account of the origins and evolution of the Being Framework, including the field-based conditions that necessitated its development and the empirical processes through which it has been refined. Subsequent sections detail the ontological model, the development and validation of the Being Profile, and the emergence of the Transformation Methodology as an integrated approach to human development and leadership transformation.

This structure is intentional. It mirrors the logic through which the Being Framework itself emerged, progressing from the identification of a persistent global problem, to the field conditions that made existing approaches inadequate, to the conceptual and empirical foundations that established a new ontology of human effectiveness. By guiding the reader through this stepwise progression, the white paper creates coherence between the problem, the inquiry that followed, the model that resulted and the practical methodology that operationalises it. This ensures that the reader can see the lineage of ideas, the evidence supporting each development stage and the rationale for the integrated model presented in later sections. It also prepares the reader for the technical and methodological material that follows, grounding it in a clear narrative arc rather than presenting it in isolation.

Taken together, these sections aim to demonstrate that addressing contemporary leadership challenges requires more than incremental improvement to existing models. It requires a shift in how human functioning itself is understood. The Being Framework represents one such shift, offering an ontologically grounded, empirically informed and practically applicable approach to understanding and developing the human foundations of leadership and performance.

Notably, the Being Framework is not presented as a standalone or totalising theory, but as an ontological foundation designed to operate in dialogue with other established leadership, organisational and systems frameworks, each addressing complementary dimensions of human and organisational functioning.

# Problem statement

## Global leadership context and the unresolved research gap

**A**cross industries and sectors, leadership remains one of the most extensively studied yet persistently unresolved challenges of modern organisational life. Despite decades of research, the proliferation of leadership development programs and the widespread adoption of behavioural and competency-based frameworks, organisations continue to experience chronic dysfunction in collaboration, decision-making and performance (Day & Antonakis, 2012). These patterns are not confined to any one domain. They are evident across corporate environments, SMEs, startups, public-sector institutions, non-profits and government agencies.

Large-scale studies consistently report high levels of leadership ineffectiveness, disengagement and erosion of trust within teams (Kaiser & Curphy, 2013). Organisational transformation initiatives frequently fail to achieve sustained outcomes, often due to unresolved interpersonal dynamics, misalignment and a lack of adaptive capability among leaders (Beer, Finnström & Schrader, 2016). In entrepreneurial and venture contexts, repeated empirical observation shows that ventures most often fail not because the idea, strategy or market opportunity is flawed, but because founding teams are unable to maintain effective working relationships under pressure and uncertainty (Erhard & Jensen, 2011).

These persistent failures point to a deeper explanatory gap. Dominant leadership models focus primarily on observable behaviour, personality traits or competency lists. While these approaches provide descriptive insight, they do not adequately explain how individuals interpret situations, make sense of uncertainty or sustain effective action under pressure. Behavioural models describe what leaders do, but not why they do it. Personality theories categorise individuals, but offer limited guidance on how effectiveness can be intentionally developed or modulated. Competency frameworks identify desirable skills, yet frequently fail to account for why those skills break down in practice despite training, incentives and organisational support (Northouse, 2016).

As a result, organisations are often able to identify leadership symptoms without understanding their causes. They can observe breakdowns in trust, accountability, decision-making and collaboration, yet lack a coherent framework for diagnosing the underlying human dispositions that generate these outcomes. Without such an explanatory model, interventions remain fragmented, superficial or short-lived.

At the root of these failures lies a missing ontological foundation. Human beings do not operate merely as collections of skills, traits or behaviours. They act from their relationship with fundamental qualities of Being that shape how reality is interpreted, how responsibility is held, how uncertainty is navigated and how others are engaged. These underlying dispositions exert a causal

influence on judgement, action and relational dynamics, particularly under conditions of pressure, ambiguity or change. When this ontological layer remains unexamined, leadership development efforts struggle to produce durable transformation.

The proliferation of assessment and profiling tools has not resolved this gap. Most existing instruments measure surface-level preferences, styles or self-reported behaviours. Few are designed to observe or quantify the deeper dispositions that shape human functioning across contexts. Consequently, organisations lack a reliable and empirically grounded method for assessing the qualities that give rise to integrity, resilience, responsiveness, authenticity or sustained commitment. Without such a method, development initiatives tend to address symptoms rather than causes, limiting their long-term effectiveness.

The central problem this research addresses is therefore twofold:

- The absence of a coherent, causally grounded model for understanding the human qualities that determine leadership effectiveness and organisational performance.
- The lack of a reliable, empirically grounded method for assessing and developing these qualities within real-world organisational contexts.

This white paper responds to these gaps by presenting the development of an integrated ontological model, an ontometric assessment tool and a structured transformation methodology. Together, these components provide a rigorous and practical foundation for understanding how human dispositions shape leadership, collaboration and performance, and for developing those dispositions in a deliberate, sustainable and ethically grounded way.

# Evolution of the Being Framework and development of this white paper

The Being Framework was first introduced in 2021 through the publication of *Being* (Tashvir, 2021), which presented the foundational distinctions, the ontological model and the initial version of the Being Profile ontometric assessment. Following its publication, the framework entered use across a wide range of professional, organisational and cultural contexts. This expanded application generated a growing empirical base, richer practitioner insight and deeper comparative analysis, enabling refinement of several distinctions and informing a subsequent round of instrument recalibration of the assessment tool. These refinements were consolidated and released in an updated edition, *Being: The Being Framework v.1.1*, in July 2022.

Readers will note that this white paper draws on a broader range of scholarly references and theoretical integrations than the original publication. This reflects continued engagement with the academic literature and the accumulation of empirical findings between 2021 and 2026, as well as the integration of insights from cross-cultural studies, existential philosophy, developmental theory and adjacent domains that were not fully represented in the first edition.

The Being Profile assessment tool has undergone continuous empirical review throughout this period. By the end of 2025, additional data drawn from wider demographic and professional groups had contributed to further ontometric strengthening. These developments have not altered the core architecture of the framework, but have enhanced its precision, depth and applicability.

This white paper emerged alongside this broader evolution. Initially conceived as a concise articulation of the framework, its scope expanded as new evidence, practitioner feedback and refinements to the distinctions became available. Developed progressively between 2021 and the end of 2025, its 2026 release offers a consolidated and more comprehensive account of the Being Framework as it currently stands. While it captures the conceptual and empirical progress achieved to date, a more detailed scholarly exposition of the framework, including its ontological foundations, the formal architecture of its constructs and a fuller methodological account of the Transformation Methodology and its empirical development, is reserved for a dedicated research monograph that extends this work.

To understand the context in which this ontological framing emerged, it is important to examine the practical conditions from which the Being Framework developed. The framework did not originate primarily from abstract theorising but from sustained engagement with complex human systems in practice.

This inquiry was conducted over an extended period through independent research and practitioner collaboration rather than within a traditional university setting. Because the work required sustained transdisciplinary integration, real-world iteration and ontological freedom, the research was undertaken within a practitioner-led environment. The methodological rationale for this research context is outlined in *Appendix 1: Scholarly rationale for the independent development of the Being Framework*.

# Field-based origins of the Being Framework

The Being Framework emerged from sustained engagement with real-world leadership and venture-building environments rather than from purely theoretical inquiry. Beginning in 2017, Engenesis Ventures, the venture-building arm of Engenesis, worked with startups, founders and organisational leaders across multiple countries. Through this engagement, a recurring pattern became evident. Even when teams had access to capital, expertise, networks and opportunity, many ventures struggled due to breakdowns in trust, responsibility, communication and collaboration.

Existing approaches, including strategy frameworks, behavioural leadership models and personality or values-based assessments, provided partial insight but did not adequately explain or address these persistent human dynamics. These limitations prompted a deeper inquiry into the role of human qualities in shaping perception, decision-making and collective workability.

The limitations became most visible through the venture-building activities of Engenesis Ventures. Operating at the intersection of founders, investors and venture development, Engenesis Ventures provided a practical environment in which the human dynamics shaping leadership, collaboration and venture performance could be repeatedly observed across diverse teams and organisational contexts.

Engenesis Ventures had broad access to sources of investment, particularly high net worth individuals, professional investors, family offices and more. Acting both as a venture-building partner and as an investor, Engenesis Ventures could deploy its own capital as well as attract and coordinate external investors. This formed the first layer of the model, centred on capital and investment decision-making.

The second layer was the Genesis Framework, an ontological framework for entrepreneurs that Engenesis Ventures was formulating and developing at the time. The Genesis Framework was designed to help founders identify gaps and address the many dimensions of building and growing a venture. It provided the philosophical ground and practical methodology for how to think about and go about venture building.

The third layer was Engenesis Ventures' unique execution know-how through Engenesis Services, which was and remains highly specialised in product design and software development. Operating with a diverse and distributed model, Engenesis Services attracted top talent across multiple domains and placed technology leaders in the founding teams of subsidiaries and in executive roles. This ensured deep capability in technology build, particularly application and software development and, later, in artificial intelligence and related fields.

With these three layers in place, the strategic intent was to attract startups and founding teams with compatible business concepts and work closely with them to take their ventures to the next level. Engenesis Ventures was not operating as a typical venture capital firm that spreads capital widely and largely monitors from a distance, nor as a conventional accelerator running short, cohort-based programs, nor as a standard incubator that predominantly provides space and light support. Instead, it was conceived as a hands-on venture builder that co-designed, co-executed and, where appropriate, co-invested alongside founders.

From 2017 through to today (2026), this venture-building identity evolved gradually as Engenesis Ventures worked with an increasing number of founders and teams. In the first two years alone, engagement with close to 3,200 founding teams and startups across more than 45 countries began to reveal a consistent pattern. While Engenesis Ventures initially focused on capital access, venture-building methodologies and technical execution, it became increasingly clear that the most persistent challenges were not financial or technical but human in nature. Although these factors had not been entirely overlooked, their central role in determining venture success had not been fully recognised at the outset.

Despite multiple, serious attempts to address the usual levers of venture success, these challenges persisted. Efforts included shortlisting teams and startups, supporting capital raises and strengthening various aspects of businesses through investments via the Engenesis network. They also involved substantial support in venture-building practices such as product design and development, market research and validation, user experience practices and business coaching based on the Genesis Framework, alongside guidance from experienced external coaches, consultants, mentors and advisory programs. Even with these resources in place, it remained extremely difficult to consistently identify and develop genuinely effective teams.

As Engenesis Ventures collaborated more widely with venture capital firms, accelerators, incubators, established SMEs, corporate innovation teams and transformation leaders within medium and large organisations, it became clear that these challenges were not isolated anomalies. Rather, they reflected a broader pattern across the global business and organisational landscape. High failure rates among startups and SMEs, persistent dysfunction within leadership teams of established companies, the limited long-term impact of organisational development initiatives and the low commercial conversion of government-funded innovation programs all pointed to systemic issues that could not be explained by economics, strategy, technique or execution alone.

Across major economies such as Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe, similar indicators emerged. Despite access to capital, education, technical capability and opportunity, organisations repeatedly struggled to form and sustain high-trust, effective teams. These recurring difficulties highlighted the central role that human dispositions play in shaping collaboration, decision-making and organisational workability.

A concise summary of these interconnected global challenges includes:

- Persistent dysfunction in founding teams, SME leadership teams and teams within larger organisations.
- Limitations of traditional venture-building, organisational development and transformation approaches.
- Inadequacy of existing assessment and profiling tools.
- Repeated failure of behavioural and skills-based interventions.

- High and consistent rates of business failure across startups, SMEs and established industries.
- Ongoing challenges in venture capital portfolios, accelerator and incubator outcomes and government-funded innovation programs.
- Broader systemic dysfunction in economic and institutional environments, including declining trust in leadership, governance failures and institutional instability that shape the conditions under which organisations operate.

These dynamics reinforced that the human dimension was the missing layer in understanding performance, failure and transformation. They also made it evident that a more rigorous ontological model was required to address these recurring patterns at their root rather than treating symptoms at the behavioural or strategic level. For readers who wish to explore this context in greater depth, a comprehensive analysis of these real-world challenges, supported by international research, statistics and field evidence, is provided in *Appendix 2: Real-world challenges addressed by this research*.

The intention was never to use an assessment tool merely as a screening or classification mechanism. Understanding human qualities was only part of the picture. What became necessary was a way to meaningfully support the individuals and teams engaged through these ventures so that they could grow, mature and develop into effective leaders.

This required far more than a diagnostic instrument. It required a coherent language for describing human qualities, a model capable of explaining how these qualities function in real contexts and practical methods for helping individuals develop healthier relationships with those qualities over time. In practice, this pointed to the need for an overarching framework, supported by assessment tools and structured methodologies capable of guiding intervention, development and transformation.

These insights led to the development of the Being Framework, encompassing the Being Framework Ontological Model, the Being Profile ontometric assessment tool and the Transformation Methodology, and later the Thrive Method of Coaching. The aim was not simply to understand individuals' current state but to equip them with ongoing support, tools and coaching capable of helping them evolve how they were being so they could perform, collaborate and lead effectively over the long term.

A central conclusion emerging from this inquiry is that organisations function fundamentally as human systems. Human beings are not purely intellectual or rational actors. Decisions are often shaped by emotion, memory and social dynamics. Individuals may become defensive, harbour envy, conceal information, suppress creativity out of fear of judgement or fall into unproductive patterns of communication and self-expression. Trust dynamics influence whether potential customers become early adopters of products and services, while perceptions of value and the authenticity of organisational brands are deeply shaped by how individuals and teams are being, both individually and collectively.

This line of inquiry was particularly sharpened through the philosophical work of Ashkan Tashvir, founder and CEO of the Engenesis Group. His work linked these field problems to a deeper ontological investigation of human performance and integrity. In an effort to better understand and de-risk the human side of the start-ups Engenesis Ventures was choosing to work with and invest in, Tashvir led the team in systematically exploring existing theories and tools, including personality theories, IQ assessments, emotional intelligence measures and various values-based assessment and profiling instruments. Although many of these tools and theories had clear merit, in practice, they

did not offer sufficient confidence that they were accurate indicators of whether potential partners demonstrated qualities such as commitment, authenticity, courage, proactivity and resourcefulness.

Gradually, a new language and way of observing human beings began to take shape, informed by Tashvir's philosophical work and grounded in direct interactions with real people in the field. Over time, this inquiry into 'Being' became the primary task. From late 2018 onwards, with the collaboration of experienced leadership coaches and a range of experts, Tashvir's main focus shifted to the development of what is now known as the Being Framework, with the Being Profile as its core ontometric assessment platform, alongside a broader and still-growing body of work.

As of the time of writing, close to 5,000 Being Profiles have been created and used across diverse contexts. The purpose of this white paper is to provide greater transparency about how the Being Framework and the Being Profile have been developed, the research and methodology that underpin them, and how they continue to actively evolve in response to real-world practice.

Taken together, these field-based observations made clear that the recurring failures encountered across ventures, organisations and institutions could not be resolved through improved strategy, skills or execution alone. They pointed to a deeper structural issue in how human qualities shape perception, decision-making and collective workability. Addressing this required moving beyond descriptive or behavioural models towards a more rigorous ontological understanding of human effectiveness.

# Foundational ontological influences on the Being Framework

The development of the Being Framework and its emphasis on qualities such as authenticity, integrity, responsibility and commitment was informed in part by foundational research conducted by Werner Erhard and Michael C. Jensen at Harvard Business School, whose work has been widely published through the Social Science Research Network (SSRN). Their research challenged behaviour-centric or competency-based models of leadership by proposing that who a leader is being, including their relationship with qualities such as authenticity, integrity and responsibility, is the primary determinant of leadership effectiveness, value creation and performance.

In their seminal paper, *Integrity: A Positive Model that Incorporates the Normative Phenomena of Morality, Ethics and Legality* (Erhard & Jensen, 2011), the authors argue that integrity is best understood as a state of being whole and complete. They emphasise that this wholeness is not a moral notion but a functional one. A lack of integrity directly reduces performance, diminishes trust and undermines workability within groups and organisations. Their later work, *A New Model of Integrity: The Missing Factor that Underlies Performance* (Erhard, Jensen & Zaffron, 2010), further clarifies that integrity operates as a causal factor in the effectiveness of actions, decisions and relationships.

Erhard and Jensen extended this inquiry in *Four Ways of Being that Create the Foundations of a Great Personal Life, Great Leadership and a Great Organisation* (Erhard, Jensen & Granger, 2010). In this work, they identify four fundamental ways of being that underpin exceptional leadership:

- being authentic
- being cause in the matter
- being committed to something bigger than oneself
- being a person of integrity

These ways of being were presented as ontological phenomena rather than psychological traits, positioning them within the realm of existential inquiry. Their framing aligns with the field observations that Engenesis Ventures encountered across thousands of interactions with founders, leaders and teams from 2017 to 2026. Persistent human issues such as misalignments in commitment, breakdowns in integrity, avoidance of responsibility, fear-driven behaviour, patterns of mistrust, poor communication and unresolved conflict consistently revealed themselves not as failures of competence but as failures in ways of being.

The Being Framework was developed in dialogue with this influential lineage of research, while extending beyond it in scope, structure and operational depth. Whereas the Erhard and Jensen model identified four foundational ways of being, the Being Framework articulates a comprehensive multi-layered ontological model comprising Meta Factors, Moods, Primary Ways of Being and Secondary Ways of Being: 31 qualities or 'Aspects of Being' in total. It is supported by a fully developed set of distinctions, an ontometric assessment tool and a transformation methodology. It also incorporates additional philosophical and structural influences such as phenomenology, existential ontology, cross-cultural virtue studies, behavioural research and the Metacontent Discourse, including its central Nested Theory of Sense-making (Tashvir, 2024).

While the Erhard and Jensen research provided valuable inspiration by foregrounding the central role of Being in effective leadership, the Being Framework extends these early insights into a structured, scalable and practically applicable system for leadership, organisational development and societal transformation. The emphasis on integrity, authenticity, commitment and responsibility in Erhard and Jensen's work aligns with the core focus of the Being Framework. However, the latter offers a broader and more operationalised approach designed to work across diverse contexts.

# Why a new framework was needed

As Engenesis Ventures engaged with close to 3,200 founders, leaders and teams across more than 45 countries, a consistent pattern became impossible to ignore. Despite access to capital, strategy, technology and operational support, many ventures struggled not because of their ideas, markets or business models, but because of human factors. Issues of trust, integrity, authenticity, commitment, courage, communication, responsibility and follow-through repeatedly undermined otherwise promising teams.

Although the leadership and organisational literature offered a wide array of models, typologies and competency frameworks, these approaches proved insufficient in practice. Behavioural models described observable actions but offered little insight into why individuals responded as they did under pressure or uncertainty. Personality-based tools categorised people into types, but could not account for the dynamic and situational nature of human effectiveness. Competency frameworks identified desirable skills, yet lacked explanatory power regarding the underlying dispositions that enable or undermine those skills in real contexts. Together, these approaches provided partial insight but did not offer a causal understanding of the human qualities shaping judgement, decision-making, relationships and performance over time.

From a practical standpoint, this limitation was critical. Commonly used instruments – including personality assessments, emotional intelligence measures and values-based tools – captured fragments of the human picture, but none provided a reliable way to observe or assess the deeper drivers that consistently determined outcomes in founding teams, leadership groups and high-stakes decision environments. As a result, organisations and investors lacked a dependable basis for selecting partners, forming effective teams or supporting leadership development in ways that translated into sustained performance while strengthening trust, human connection and responsible collaboration.

Engenesis therefore required a framework capable of moving beyond surface traits and descriptive models to offer a rigorous, structured way of distinguishing human qualities as they function in real-world contexts. The objective was not to generate abstract theory but to create practical workability – a means of understanding and working with the human factors that repeatedly shape success or failure across ventures and organisations.

This need for greater clarity, accuracy and reliability in understanding human qualities led to the commencement of a research program focused on addressing a gap that neither academic theory nor industry practice had adequately resolved. The goal of this research was to develop a comprehensive, ontologically grounded and practically applicable model for observing, assessing and transforming the qualities that enable individuals and teams to perform, collaborate and lead effectively.

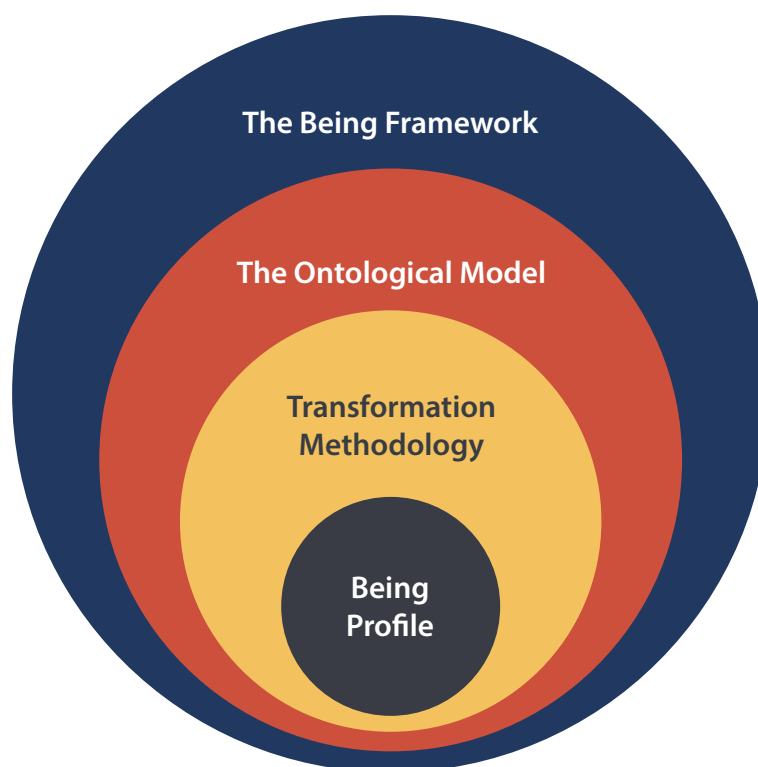
The research that followed was structured in three integrated phases, moving from qualitative inquiry and ontological model development, through quantitative validation, to the design of a practical methodology for application in leadership and organisational contexts.

# The Being Framework: An overview

**T**he Being Framework is an ontological paradigm that explains how internal human dispositions causally shape interpretation, decision-making and action, particularly within organisational and leadership contexts. Unlike behavioural or personality-based approaches, the framework focuses on the underlying qualities that shape conduct rather than on the conduct itself. The framework consists of three integrated layers, as shown in Figure 1:

1. **The Being Framework Ontological Model:** A four-layered construct of 31 Aspects of Being that represent the internal human dispositions which causally influence effectiveness and performance.
2. **The Being Profile:** An ontometric assessment tool that evaluates the quality of an individual's relationship with each of the 31 Aspects of Being.
3. **The Transformation Methodology:** A structured developmental pathway that supports the strengthening, modulation and integration of these dispositions for sustainable effectiveness.

These three layers form the complete conceptual and practical architecture of the Being Framework.



*Figure 1 – The Being Framework*

## **Ontological foundations**

At the core of the Being Framework is the assertion that effectiveness and performance is determined by the health of an individual's relationship with how they are being in any given moment. Being refers to a person's underlying dispositions, qualities and interpretive tendencies that precede behaviour. These dispositions influence perception, judgement, emotional orientation and interpersonal engagement. They function as causal forces that shape all observable outcomes.

The framework is grounded in phenomenological inquiry and interpretive analysis. It acknowledges that human beings are not static entities but dynamic, interpretive agents who navigate complexity through their internal relationship with themselves, others and the world. This ontological lens provides a coherent foundation for understanding why people behave the way they do and how their underlying qualities can be developed.

# Research design overview

The research underpinning the Being Framework was conducted through a three-phase design integrating qualitative inquiry, literature-based synthesis and quantitative validation. This design enabled the development of a coherent ontological model of human qualities, its translation into a measurable assessment instrument and the formulation of a practical methodology for leadership and organisational development.

## ***Phase 1: Qualitative exploration and ontological model development***

The research commenced with an extensive qualitative exploration focused on identifying the core human qualities that influence leadership effectiveness and performance. This phase drew on field observations, engagement with experienced leadership coaches and practitioners, cross-cultural analysis of virtues and constructive qualities, and a broad review of relevant literature.

Insights generated through this inquiry were synthesised into a coherent ontological model that categorises and organises these qualities, referred to as the *Aspects of Being*. As part of this phase, detailed distinctions were developed for each Aspect of Being, articulating both healthy and unhealthy manifestations in order to capture how these qualities function dynamically in real-world contexts. Together, this work established the conceptual foundation of the Being Framework by identifying the qualities that matter and modelling how relationships with those qualities shape behaviour and performance.

These distinctions later formed the foundational content for the dedicated chapters in *Being* and *Human Being* by Ashkan Tashvir (Tashvir, 2021; 2022).

## ***Phase 2: Quantitative validation and ontometric assessment development***

The second phase focused on the empirical validation of the ontological model through the development of an ontometric assessment tool, the Being Profile. This instrument operationalises the Aspects of Being by enabling the quantitative measurement of individuals' and teams' relationships with each quality.

Quantitative data collection and analysis were used to test the relevance, coherence and practical utility of the model across diverse populations. This phase established empirical support for the ontological distinctions and confirmed their applicability across leadership, organisational and cultural contexts.

### ***Phase 3: Development of the Transformation Methodology***

The third phase involved the development of a practical Transformation Methodology informed by insights from both the qualitative and quantitative phases. This methodology translates ontological understanding and assessment insight into structured developmental interventions.

The Transformation Methodology provides leaders, coaches and practitioners with a means of supporting meaningful and sustainable change by addressing underlying dispositions rather than prescribing surface-level behaviours. In this way, it completes the research arc by linking understanding, measurement and transformation within a single coherent framework.

### **The overarching research methodology**

The research adopted a mixed methods approach, integrating qualitative inquiry, literature synthesis and quantitative validation to produce a comprehensive and reliable understanding of human qualities in leadership and performance.

Mixed methods research is well established in fields where complex human phenomena require both interpretive depth and empirical rigour, including education, psychology, health sciences and organisational studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Its relevance to leadership research is particularly strong, as leadership qualities involve subjective experience, observable behaviour and measurable patterns. This form of research is especially suited to studies where the depth and context of human behaviour are as important as the ability to measure and analyse these behaviours through statistical inquiry. Given the complex, multi-faceted and deeply contextual nature of leadership and human effectiveness, this approach offered the breadth, depth and validity required for a framework of this scale.

More specifically, adopting a mixed methods approach was essential for capturing this complexity in a rigorous and workable way because it provides:

#### **Complementarity and depth**

The qualitative phase provided access to rich insights obtained from experienced leadership coaches, founders, cross-cultural studies of virtues and direct observation. This depth allowed the research to uncover the nuanced and often subtle qualities that underpin effective leadership, moving beyond surface-level traits and into the deeper ontological structure of human effectiveness.

#### **Structural completeness**

Qualitative insights inform construct definition and item generation, while quantitative testing evaluates reliability, factor structure and measurement coherence.

#### **Validation and generalisation**

Centred on the development and administration of the Being Profile, the quantitative phase enabled these qualitative insights to be translated into measurable constructs. Quantitative data allowed the findings to be validated across a broad and diverse population, ensuring the resulting model was relevant, stable and applicable across contexts and demographics.

### **Iterative development and refinement**

Mixed methods allow for an iterative research cycle. The ontological insights uncovered in the qualitative phase informed the design of the quantitative assessment. The quantitative findings then informed further refinement of the model. This cyclical process enhanced the precision, sensitivity and practical usefulness of the Being Profile, ensuring that the final model reflected both empirical evidence and real-world insight.

### **Methodological triangulation**

Integrating qualitative and quantitative evidence strengthens validity by enabling findings to be cross-corroborated across independent data sources (Greene, 2007).

### **Bridging theory and practice**

The mixed methods approach enabled the research to move seamlessly from theoretical inquiry to practical application. By grounding the ontological distinctions in both qualitative insights and quantitative evidence, the research not only contributed to academic knowledge but also produced tools that can be directly applied in coaching, organisational development and personal transformation.

### **The ability to navigate complexity and diversity**

Leadership and high-performance contexts involve diverse behaviours and human experiences. Mixed methods research accommodates these complexities by drawing on multiple forms of data and analysis. This ensured the final framework captures the layered and interconnected nature of human qualities and can be relied upon in a wide range of real-world applications.

### ***Research methodology summary***

A mixed methods approach was chosen for this research because it provides a comprehensive, nuanced and validated way to understand human qualities. This methodology aligns with the goals of the Being Framework: to identify, understand, measure and develop the Aspects of Being that drive leadership, performance and effectiveness, and to translate these insights into practical tools that support individuals, teams and organisations in achieving effective and sustainable transformation. It also aligned perfectly with the goals of the research, providing a balanced and comprehensive exploration of leadership qualities that can significantly contribute to theoretical and practical advancements in the field.

# Structure and progression of the main body

The main body of the white paper is presented through three interconnected parts. Each of these parts reflects a distinct dimension of the Being Framework's development and application.

Part 1 presents the qualitative foundations of the Being Framework Ontological Model. It outlines how recurring patterns in human behaviour, leadership effectiveness and interpersonal dynamics were identified and synthesised into a coherent set of distinctions, culminating in the articulation of the 31 Aspects of Being. This part establishes the ontological architecture that underpins the framework and provides the conceptual basis for a causal understanding of human effectiveness.

Part 1 also situates the framework within its broader philosophical and conceptual context, introducing the key perspectives that inform its development and distinguishing it from behavioural, personality-based and competency-driven approaches.

Part 2 focuses on the quantitative research through which the ontological model was operationalised into measurable constructs. It describes the development of the Being Profile, an ontometric assessment designed to measure individuals' and teams' relationships with the Aspects of Being, and outlines how the model was empirically tested and refined.

This part provides transparency regarding the validation of the assessment tool and establishes its reliability and relevance as a foundation for developmental and applied work.

Part 3 addresses the practical application of the Being Framework and the Being Profile in leadership and organisational contexts. It introduces the Transformation Methodology, which translates ontometric insight into structured developmental interventions for individuals, leaders, teams and organisations.

While the primary emphasis of the white paper is the research foundation of the framework, Part 3 provides the bridge between the conceptual model, empirical assessment and real-world leadership and organisational development practice.

# Part 1: Qualitative foundations and ontological model development

The qualitative phase of the research established the ontological foundations of the Being Framework. Its purpose was to identify the core human qualities that consistently underpin leadership effectiveness and performance, and to develop a rigorous, nuanced understanding of how those qualities operate in practice.

This phase unfolded through two closely integrated strands of inquiry. The first focused on identifying the human dispositions that shape how individuals interpret situations, relate to others, make decisions and act under pressure. The second deepened understanding of each identified quality through systematic engagement with existing literature, cross-cultural research and practitioner insight, examining both healthy and unhealthy expressions. Together, these strands ensured that the resulting ontological model was grounded in real-world leadership observation while remaining theoretically robust, analytically rigorous and applicable across contexts.

These distinctions were developed not as descriptive categories but as systematically identified causal dispositions that shape how individuals perceive, interpret, decide and act. In this way, they provide an ontological structure for organising and analysing fundamental human dispositions across leadership and organisational settings.

## Qualitative data sources and sampling

To ensure a diverse, reliable and multi-layered understanding of leadership qualities, the qualitative phase drew on three primary data sources:

- high-achieving leaders,
- cross-cultural studies of virtues and character strengths, and
- professional leadership coaches.

Each source contributed a distinct perspective, enabling triangulation between lived practice, cultural universality and professional expertise.

### *Data source 1: High achiever interviews, observations and accolades*

The first major data source involved an extensive qualitative review of video-recorded interviews, public presentations and observable decision-making behaviours from 350 high-performing leaders. Their demonstrated ability to build and sustain organisations was treated as tangible evidence of leadership effectiveness.

Through systematic observation, coding and thematic analysis of publicly available material, this inquiry sought to distil the recurring qualities, behaviours and dispositions that consistently underpin effective leadership. These insights formed a foundational layer in the development of the emerging ontological model.

Selection of the sample prioritised demonstrated effectiveness rather than positional authority or public profile. Criteria included verifiable organisational outcomes, independent acknowledgements and accolades, diversity across industries, cultures and geographies, peer and expert recommendations, availability of public material for transparent analysis, representation across leadership levels and a holistic conception of success extending beyond financial performance to include cultural health, ethical conduct, employee engagement and broader impact.

### ***Data source 2: Cross-cultural studies***

To ensure that the identified leadership qualities possessed global relevance rather than reflecting culturally narrow assumptions, the research drew on established cross-cultural scholarship on virtues and character strengths.

The primary foundation for this work was *Character Strengths and Virtues* (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), which identifies 24 character strengths organised under six virtues that recur across diverse civilisations. This framework provided a well-established reference point for qualities associated with human flourishing and effective functioning across historical and cultural contexts.

This foundation was complemented by additional cross-cultural research, including Schwartz's Theory of Universal Values (Schwartz, 1992) and the GLOBE Study on Leadership and Organisational Behaviour (House et al., 2002). Together, these bodies of work enabled the research to map culturally recurring virtues onto the emerging Aspects of Being, validate findings from leadership observation and coaching data, and ensure that the ontological model transcends cultural, geographical and historical boundaries.

### ***Data source 3: Professional leadership coaches***

The third major data source comprised professional leadership coaches with extensive experience working directly with leaders across industries and organisational contexts. Their insights offered a practitioner-grounded perspective on recurring behavioural patterns and underlying dispositions influencing leadership effectiveness.

To capture a wide and reliable range of observations, structured interviews were conducted with two distinct cohorts of coaches, each contributing unique professional backgrounds and client experiences.

#### **Cohort 1: Led by John Lowe**

The first cohort consisted of six experienced leadership coaches. Working collaboratively, this group identified an initial set of pivotal leadership qualities, referred to as Aspects of Being. These qualities emerged from two primary sources: explicit advocacy from the coaches based on their professional judgement and recurring themes observed in their coaching engagements. This early list formed the preliminary foundation for the emerging ontological model.

## **Cohort 2: Led by John Smallwood**

The second cohort included 12 additional coaches. Their role was to build upon and refine the work of the first cohort by reviewing, validating and expanding the preliminary list of qualities. Through a structured and iterative process, this group added new dimensions, clarified definitions and offered further nuance. Their contributions strengthened the emerging framework by ensuring it reflected a broad and diverse set of coaching experiences.

The combined insights from both cohorts played a critical role in shaping the early formulation of the Being Framework Ontological Model. Their observations helped:

- Identify qualities that consistently influence leadership effectiveness.
- Confirm patterns that appear across coaching practices and client profiles.
- Provide practitioner-grounded validation for the emerging Aspects of Being.
- Ensure the model reflects real-world leadership challenges rather than purely theoretical constructs.

This collaboration with experienced coaches ensured the early stages of the model were deeply informed by lived practice, professional insight and real behavioural patterns observed in leadership development contexts.

Brief professional biographies of the participating leadership coaches are provided in *Appendix 7: Professional leadership coach biographies*.

## **Qualitative methodology, analytic approach and research rigour**

The qualitative phase of the research was guided by grounded theory principles, enabling leadership qualities, patterns and distinctions to emerge inductively from the data rather than being imposed through predefined theoretical categories. This approach ensured that the ontological model developed from observed human behaviour and lived leadership experience, rather than speculative abstraction or normative prescription.

Data were generated through in-depth interviews with professional leadership coaches, along with systematic analysis of public-domain leadership materials and cross-cultural research. Interviews explored both explicit judgements about what matters in leadership and implicit patterns observed repeatedly across coaching engagements. All qualitative material was subjected to systematic coding, thematic grouping and constant comparative analysis to identify recurring patterns, shared distinctions and contextual variations across leadership environments. The analytic focus was on distilling diverse qualitative inputs into a coherent set of ontological distinctions capable of explaining leadership behaviour across situations rather than merely describing surface-level actions.

The emerging distinctions and overall model were refined through iterative review cycles, particularly in collaboration with the second cohort of leadership coaches. This iterative process deepened definitions, clarified conceptual boundaries between qualities and ensured that the developing framework reflected practitioner consensus and repeated field observation rather than individual interpretation. Iterative refinement strengthened both conceptual clarity and practical relevance, aligning the model with real-world leadership dynamics.

Throughout the qualitative phase, the development process and resulting distinctions were systematically documented to ensure clarity, coherence and traceability. For each Aspect of Being, documentation captured the rationale for its inclusion, the primary data sources informing its

identification, the key literature integrated during distinction development and the evolution of its distinction through expert review and refinement. In addition to documenting individual distinctions, a comprehensive model-level synthesis was produced to demonstrate how the Aspects of Being function together as an integrated ontological architecture rather than as isolated constructs. This documentation provides a transparent account of how empirical observation, theoretical synthesis and practitioner insight converged to form the final ontological model.

To strengthen robustness and cultural relevance, qualitative findings were triangulated across multiple independent data sources, including publicly available interviews, presentations and observable decision-making material from 350 high-achieving leaders, cross-cultural studies of universal virtues and leadership attributes, and structured interviews with two cohorts of professional leadership coaches. Triangulation across these sources reduced single-perspective bias and supported the emergence of qualities that recur across cultures, leadership levels and organisational contexts.

Ethical considerations were integral throughout the qualitative phase. Care was taken to ensure respectful treatment of indirect subjects referenced in public-domain material and coaching contexts. Peer review within the research team and reflexive attention to researcher assumptions also supported the trustworthiness, credibility and integrity of the qualitative findings.

## **Identification of the Aspects of Being**

The identification of the Aspects of Being focused on isolating the human dispositions that consistently underpin effective leadership and sustained performance across contexts. Rather than examining surface-level behaviours, competencies or personality traits, this inquiry concentrated on the underlying qualities that shape how individuals interpret situations, assume responsibility, engage with others and act under pressure.

This stage established the foundational elements of the ontological model by determining which qualities matter most and how relationships with those qualities influence leadership effectiveness in practice.

The scholarly foundations informing the identification and development of the Aspects of Being are summarised in *Appendix 3: Literature review for identifying the key Aspects of Being*, with representative examples of how these were synthesised into ontological distinctions provided in *Appendix 4: Exemplars of scholarly synthesis across the Aspects of Being*.

## **Developing a nuanced ontological understanding of each Aspect of Being**

Following the identification of the core human qualities associated with leadership effectiveness and performance, the qualitative inquiry proceeded to a second, closely integrated task: developing a nuanced and conceptually rigorous understanding of each identified quality. While the first stage of the qualitative phase established what qualities matter, this stage focused on clarifying what each quality is, how it functions and how different relationships with it shape leadership behaviour in practice.

The purpose of this work was not merely descriptive. It was to transform an initial set of observed qualities into a precise ontological model capable of supporting both empirical measurement and developmental application. To achieve this, each Aspect of Being was examined through systematic literature synthesis, critical analysis and iterative refinement informed by both theory and practice.

Representative exemplars of this scholarly synthesis process, illustrating how individual Aspects of Being were developed through interdisciplinary integration and ontological analysis, are provided in *Appendix 4: Exemplars of scholarly synthesis across the Aspects of Being*.

## **Research paradigm and analytic approach**

The development of nuanced ontological distinctions was undertaken within an interpretivist qualitative paradigm, prioritising depth, contextual understanding and meaning-making over the imposition of predefined theoretical categories. This approach was essential for translating dispersed literature, observed leadership behaviour and practitioner insight into coherent ontological distinctions capable of supporting both empirical measurement and developmental application.

A combination of thematic analysis and narrative synthesis was employed during the literature review process. Thematic analysis enabled the identification of recurring conceptual patterns and shared constructs across diverse leadership, psychological and philosophical sources, revealing both convergence and divergence in how particular qualities have been understood across traditions. Narrative synthesis was then used to integrate these insights into coherent conceptual accounts of each Aspect of Being, supporting the development of the three-part distinction structure encompassing definition, healthy expression and unstable expression.

To refine and validate these distinctions, iterative expert review was incorporated through structured engagement with experienced leadership coaches and subject matter experts. This process, analogous to a Delphi-style approach, enabled successive refinement of definitions through practitioner feedback and consensus-building, ensuring that the distinctions achieved both conceptual rigour and practical resonance.

Together, these methods enabled the research to move from dispersed theory and expert insight to a structured and internally coherent ontological model. The resulting distinctions later received further elaboration in works such as *Being* and *Human Being* (Tashvir, 2021; 2022), extending their application beyond the research context into leadership development practice.

## **Distinction development**

For each Aspect of Being, a structured ontological distinction was developed to capture its essential nature and its practical implications. These distinctions were designed to articulate not only the definition of each quality but also how it manifests in both effective and ineffective forms. To ensure consistency, clarity and depth, every distinction followed the same three-part structure:

- 1. Definition of the Aspect of Being**

The first paragraph provides a clear, formal and practically grounded definition of the quality. It articulates what is being referred to when the term is used within the framework and establishes conceptual boundaries that distinguish it from adjacent or overlapping constructs.

- 2. Healthy relationship or stable disposition**

The second paragraph describes how the quality manifests when an individual has a healthy and stable relationship with it. This includes characteristic patterns of thinking, decision-making, behaviour and emotional regulation, as well as the contribution the quality makes to leadership effectiveness, collaboration and performance.

### 3. Unhealthy relationship or unstable disposition

The third paragraph outlines the ways the quality can become distorted, deficient or excessive. Rather than framing these expressions as moral failings or pathologies, they are presented as unstable relationships with qualities that undermine leadership effectiveness, trust, discernment and wellbeing.

The structure of each ontological distinction ensures that each Aspect of Being is understood as a dynamic disposition rather than a static trait, capable of manifesting constructively or destructively depending on how it is engaged.

#### Being Framework Ontological Distinction of Responsibility

*Responsibility* is being the primary cause of the matters in your life, regardless of their source. It is the extent to which you choose to respond rather than react to them. *Responsibility* is distinguished by how you honour the autonomy that you have as a human being and is considered the power to influence the affairs, outcomes and consequences you are faced with. *Responsibility* is not about blaming or determining whose fault it is. Instead, it is to intentionally choose, own, cause and bring about outcomes that matter, work and produce results while also being answerable for the impact and consequences.

A healthy relationship with *responsibility* indicates that you have the power to influence the circumstances you find yourself in and/or cause. Others may consider you capable of appropriately responding to matters, which is a prerequisite to producing and bringing to fruition effective results. You fully accept ownership of both outcomes and consequences and have the capacity to make informed, uncoerced decisions. You are unquestionably the active agent in your life.

An unhealthy relationship with *responsibility* indicates that you may often be stuck, experience a loss of power, and are a victim of circumstances. You frequently experience being disarmed, as though you have no choice in influencing outcomes and there is an inevitability about your future. You may be inclined to self sabotage and make repetitive complaints without seeking, putting forward and implementing solutions. You frequently make excuses for your lack of accomplishments while abdicating or avoiding consequences. You may be considered ineffective in consistently fulfilling the promises you make and producing intended results. You are a passive victim in your life. Alternatively, you may live life from the viewpoint of being the sole cause of matters and exert your will onto your surroundings and others or be over-responsible and attempt to control all matters all the time. You may also expect that matters should always go your way.

(Tashvir, 2021)

#### ***Literature synthesis, expert refinement and distinction consolidation***

Each ontological distinction was grounded in a comprehensive review of relevant literature spanning leadership theory, psychology, philosophy, organisational studies and cross-disciplinary research on human performance and behaviour. Sources were selected based on relevance, conceptual clarity and scholarly credibility, with priority given to peer-reviewed articles, foundational theoretical works and well-established empirical studies.

Rather than reproducing existing models, the literature was synthesised to clarify how each quality has been understood across theoretical traditions and how these perspectives could be

integrated into a coherent ontological account. Where appropriate, multiple theoretical lenses were reconciled to capture the multidimensional nature of each Aspect of Being and to resolve conceptual ambiguities or overlaps.

Draft distinctions were then subjected to expert review by experienced leadership coaches and subject matter experts. These practitioners evaluated each distinction for conceptual clarity, accuracy and practical relevance based on direct experience working with leaders and teams. Feedback was gathered through structured discussions and iterative review cycles, analysed thematically and incorporated into successive refinements of the distinctions.

This iterative process continued until a high level of clarity, validity and practical resonance was achieved across the full set of Aspects of Being. The aim was to produce distinctions that are sufficiently rigorous to withstand academic scrutiny while remaining accessible and meaningful for practitioners in leadership and organisational development contexts.

An illustrative example of this approach can be seen in the ontological distinction of *authenticity* (see Appendix 4), which frames the quality as a relationship with reality rather than a personality trait, and distinguishes grounded self-congruence from both inauthenticity and rigid righteousness as unstable expressions.

### ***Documentation and model coherence***

The qualitative development process culminated in a structured documentation phase designed to consolidate the individual distinctions into a coherent ontological system. For each Aspect of Being, documentation captured the rationale for its inclusion, the primary qualitative and theoretical sources informing its development, and the evolution of its definition through expert review and iterative refinement.

Beyond documenting individual distinctions, a consolidated model-level synthesis was produced to demonstrate how the Aspects of Being function together as an integrated ontological architecture rather than as isolated constructs. This synthesis clarified relational patterns, structural dependencies and levels of influence across the model, ensuring internal coherence and conceptual integrity.

This documentation phase completed the qualitative foundation of the Being Framework by stabilising the transition from observed leadership qualities to clarified ontological meaning and, ultimately, to an integrated system of human dispositions. It provided the necessary conceptual platform for the subsequent phases of the research, in which the ontological model was operationalised through the Being Profile and translated into the Transformation Methodology.

## **Ontological model development**

The identification and conceptual refinement of the Aspects of Being necessitated the development of a coherent ontological model capable of explaining how these qualities relate to one another and function together in lived leadership contexts. Rather than treating the Aspects of Being as a flat or unstructured list of traits, the research sought to organise them into an integrated architecture that reflects the layered and dynamic nature of human disposition.

The model was developed by examining patterns of influence observed across the qualitative data. Particular attention was given to how some qualities operate as foundational conditions shaping perception, meaning-making and engagement, while others manifest as more situational or expressive dispositions influencing behaviour, decision-making and interpersonal dynamics.

This analysis demonstrated that leadership effectiveness is not driven by isolated qualities, but by the interaction between deeper ontological conditions and more visible ways of being.

On this basis, the Aspects of Being were organised into four interrelated ontological layers: Meta Factors, Moods, Primary Ways of Being and Secondary Ways of Being.

Together, these layers account for both stability and variability in leadership behaviour, recognising that certain dispositions exert a shaping influence across contexts, while others are more sensitive to situational conditions.

- **Meta Factors:** Foundational orientations that influence the entire system of human functioning. Meta Factors shape how individuals relate to reality, truth, responsibility and the coherence between intention and action.
- **Moods:** Enduring emotional orientations that shape how people approach uncertainty, setbacks, disclosure, learning, relationships and unfolding circumstances. Moods influence both interpretation and behaviour.
- **Primary Ways of Being:** Core existential qualities that determine how individuals show up in relation to themselves, others and their commitments. These include dispositions such as responsibility, commitment, courage, authenticity, presence and higher purpose.
- **Secondary Ways of Being:** Contextual behavioural orientations that express and enact the Primary Ways of Being. They include assertiveness, resilience, proactivity, resourcefulness, reliability and other outward expressions of inner dispositions.

These four layers operate systemically. Meta Factors orient the system. Moods colour experience. Primary Ways of Being provide the central axis from which a person acts. Secondary Ways of Being make these dispositions visible and functional in lived contexts. Together, they capture the essential human dispositions underlying effective leadership and performance.

### ***Primary and Secondary Ways of Being: The ontological architecture beneath human action***

A recurring question in relation to the Being Framework concerns the distinction between Primary and Secondary Ways of Being. This distinction is neither arbitrary nor based on cultural preference, behavioural visibility or surface admiration. It is grounded in ontology: the structural relationship between what exists at the depth of a person's Being and what becomes observable through their actions.

At the deepest operative layer of the human ontological architecture sit the Primary Ways of Being. These qualities are generative rather than performative. They shape how individuals orient to reality prior to action, influencing sense-making, internal coherence, narrative formation and the interpretive lens through which situations are encountered. In this sense, Primary Ways of Being possess causal power. They create the conditions under which behaviour becomes possible rather than merely influencing behaviour once it has already emerged.

Primary Ways of Being are also closely intertwined with Moods, which within the Being Framework are understood not as transient emotions but as enduring existential attunements. Moods – fear, anxiety, care and vulnerability – function as the background atmospheric conditions of Being, shaping how reality is encountered and how possibilities are perceived. They operate largely beneath conscious awareness, yet exert profound influence over decision-making, responsiveness and engagement. For this reason, Moods occupy the same ontological depth as the Primary Ways of Being: subtle in appearance, decisive in impact.

At the other end of the ontological spectrum lies the visible domain of human performance: the actions people take, the behaviours they exhibit and the patterns through which they show up in the world. These surface expressions are what organisations tend to measure and what observers most readily judge. However, behaviour is not self-originating. Between ontological depth and visible action sits a mediating layer that translates deeper conditions into functional expression. This is the role of the Secondary Ways of Being.

If the Primary Ways of Being constitute the architecture of human action, the Secondary Ways of Being constitute its mechanics. They are the practical orientations through which deeper ontological forces manifest in real-world contexts. Secondary Ways of Being are more observable, situational and readily identifiable because they sit closer to behaviour. They convert what is ontologically generative into what is functionally visible.

The structural distinction can therefore be stated clearly:

- **Primary Ways of Being are generative.** They shape orientation, meaning-making, mood and internal coherence.
- **Secondary Ways of Being are expressive.** They translate those deeper conditions into behaviour, decision-making and relational patterns.

This distinction explains why surface behaviour can be misleading when taken at face value. Individuals may display confidence (a Secondary Way of Being) without courage (a Primary Way of Being) or assertiveness (a Secondary Way of Being) without responsibility (a Primary Way of Being). What is visible is not always what is primary, and what is primary is not always immediately apparent. Observable behaviour reflects outcomes rather than sources.

Understanding human performance therefore requires analysis that works from the inside out and from the bottom up. Moods shape the existential climate within which action becomes possible. Primary Ways of Being establish the source architecture of orientation and coherence. Secondary Ways of Being enact that architecture in lived contexts. Behaviour reveals the resulting outcomes. Only when these layers are understood together does the ontological structure of human action become coherent.

This architectural distinction provides a critical foundation for the Being Framework Ontological Model introduced in Figure 2. It clarifies how the Aspects of Being operate systemically rather than as isolated traits and establishes the causal ordering that underpins subsequent phases of the research, including empirical measurement and developmental application.

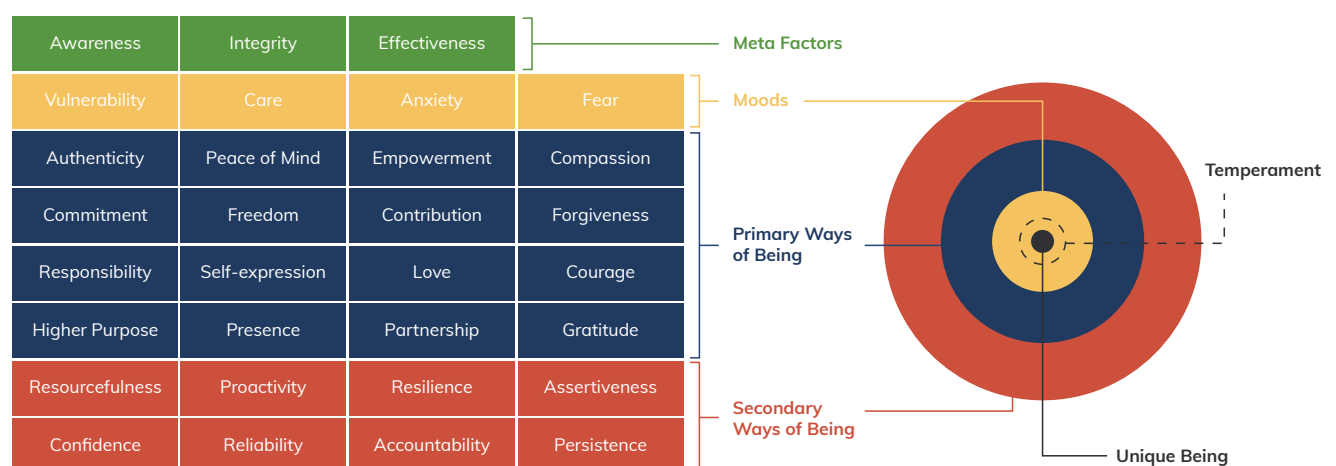


Figure 2 – The Being Framework Ontological Model

The model provides a conceptually rigorous and practically applicable explanation of how leadership qualities operate collectively rather than independently. It integrates philosophical grounding with observed leadership behaviour and forms a central pillar of the Being Framework, providing the foundation for subsequent phases of the research.

Refer to Appendix 4 to read a more detailed scholarly foundation for the 31 Aspects of Being that constitute the Being Framework Ontological Model.

## **Summary**

Phase 1 established the ontological foundations of the Being Framework by integrating observation, philosophical inquiry and professional leadership practice. Through qualitative exploration across high-achieving leaders, cross-cultural virtue research and experienced leadership coaches, this phase identified and articulated the core human qualities that shape leadership effectiveness.

The resulting ontological model reflects a synthesis of lived behaviour, practitioner insight and cross-cultural understanding. It provided the conceptual foundation for subsequent phases of the research, in which these qualities were operationalised through an assessment tool and translated into a structured transformation methodology.

To move from ontological clarity to empirical application, the model required a method for making these distinctions measurable without reducing them to traits or behaviours. This necessity led directly to the development of the Being Profile: an ontometric assessment designed to measure an individual's relationship with each of the 31 Aspects of Being.

Ontometrics focuses on the quality and stability of internal dispositions rather than surface performance, revealing how individuals habitually interpret, decide and act, particularly under pressure, uncertainty or relational tension. Each assessment item is explicitly grounded in the conceptual distinctions generated during the qualitative research phase. Part 2 details the quantitative development, validation and deployment of this assessment tool.

# Part 2: Quantitative validation and ontometric assessment development

The quantitative phase focused on translating the qualitative insights of the earlier research stages into measurable constructs capable of systematic assessment and empirical validation. This work led to the development of the Being Profile, the ontometric assessment instrument designed to measure an individual's relationship with the 31 identified Aspects of Being across the ontological model's four layers: Meta Factors, Moods, Primary Ways of Being and Secondary Ways of Being.

It is important to clarify that the Being Profile is not a conventional psychometric assessment, but an ontometric one. It does not attempt to measure the psyche in its totality, nor to reduce the richness of human experience, consciousness and identity to numerical representation. Rather, it is grounded in an ontological model of the human being and is concerned with assessing specific qualities or dispositions, namely the 31 Aspects of Being, as they are expressed in lived experience and conduct. In this sense, what is being assessed is not the person as an object, but the patterned ways of being through which a person relates to reality, others and themselves.

The distinction between psychometric and ontometric assessment is therefore central to understanding the Being Profile's purpose, scope and interpretation. The following section clarifies this distinction in more detail.

## **Psychometrics and ontometrics: Distinct approaches to human assessment**

Assessment tools play a critical role in how individuals and systems understand capability, behaviour and development. However, not all assessment tools operate on the same premise, nor are they designed to answer the same type of question. A lack of clarity at this level can lead to misapplication, where tools are used beyond their intended scope or interpreted in ways that distort their value. Within this context, it is important to distinguish between two fundamentally different approaches to assessment: psychometric and ontometric.

At a high level, psychometric tools are primarily comparative, whereas rigorously developed ontometric tools are developmental and orientational. This distinction clarifies why the two approaches should not be treated as interchangeable, even if both are concerned with understanding human functioning.

### ***Psychometric assessment: Measurement and comparison***

Psychometric assessments are designed to measure and compare relatively stable patterns of cognition, personality or behaviour against a statistical population distribution. Their methodology

is grounded in norm-referenced calibration, meaning that an individual's results are interpreted in relation to what is typical, average, above or below within a defined population. Even when the characteristics being measured are not strictly fixed, they are generally treated as relatively stable, measurable and comparable across individuals. This allows for standardisation, benchmarking and consistency across contexts such as recruitment, education, research and behavioural assessment.

Psychometric tools therefore provide descriptive and comparative insight. They answer questions such as where an individual sits relative to others, how their patterns compare to established norms and what characteristics are consistently observable and measurable across populations. Their strength lies in their ability to map human variation and provide clarity within a distribution of observed traits and behaviours. In this sense, psychometric assessment is primarily concerned with positioning within a population. It helps identify where a person stands in relation to measurable traits that are already observable within humanity.

### ***Ontometric assessment: Orientation and development***

Ontometric assessment operates on a different premise. Rather than positioning an individual within a statistical distribution, ontometric tools assess the degree to which a person is aligned with a structured ontological and developmental orientation. The Being Profile is an example of such an assessment, with a specific focus on one's state or way of being. In this context, the focus is not on comparison, but on alignment, coherence and direction. The central question shifts from, 'Where does this person stand among others?' to, 'To what extent is this person aligned with what is developmentally possible within the structure of their human orientation?'

Ontometric assessment therefore evaluates the relationship between how a person is currently being and how they could progressively embody greater coherence, integrity and effectiveness over time. It is concerned less with relative standing and more with developmental orientation. Rather than locating the person within an already mapped population, it seeks to orient the person in relation to a structured path of development.

### ***Reference points: Distribution versus orientation***

The distinction between psychometric and ontometric approaches becomes clearer when their reference points are examined. Psychometric tools reference the population. Their outputs are meaningful in relation to averages, percentiles and distributions. They locate individuals within an existing map of human variation and their logic depends on comparability and on the ability to situate a person within a broader field of measurable characteristics.

In contrast, ontometric tools reference a developmental orientation. Their outputs are meaningful in relation to the degree of alignment with a structured ontological orientation that supports development, coherence and more sustainable functioning. Rather than primarily locating individuals within a distribution, they orient them in relation to a developmental direction. Psychometric results indicate position, whereas ontometric results indicate direction. One tells us where a person stands relative to others. The other tells us how a person is oriented in relation to what is possible within their own development.

### ***Beyond the notion of an 'ideal'***

It may be tempting to describe ontometric assessment as measuring against an ideal. However, that term is not precise enough. The word *ideal* often implies a fixed, static endpoint, a form of

perfection or an abstract moral standard that one is expected to reach. Those implications are not quite right for the kind of developmental work being described here because they risk making the process sound rigid, moralistic or unrealistically absolute.

Ontometric assessment, at least in the rigorous sense being discussed here, does not operate in this way. A more accurate concept is that of a developmental horizon. This refers to a structured potential of Being that can be progressively realised rather than definitively achieved. It is dynamic, unfolding and responsive to context. It represents what is possible, not what must be perfectly completed. Human history provides examples of individuals and systems that embody aspects of this horizon to a high degree, yet no individual fully realises it. The horizon remains open, inviting continuous development rather than final arrival.

### ***Functional differences in practice***

The distinction between the two approaches has practical implications. Psychometric assessment provides comparative positioning, supports benchmarking and selection, identifies patterns within populations and informs decisions based on relative standing. Its function is primarily descriptive and comparative. It is especially useful where standardisation, population-level analysis and measurable comparison are required.

Ontometric assessment provides developmental orientation, supports alignment and coherence, identifies areas of growth in how one is being and informs decisions based on direction and integrity of action. Its function is primarily developmental and orientational. This does not mean one approach is superior to the other. It means they serve different purposes and operate at different layers of inquiry.

These approaches should not be understood as competing or mutually exclusive. Psychometric tools are well suited to contexts requiring comparison, standardisation and population-based insight. Ontometric tools are suited to contexts where development, alignment and transformation are the focus. One locates. The other orients. When these distinct functions are clearly understood, each approach can contribute meaningfully within its proper domain.

### ***A necessary qualification: Not every tool is ontometric in a rigorous sense***

An important qualification must be added here. Not every tool that moves beyond psychometric comparison should automatically be considered ontometric. Nor should ontometric become a loose label for any assessment that sounds more philosophical, developmental or non-statistical. If that happens, the term quickly loses precision and becomes little more than branding language.

For a tool to be considered ontometric in a rigorous sense, it must meet several conditions. It must assess the person in relation to a structured ontological orientation, not merely describe preferences, attitudes, states or behaviours. It must be developmental rather than primarily comparative. It must have a clear and defensible reference structure. It must also avoid collapsing into vague idealism, moral fantasy or culturally loaded notions of what a 'better human' looks like. The claims made in this section therefore apply only to tools genuinely constructed to assess alignment with a structured developmental orientation of Being.

### ***The Being Profile in this context***

In this sense, the Being Profile is not merely non-psychometric. It is ontometric because it assesses the degree of alignment between a person's current state of being and a defined developmental

architecture of integrity and effectiveness. The strength of the distinction therefore depends on the rigour of the tool’s underlying ontological structure. Without such a structure, the term ontometric would be weak or misleading.

The Being Profile is developmental in orientation. It helps reveal how a person is standing in relation to what is possible in the maturation, coherence and enactment of their state or way of being. It assesses not simply what is already observable across a population, but the degree to which one’s current way of being is aligned with a structured potential that can be progressively realised.

In summary, psychometric assessments measure and compare relatively stable human characteristics against what is observable within a population. Ontometric assessments, where rigorously developed, evaluate alignment with a developmental horizon of Being: a structured potential that can be progressively realised rather than a fixed ideal to be achieved. One indicates where an individual stands among others. The other indicates how an individual is oriented in relation to what is possible. Understanding this distinction helps ensure that each approach is applied with clarity, precision and integrity.

### Quantitative validation snapshot

With this distinction established, the following snapshot summarises the quantitative validation and deployment of the Being Profile. Detailed statistical validation results are presented in *Appendix 8: Internal consistency and reliability analysis of the Being Profile*, which also includes a plain-language interpretation for readers seeking an accessible overview of the findings.

Indicator	Summary
Internal pilot sample	Approximately 112 participants involved in early instrument testing
Expanded deployment	Close to 5,000 Being Profiles completed across diverse populations (as of March 2026)
Instrument scope	31 Aspects of Being assessed across four ontological layers
Internal consistency	Strong internal consistency observed across scales
Factor structure	Analytical results supported the four-layer structure of the ontological model
Development process	Multiple iterative refinement cycles conducted during the instrument’s development and deployment

Table 1 – Quantitative Snapshot of Being Profile Validation

### Conceptual foundations of the instrument

The theoretical backbone of the Being Profile is deeply informed by existential phenomenology, particularly Martin Heidegger’s treatment of moods, attunements and fundamental dispositions of *Dasein* in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1927/1962). Heidegger’s notion of *Stimmung*, or attunement, provided an important conceptual foundation for articulating the existential Moods – care, vulnerability, anxiety and fear. In the Being Framework, Moods are the first layer through which human beings disclose how they are being, both to themselves and to others. All decisions and actions reflect the health of one’s relationship with each of the four Moods. This self-disclosure occurs first through Moods and then through Primary Ways of Being.

This philosophical grounding ensured that the instrument went beyond capturing surface-level behavioural traits by assessing the deeper existential orientations that shape human perception,

decision-making and leadership expression. Secondary Ways of Being were later integrated to reflect the nuanced extensions of these foundational structures, providing a more granular and comprehensive understanding of human dispositions.

## **Instrument development process**

The development process was informed by the ontological distinctions created and distinguished during the qualitative phase and aligned with established methodologies for psychological and leadership assessment. It involved several structured and interdependent steps.

### ***Item generation***

The first step involved generating assessment items for each of the 31 Aspects of Being. Each item was crafted to reflect the conceptual distinctions developed earlier, ensuring that the questions captured the essence of the quality and its manifestations. This alignment between qualitative insights and item construction ensured conceptual fidelity.

### ***Content validity***

Content validity was evaluated through expert review. Leadership practitioners, psychologists and subject matter experts assessed the relevance, clarity and appropriateness of each item. Their feedback ensured that assessment items genuinely represented the intended Aspect of Being and were interpretable by respondents, consistent with established scale development principles (Hinkin, 1995).

### ***Pilot testing***

A preliminary version of the Being Profile was pilot-tested with a sample representative of the intended user population. Pilot testing served to identify issues in item clarity, response format, scale usability and overall structure. It also revealed whether items were interpreted consistently and whether the assessment captured meaningful variation.

### ***Iterative refinement***

Feedback from the pilot phase informed iterative refinement of the tool. Items were revised, removed or added based on empirical observations and participant responses. The refinement process followed established principles for iterative scale development (Clark & Watson, 1995), ensuring the emerging Being Profile was both comprehensive and user-friendly.

### ***Reliability and validity assessment***

The refined instrument underwent ontometric evaluation to assess reliability and validity in accordance with established practices in psychological scale development.

Reliability testing, including measures such as Cronbach's alpha, examined the internal consistency of items across the Aspects of Being (Cronbach, 1951). Construct validity assessed whether the instrument's items accurately reflected the theoretical constructs they were designed to measure. Criterion-related validity explored the relationship between assessment scores and relevant behavioural or performance indicators, while face validity evaluated whether the items appeared meaningful and relevant to respondents.

As with all psychological measurement instruments, the Being Profile is subject to normal sources of measurement variance, including respondent interpretation, contextual factors and scale sensitivity. In ontometric terms, this variance is typically reflected through measures such as standard error and reliability coefficients (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The objective of the Being Profile is therefore not perfect measurement precision but the generation of clear and reliable developmental insight into an individual's relationship with the Aspects of Being.

Taken together, these procedures provided confidence that the instrument measures respondents' relationships with the Aspects of Being in a consistent and theoretically coherent manner, while recognising the inherent variability present in all psychological and ontometric assessments.

### ***Instrument recalibration and optimisation***

Based on quantitative analyses, recalibration was carried out to optimise the Being Profile's accuracy. This process included adjustments to scoring algorithms, refinement of response scales and revision of item wording to enhance clarity and measurement consistency. The objective was to strengthen both usability and ontometric robustness.

### ***Real-world validation and ecological validity***

The final validation step involved applying the Being Profile in real-world contexts and comparing assessment outcomes with observable leadership behaviours or performance indicators. This step assessed the practical applicability and ecological validity of the tool, drawing on validation practices similar to those used in leadership instruments such as the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1995).

These analyses provided evidence that the tool not only demonstrated statistical coherence but also mapped meaningfully onto the lived experience of leadership and human performance.

### **Integration with the qualitative foundation**

Throughout the quantitative development process, the Being Profile remained grounded in the qualitative distinctions and the overarching ontological framework. Each stage reinforced the conceptual foundations established earlier, translating qualitative insights into measurable constructs. This ensured that the ontometric assessment captured the depth and nuance of the Aspects of Being while maintaining methodological rigour.

By adhering closely to established practices in scale development and testing, the Being Profile evolved into a structured instrument for assessing individuals' relationships with the 31 Aspects of Being. This work contributes to both scholarly inquiry into leadership and human performance and practical leadership development.

Although the preceding sections establish the methodological and ontometric foundations of the Being Profile, its effective application depends equally on how results are interpreted across the ontological layers of the framework.

### **Interpreting Primary, Secondary and Mood Scores in the Being Profile**

The Being Profile operationalises the ontological architecture established in Part 1 by translating the Aspects of Being into measurable relational patterns. Interpretation of the profile therefore

requires attentiveness not only to individual scores, but to the structural relationships between ontological layers, particularly Primary Ways of Being, Secondary Ways of Being and Moods.

Within the Being Framework, scores do not represent fixed traits, competencies or personality characteristics. They reflect an individual's current relationship with particular qualities of Being and the degree to which those relationships are healthy, constrained or destabilised in lived contexts. Interpretation therefore depends on relational patterns rather than isolated scores.

### ***Primary and Secondary Ways of Being in assessment***

Primary Ways of Being represent generative ontological orientations. High scores in Primary Ways of Being indicate a healthy relationship with the underlying ontological architecture that supports effective action. These scores reflect the stability and accessibility of depth qualities such as responsibility, courage, integrity, authenticity and presence, which shape orientation, sense-making and internal coherence prior to behaviour.

In contrast, Secondary Ways of Being represent expressive orientations. Their scores reflect how relationships with Primary Ways of Being are translated into action, interaction and visible patterns of behaviour. High scores in Secondary Ways of Being indicate that ontological depth is being expressed functionally in lived contexts, while lower scores may indicate constraints in enactment rather than instability or absence of deeper relationships.

Crucially, high scores in Secondary Ways of Being should not be interpreted as evidence of ontological health in isolation, nor should lower scores be interpreted as deficiency without reference to Primary Ways of Being and Moods. Observable effectiveness can be situational, effort-driven or compensatory, particularly in high-pressure environments.

### ***The interpretive role of Moods***

Moods play a decisive role in interpreting Being Profile results. Within the framework, Moods are understood as enduring existential attunements that shape the internal climate in which Primary Ways of Being operate and Secondary Ways of Being are expressed.

An individual may score highly in multiple Primary Ways of Being while simultaneously scoring lower in one or more Moods. This pattern indicates that foundational ontological relationships are intact, but the existential atmosphere in which the person is operating is constraining their expression. In such cases, effective behaviour may still occur, but it is often experienced as effortful, tense or unsustainable.

Conversely, when the Being Profile results reflect a healthy relationship with the Moods, Primary Ways of Being tend to express with significantly greater ease. Importantly, nothing new needs to be added in such cases; existing ontological relationships are simply allowed to express more freely. Mood shifts therefore do not create capacity, but modulate access to what already exists.

Low Mood scores should not be interpreted as an absence of foundational qualities. They indicate that a person's current emotional and existential state is not fully aligned with their deeper dispositions, rather than reflecting deficiency or lack.

### ***Common interpretive errors and safeguards***

The layered structure of the Being Profile is designed to help prevent several recurring interpretive errors, including the conflation of expression with source, the pathologising of constraint and an

over-reliance on behavioural indicators as evidence of ontological health. Accurate interpretation therefore requires reading scores across layers and identifying patterns of alignment or tension rather than drawing conclusions from isolated values.

### ***From interpretive clarity to developmental insight***

The primary purpose of the Being Profile is not categorisation or comparison, but interpretive clarity. Rather than producing definitive labels, the profile provides a structured basis for reflection and developmental conversation. By illuminating how ontological depth, existential orientation and behavioural expression currently interact, the profile helps individuals and practitioners recognise patterns that influence effectiveness in lived contexts. As with most developmental assessments, the value of the Being Profile lies not in absolute measurement precision but in the clarity and direction it provides for meaningful growth and leadership development.

This layered interpretive approach enables practitioners and leaders to distinguish between healthy and constrained relationships with core qualities, effortful performance and sustainable effectiveness, and surface expression and underlying coherence. These distinctions support responsible use of the profile and provide the interpretive foundation upon which the Transformation Methodology, introduced in Part 3, is built.

### **Data collection and analysis**

Following the development of the Being Profile, the quantitative phase involved administering the ontometric assessment tool to a diverse sample of close to 400 participants. The purpose of this large-scale data collection was to identify meaningful statistical patterns, validate the underlying constructs and examine correlations between the 31 Aspects of Being and a range of behavioural or contextual indicators.

A variety of statistical methods were employed to analyse the data, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, reliability testing and exploratory factor analysis. These analyses were designed to ensure that the instrument captured consistent, interpretable and theoretically coherent relationships, providing empirical support for the model and its conceptual foundations.

#### ***Data characteristics***

To ensure the assessment tool's broad applicability and ontometric robustness, the sample was constructed to reflect substantial demographic diversity. This inclusive approach strengthens the generalisability of the tool and ensures that it captures leadership dispositions across a wide spectrum of human experiences. The sample incorporated the following dimensions:

**Leadership experience:** Participants represented varying stages of professional and leadership experience, from individuals beginning their leadership journey to senior professionals responsible for complex teams and organisational systems. This variation enabled the assessment to capture leadership dispositions across different stages of development and responsibility.

**Diverse identities:** The participant pool included individuals from a variety of identity backgrounds, ensuring a rich diversity of lived experiences. This was essential for validating the tool's sensitivity to the pluralistic nature of modern leadership contexts.

**Ethnic and cultural backgrounds:** A multicultural array of participants contributed to the dataset. This helped ensure that the assessment tool captures leadership qualities in ways that are culturally nuanced rather than constrained by Western-centric or monocultural assumptions.

**Professional sectors:** Participants were sourced from a variety of professional settings, including technology, healthcare, education, finance, government, entrepreneurship and the not-for-profit sector. This variation ensured that the tool remained relevant and reliable across occupational contexts.

**Geographical locations:** Data were collected from participants across multiple countries and regions, encompassing both urban and rural contexts. This geographical spread increased the global applicability of the assessment tool and ensured that contextual variables were taken into account.

Collectively, this diverse sample provided a strong foundation for statistical analysis, factor validation and the calibration of the Being Profile.

## **Iterative empirical development**

The development of the tool followed an iterative, multi-stage approach. Early prototypes were tested with an initial cohort of approximately 100 participants, allowing the research team to assess item clarity, identify conceptual gaps and refine the emerging structure. Feedback was gathered through interviews, written reflections and online forms, enabling a continuous cycle of adjustment and improvement.

At this stage, the Ororra prototype emerged – an important developmental milestone that later evolved into what became the Being Profile. The prototype was refined further through engagement with professional coaching practitioners who provided detailed observations based on their work with leaders across various contexts and industries.

## **Practitioner collaboration and refinement**

A significant advancement occurred through collaboration with a second cohort of leadership coaches, led by John Smallwood. These practitioners played an instrumental role in aligning the tool's conceptual architecture with real-world leadership needs. Their insights ensured that the instrument was:

- Conceptually coherent.
- Practically relevant.
- Attuned to observable patterns of leadership behaviour.
- Sensitive to the lived experience of human development.

Their contributions informed several key iterations, enhancing both the validity and the practical applicability of the assessment.

## **Pilot dataset and pre-launch calibration**

By the time of commercialisation and the tool's official launch, the Being Profile had been shaped by the experiences and feedback of close to 400 participants from a wide range of cultural, organisational and professional contexts. This pilot dataset played a central role in the instrument's pre-launch calibration, informing the refinement of scoring algorithms, item weights and interpretive frameworks.

The diversity of the participant base strengthened the robustness of the calibration process by exposing the instrument to variation across organisational roles, industries, professional

backgrounds and cultural contexts. Cultural background represents one dimension of this diversity and was considered during interpretation and refinement of the assessment. While cultural contexts may influence how particular qualities are expressed behaviourally, the underlying ontological architecture of the Being Framework is proposed as universal. The calibration process therefore focused on ensuring that assessment items remained interpretable across different cultural settings while preserving the conceptual integrity of the underlying ontological distinctions.

## **Emergence of a community of practice**

The data collection and calibration process also contributed to the emergence of a community of practice centred on the Being Framework, including its core Being Profile ontometric assessment tool. Practitioners, coaches, leaders and researchers engaged deeply with the underlying philosophy and its application, collectively advancing the discourse and reinforcing the model's relevance in contemporary leadership development.

Community engagement, now extending across thousands of individuals engaging with the framework, has continued to inform ongoing refinements, demonstrating the reciprocal relationship between theoretical development, empirical research and practical application.

## **Risks and ethical considerations**

A rigorous ethical framework guided the data collection process to protect participant rights and ensure the integrity of the research. Key ethical considerations included:

**Anonymity and confidentiality:** All participant data was anonymised prior to analysis. Identifying information was removed, and results were reported in aggregate form to protect individual privacy.

**Informed consent:** Participants were fully briefed on the purpose of the research, the nature of the assessment tool and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any point without penalty. Consent was obtained prior to participation.

**Voluntary participation:** All involvement in the research was voluntary. Participants were assured that their decision to participate, decline or withdraw would not affect any professional relationship or coaching arrangement.

**Data security:** Collected data was stored securely and accessed only by authorised researchers. Digital storage adhered to appropriate security protocols to prevent unauthorised access or data breaches.

**Cultural sensitivity:** Given the multicultural nature of the sample, care was taken to ensure that assessment items and interpretations did not impose culturally biased assumptions. The diversity of the sample itself served as an additional safeguard against cultural distortion.

**Responsible interpretation:** Results were interpreted with caution to avoid deterministic or reductive conclusions about individuals or groups. The ontological nature of the tool emphasises developmental potential rather than fixed traits.

By adhering to these ethical standards, the research maintained methodological integrity while safeguarding the dignity and autonomy of all participants involved.

## Summary

The evolution of the Being Profile represents a coherent integration of existential philosophy, qualitative insight and rigorous empirical validation. Through iterative development, practitioner collaboration and large-scale data analysis, the instrument emerged as a structured assessment for measuring individuals' relationships with the Aspects of Being and their implications for leadership and human performance. Its theoretical depth, combined with practical relevance positions it as a meaningful contribution to both leadership research and applied development practice.

Notably, the quantitative development and validation of the Being Profile did not conclude with initial testing. Since its deployment, the assessment has approached 5,000 cumulative deployments across a wide range of cultural, professional and organisational contexts. While this white paper focuses on the formal research phases underpinning the instrument's development, this accumulated dataset contributes to its ecological validation. It indicates that the Being Profile has been repeatedly applied in real-world environments and engaged diverse populations over an extended period.

In parallel, close to 300 practitioners and coaches have been formally trained through Being Profile as the core training and accreditation body in partnership with the Engenesis Coach Academy. Selected training programs within this ecosystem are recognised by the International Coaching Federation (ICF) as Continuing Coach Education (CCE) units. These accredited practitioners have delivered thousands of assessment debriefs and developmental feedback sessions, frequently followed by longitudinal coaching engagements. This practitioner ecosystem has generated a substantial body of field-based observation, enabling ongoing examination of how the instrument functions across differing leadership contexts, organisational cultures, coaching methods and behavioural patterns.

The Being Profile has also been embedded within a broad range of organisational settings, including small and medium enterprises, scale-ups and more established organisations. It has been applied in leadership development, team diagnostics, succession planning and organisational transformation initiatives. These applications demonstrate that the assessment operates effectively across both early-stage and mature organisational environments, reinforcing its practical adaptability and relevance.

The breadth and diversity of this empirical base have supported multiple cycles of refinement following initial validation. Insights derived from large-scale use have informed improvements in item clarity, scoring calibration, interpretive guidance aligned with the ontological architecture and overall scale coherence. This has included statistical normalisation to maintain robust and comparable score distributions across populations, as well as structural refinements to strengthen internal measurement logic while preserving conceptual integrity. These developments reflect an iterative, evidence-informed approach rather than a static, one-off instrument design.

Taken together, this extended empirical engagement complements the formal quantitative analyses presented earlier in this part. It provides further confidence that the Being Profile consistently measures its intended ontological constructs, remains coherent across varied contexts and retains practical relevance for leadership development, coaching, team performance and organisational transformation. As such, Part 2 establishes not only the ontometric soundness of the assessment tool but also its sustained applicability in lived leadership environments.

# Part 3: The Transformation Methodology and its practical application in leadership

The Transformation Methodology provides structured, practical pathways for strengthening an individual's or collective's relationship with the Aspects of Being, modulating unproductive patterns and integrating new capacities over time. It translates ontological insight into sustained developmental change and improved leadership effectiveness.

Building directly on the ontological foundations established in Part 1 and the empirical insights generated through the Being Profile in Part 2, the methodology represents the intervention-focused dimension of the Being Framework. It serves as the bridge between conceptual understanding, diagnostic clarity and applied developmental practice.

While the ontological model identifies the core human qualities that shape leadership effectiveness, and the Being Profile measures an individual's or team's relationship with those qualities, the Transformation Methodology provides a means of deliberately working on those relationships. It is therefore concerned not with description or diagnosis alone, but with enabling durable developmental change at both individual and collective levels.

The methodology integrates insights from the Being Framework, the Being Profile and the broader philosophical ecosystem developed within Engenesis. These include the Metacontent Discourse and its Nested Theory of Sense-making, the Authentic Sustainability Framework (Tashvir, 2024; 2025) and related ontological work currently under development. Together, these bodies of work inform the Thrive Method of Coaching, which has been in continuous development since 2018, through dedicated practitioner materials and a scholarly monograph, *The Ontological Foundations of Leadership: The Being Framework Research Monograph* (Tashvir, forthcoming).

## Scholarly foundations of the Transformation Methodology

The Transformation Methodology emerged from an extensive synthesis of pre-2021 scholarship across psychology, developmental theory, phenomenology, metacognition, systems thinking and behavioural science. Although the methodology itself has not yet been empirically tested as a standalone intervention, its conceptual architecture has been shaped by a substantial body of established research that collectively illuminates how individuals and collectives develop, consolidate new patterns of perception and behaviour and, ultimately, transform.

This section outlines the scholarly foundations upon which the methodology was conceptualised, while explicitly acknowledging that future research is required to evaluate its efficacy, causal mechanisms and contextual boundaries.

## ***1. Metacognition, awareness and sense-making***

The first pillar of the methodology – Awareness – is grounded in long-established research on metacognition and perceptual processing.

Flavell's foundational work on metacognition identified the capacity to observe and regulate one's own cognitive processes as a prerequisite for adaptive functioning (Flavell, 1979). Complementing this, Baumeister and Masicampo's research on reflective consciousness highlighted the role of deliberative awareness in navigating complex social and cultural environments (Baumeister & Masicampo, 2010).

These insights informed the conceptual structuring of Reception, Perception and Conception as sequential processes through which individuals apprehend reality and their relationship to it.

Mindfulness research also contributed empirical support. Kabat-Zinn demonstrated that present-moment awareness enhances attentional stability and psychological flexibility – capacities that underpin the Awareness stage (progressing from Reception to Perception to Conception) and of the methodology (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Although this body of work is not ontological in orientation, it provides convergent evidence for the developmental importance of attention, presence and internal observation.

## ***2. Experiential learning and behavioural application***

The Application stage of the methodology draws on a long lineage of experiential and behavioural learning research.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle identified a repeating sequence of action, reflection and conceptual integration as central to learning and development (Kolb, 1984). This work informed the structure of Execute, Track, Learn and Refine within the Application stage of the methodology.

Research on deliberate practice further reinforced this emphasis. Ericsson and colleagues demonstrated that expertise develops not through repetition alone, but through structured effort, feedback and continuous refinement (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Römer, 1993). This research supported the methodology's focus on tracking and iterative adjustment as mechanisms of sustained performance improvement.

Behavioural self-regulation research also shaped this component. Studies by Carver and Scheier showed that goal pursuit depends on feedback loops, self-monitoring and adaptive correction (Carver & Scheier, 1982). These findings conceptually informed the methodology's tracking mechanisms, while recognising that further empirical evaluation is required within the specific ontological context of the Being Framework.

## ***3. Skill acquisition, proficiency and mastery***

The Effectiveness stage – structured through Competency, Proficiency and Mastery – draws on established research into skill acquisition and expertise development.

The Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition outlined developmental stages through which learners progress as expertise matures (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). While the Being Framework adopts a distinct ontological structure, the Dreyfus work contributed to the understanding that mastery involves both cognitive structuring and intuitive integration.

Csikszentmihalyi's research on Flow further demonstrated that deep engagement in optimally challenging activity contributes to sustained high performance and psychological integration (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This work informed the recognition that mastery is not merely behavioural, but involves an attuned psychological and dispositional state.

#### **4. Adult development and identity transformation**

The methodological emphasis on shifting one's relationship with fundamental qualities of Being aligns with established adult developmental theories.

Kegan's constructive-developmental theory conceptualised transformation as a reorganisation of meaning-making structures rather than incremental skill accumulation (Kegan, 1982). Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory similarly positioned deep development as a result of critical reflection and perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991).

These frameworks reinforced the distinction, central to the Being Framework, between surface-level behavioural change and deeper structural transformation.

#### **5. Ontology, phenomenology and embodied practice**

The philosophical foundations of the methodology were informed by classical phenomenological thought.

Heidegger's analysis of being-in-the-world highlighted the role of attunement, presence and existential choice in shaping action (Heidegger, 1962). Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on embodiment further informed the methodology's integration of lived, bodily engagement as a dimension of development (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

In addition, the martial arts literature discussed later in this part provided real-world parallels demonstrating how disciplined, embodied practice shapes dispositional qualities over time. While these studies did not test the Transformation Methodology, they offered convergent evidence that structured embodied engagement can transform cognitive, emotional and behavioural patterns.

#### **6. Scope, limitations and research transparency**

It is essential to distinguish conceptual grounding from empirical validation.

The scholarly works outlined above informed the conceptual architecture of the Transformation Methodology but do not constitute empirical evidence for its effectiveness as a standalone intervention. The methodology itself emerged through synthesis, ontological reasoning and practitioner development within the Engenesis ecosystem.

Future research is required to examine:

- the causal pathways through which the methodology influences dispositional change
- its effectiveness across cultural, professional and organisational contexts
- its longitudinal impact in structured coaching and leadership programs
- its integration with the Being Profile as a developmental system.

This transparency reflects a commitment to methodological rigour, responsible application and ongoing scientific refinement.

## The Being Framework's distinction of transformation

At the heart of the Transformation Methodology is a specific understanding of transformation. Within the Being Framework, transformation does not refer to surface-level behavioural change, skills acquisition or compliance with external standards. It refers to shifts in an individual's or system's *relationship* with fundamental Aspects of Being.

Leadership effectiveness emerges when individuals maintain healthy, stable relationships with core human qualities such as responsibility, courage, care, vulnerability and commitment. Conversely, diminished effectiveness arises when these relationships become unstable, deficient or excessive, leading to reactivity, fragmentation and impaired judgement.

Transformation involves moving from unhealthy or unstable relationships with Aspects of Being towards healthier and more integrated expressions, where underlying ontological orientations, existential moods and observable behaviours become more coherent and mutually reinforcing. These shifts enhance responsiveness, coherence, adaptability and ethical action. Rather than treating leadership development as a process of adding competencies, the Transformation Methodology focuses on modulating the ontological conditions that shape perception, decision-making and action.

Two concepts organise this process:

- **Integrity**, defined ontologically as the state of being whole, aligned and in optimal functional condition.
- **Responsiveness**, defined ontologically as the capacity to consciously choose appropriate action rather than react impulsively to internal or external stimuli.

Integrity and responsiveness form the behavioural and developmental backbone of the Transformation Methodology.

## Individual transformation and leadership development

Individual transformation remains a cornerstone of effective leadership development. Extensive leadership research demonstrates the importance of self-awareness, emotional regulation, ethical grounding and adaptive sense-making for leadership effectiveness.

Within the Being Framework, individual transformation begins with diagnostic clarity. The Being Profile illuminates patterns of attunement, behavioural tendencies and relational dynamics across the Aspects of Being. This diagnostic insight enables practitioners to work with leaders in a targeted and meaningful way, focusing not on generic development goals but on the specific ontological conditions shaping behaviour.

The Transformation Methodology provides structured coaching conversations, reflective practices and developmental pathways designed to:

- surface unhealthy relational patterns with Aspects of Being
- strengthen stable and healthy dispositions
- cultivate the capacity to choose responsiveness over reactivity
- support sustained behavioural integration rather than episodic insight.

Transformation at this level is both intentional and longitudinal. It involves repeated engagement, disciplined reflection and applied experimentation rather than one-off interventions.

## **Collective transformation in teams and organisations**

The methodology explicitly recognises that leadership does not operate in isolation. Collective transformation in teams, organisations and institutions is inseparable from the transformation of the individuals within them.

Culture, shared narratives and collective norms are emergent properties of aggregated individual dispositions. As leaders shift their relationships with key Aspects of Being, the collective system correspondingly becomes more coherent, adaptive and ethically aligned. This reciprocal relationship between individual development and collective transformation has been explored in leadership and systems research, particularly in work on shared meaning-making and collective leadership processes (Drath & Palus, 1994; Drath et al., 2008). Structural or procedural change alone is insufficient; without deeper shifts in human dynamics, such changes tend to produce only temporary compliance (Senge, 1990).

The Thrive Method of Coaching provides structured pathways for working at both individual and collective levels, enabling organisations to enhance performance, integrity and adaptability simultaneously. Leadership functions as a primary leverage point through which collective transformation unfolds.

## **Inclusion, transcendence and developmental continuity**

Transformation within the Being Framework follows a recurring developmental pattern observed across natural, biological and social systems: inclusion and transcendence. Elements stabilise, integrate and then reorganise into more complex wholes.

At the human level, individuals form teams, teams form organisations and organisations form societies. Each level includes and transcends the capacities of the previous one. This pattern of inclusion and transcendence reflects well-established developmental dynamics observed across natural and social systems (Wilber, 2000). The Transformation Methodology aligns with this pattern by addressing individual dispositions while situating development within broader relational and systemic contexts.

This perspective prevents reductionism. It avoids treating leadership development as either purely individual or purely structural, recognising instead the dynamic reciprocity between the two.

## **Embodied transformation as a real-world analogue**

The core mechanisms of the Transformation Methodology – disciplined practice, embodied engagement, exposure to challenge and the cultivation of responsiveness rather than reactivity – are observable in several long-standing domains of human development. One of the clearest real-world analogues is found in traditional martial arts training.

Across diverse cultural contexts, martial arts function as structured developmental environments for cultivating dispositional qualities, shaping behavioural patterns and transforming psychological states. Practitioners are repeatedly exposed to situations that require emotional regulation, attentional stability, disciplined action and responsiveness under pressure.

Academic research has often examined these outcomes through frameworks such as mental health benefits, self-regulation, physical discipline or social behaviour. However, a closer examination suggests that martial arts training also engages deeper dispositional dynamics. Through repeated embodied

practice, ritualised interpersonal interaction and sustained exposure to challenge, practitioners gradually transform how they relate to fear, vulnerability, courage, responsibility and discipline.

Traditional martial arts therefore do more than teach techniques. Over time they cultivate shifts in an individual's way of being, not primarily through cognitive instruction but through lived embodied engagement.

These transformations closely parallel the mechanisms formalised within the Transformation Methodology. In both cases, development occurs through shifts in an individual's relationship with fundamental qualities of Being rather than through behavioural correction or skills training in isolation. Martial arts thus provide a long-standing, cross-cultural illustration that dispositional transformation is possible when practice environments are structured to engage integrity, embodiment and relational discipline.

Where the Transformation Methodology differs is not in recognising these dynamics, but in articulating them explicitly, operationalising them through ontological distinctions and integrating them into a coherent developmental framework suitable for leadership, organisational and societal contexts. A more detailed comparative analysis is provided in *Appendix 5: Links between the Being Framework and martial arts*.

## **Professionalisation, governance and practitioner standards**

As of 2026, the Transformation Methodology is being further professionalised through a structured consensus-building process involving experienced coaches accredited in the Being Framework, the Metacontent Discourse, the Authentic Sustainability Framework and related philosophical work developed within Engenesis (Tashvir, 2021; 2022; 2024; 2025).

This process is governed by the Engenesis Coach Academy and includes facilitated dialogue, supervised practicum, reflective case analysis and peer-reviewed refinement of methodological components. Its purpose is twofold:

- to strengthen methodological rigour and ethical application
- to establish a shared professional standard across the practitioner community.

This governance framework ensures responsible use of the Being Profile and Transformation Methodology in leadership development contexts and supports the long-term integrity of the work.

## **Extension into capacity, sense-making and coaching practice**

A further line of development emerging from the continued evolution of the Transformation Methodology is articulated through the Capacity Discourse – a body of work currently in development (Tashvir, forthcoming). It is important to clarify that this should not be understood as though the earlier work focused only on refining one's understanding of and relationship with the 31 Aspects of Being, without also addressing how those relationships are enacted in practice, and that capacity has now appeared as an entirely new concept. From the outset, the Transformation Methodology was concerned with the expansion of capacity, moving from a degree of awareness towards a higher degree of effectiveness, though this was intentionally held within a relatively focused scope centred on individual and collective performance and effectiveness.

As the framework was applied in practice, however, it became increasingly clear that transformation also depends on the degree of capacity an individual, team or other human-designed system has

to hold complexity, contradiction, pressure, responsibility, change and reality itself over time. The formal articulation of the Capacity Discourse emerged in response to this insight, not as a departure from the Being Framework, but as a clarification and extension of what the developmental logic of the framework had already been addressing in practice.

In this sense, the Capacity Discourse extends the developmental horizon of the Being Framework. The 31 Aspects of Being remain essential because they illuminate how a person is disposed and how those dispositions shape conduct, judgement, discernment and performance. However, capacity also addresses a related but distinct question: how much of reality can a person or human-designed system meaningfully hold, process, integrate and act upon without fragmenting, distorting or collapsing. This includes cognitive, emotional, relational, existential and systemic capacity. The Capacity Discourse therefore builds directly on the Being Framework while expanding the conditions under which transformation can be understood and supported.

From this perspective, the Capacity Discourse does not introduce a separate set of developmental qualities. Rather, it concerns the expanded ability of individuals, teams and other human-designed systems to embody the 31 Aspects of Being, sustain the integrity conditions articulated through the Authentic Sustainability Discourse's Unified Ontology of Systemic Integrity (UOSI), and hold the layered structures of sense-making described in the Metacontent Discourse and its Nested Theory of Sense-making.

The emergence of the Capacity Discourse also helps clarify how the Being Framework relates to the wider ontological work developing alongside it. The Metacontent Discourse and its Nested Theory of Sense-making originally clarified the layered structures through which human beings make sense of reality. Over time, however, it became evident that these layers are relevant not only to interpretation or the refinement of knowing, but also to transformation at the level of capacity. Transformation does not occur only by improving what a person knows or how they interpret content, but by expanding the structure through which complexity, ambiguity and reality can be meaningfully engaged. In this respect, the Nested Theory of Sense-making informs transformation not merely at the level of epistemic refinement, but also at the level of developmental capacity and integration.

A similar relationship exists with the Authentic Sustainability Discourse and its central UOSI. Just as the Being Framework articulates 31 Aspects of Being in relation to human effectiveness, the Authentic Sustainability Framework operationalises 16 qualities within the UOSI in relation to systemic integrity and long-term viability. This represents a further widening of focus from the integrity and effectiveness of the individual towards the systemic integrity and sustained effectiveness of teams, organisations and other systems. Together, these bodies of work indicate that sustainable transformation requires alignment across multiple levels: the quality of one's Being, the capacity through which one engages with and integrates reality, the metacontent through which one makes sense of content, and the conditions through which systems remain coherent over time.

While the Metacontent Discourse is more concerned with intellectual capacity, it also sits within the wider field of capacity addressed by the Capacity Discourse. The Capacity Discourse extends both beneath and beyond the intellectual layers: beneath them, it includes pre-intellectual and experiential dimensions, such as somatic reactions; beyond them, it includes integrative dimensions, such as enactment and embodiment. Likewise, while the 31 qualities of the Being Framework remain vital, and the 16 forces articulated in the Authentic Sustainability Framework's UOSI remain essential for understanding systemic coherence, the Capacity Discourse extends across and beyond both by addressing the broader conditions and higher-order dispositions required to integrate and sustain reality, complexity, pressure and transformation itself.

This broader architecture has also shaped the evolution of the Thrive Coach Training Program as a structured pathway for preparing practitioners to work with this expanded developmental and ontological framework in applied settings. At its core, Thrive is an orientation: a stance towards growth, development and transformation that moves beyond mere survival, preservation, regression or performative adaptation. From this orientation, the Thrive Method of Coaching has progressively emerged as an applied method building on the Being Framework, the Transformation Methodology, the Capacity Discourse, the Metacontent Discourse and the Authentic Sustainability Framework.

Thrive is therefore not separate from the Being Framework, but an extension of its developmental trajectory into a coaching method for working with leaders, professionals, teams and other systems. Through this methodology, individuals and teams can be supported not only to refine their ways of being, but also to expand their capacity to engage with and integrate the realities they face over time. Articulated through direct practice, program delivery and continued conceptual development, this work is currently being developed more fully in the forthcoming books *Capacity: The Limits and Possibilities of Growth and Transformation* and *The Thrive Method of Coaching* (Tashvir, forthcoming). Together, these works extend the original promise of the Transformation Methodology by situating transformation not only in relation to qualities of Being, but also in relation to capacity, sense-making, systemic integrity and the practical craft of coaching for sustainable human and systemic development.

## Summary

The Transformation Methodology synthesises the ontological foundations of the Being Framework, empirical insights from the Being Profile and the broader philosophical architecture developed within the Engenesis ecosystem. It provides a coherent pathway for translating deep conceptual understanding into structured, developmentally responsible leadership practice.

While further empirical research will be required to evaluate its effectiveness as a standalone intervention, the methodology is grounded in established developmental theory, extensive practitioner experience and a clearly articulated ontological logic. In application, it operates as a method for guiding developmental work, while also creating the conditions for related expansions in the wider research program, including work on capacity, sense-making, coaching practice and systemic integrity. As such, it forms the practical bridge between the descriptive and diagnostic work of earlier phases and the broader leadership and organisational transformation efforts that continue to evolve from it.

# Frameworks in dialogue: The Being Framework and organisational models

The Being Framework is intentionally positioned as a framework rather than a comprehensive theory seeking to explain all dimensions of leadership and organisational functioning. This reflects a core design commitment: no single model can fully account for the complexity of human beings and the systems they create. Effective leadership and organisational transformation therefore benefit from multiple complementary lenses operating in dialogue rather than competition.

The Being Framework foregrounds the ontological layer of human functioning. It focuses on the underlying dispositions, moods and ways of being that shape how individuals perceive situations, make decisions and act under pressure. It does not seek to replace frameworks that specialise in organisational structure, strategy, culture or systems design. Instead, it complements them by addressing a layer that is often left implicit or unexamined: the human substrate that ultimately determines whether structural or strategic interventions succeed or fail.

This complementary stance is illustrated through the Being Framework's active dialogue with the Three Pillars Model of organisation and leadership, developed by Peter Wollmann and colleagues and published through Springer (Wollmann et al., 2021; 2022). The Three Pillars Model focuses on Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organisation and Connectivity as three core organisational capabilities required for resilience, adaptability and long-term effectiveness.

Where the Three Pillars Model addresses how organisations align purpose, movement and connectivity at a systemic level, the Being Framework addresses how the people within those systems must be developed ontologically in order to embody, enact and sustain those capabilities. Aligning organisational pillars with the ontological development of individuals enables those capabilities to be enacted in practice, producing more coherent, resilient and integrity-driven systems.

Importantly, the Three Pillars Model is presented here as one illustrative example of how the Being Framework can operate in productive dialogue with other established organisational, strategic and systemic models. The Being Framework is intentionally designed to engage with multiple frameworks across leadership, culture, governance, sustainability and systems design, wherever an ontological lens can deepen causal understanding and practical effectiveness.

This integration demonstrates how frameworks operating at different layers can reinforce one another. Structural and strategic models provide direction and design. Ontological development provides the human capacity required to realise them. Together, they offer a practical, systemic and human-centred approach to leadership and transformation.

A detailed examination of this dialogue, including concrete applications, scholarly contributions and case studies across public and private sectors, is provided in *Appendix 6: Frameworks in dialogue – The Being Framework and the Three Pillars Model*.

# Conclusion and future direction

The research presented in this white paper has sought to create a coherent, ontologically grounded framework for understanding the qualities that underpin leadership, high performance and human effectiveness. Beginning with an exploration of why a new paradigm for understanding human dispositions was necessary, the study progressed through a multi-layered qualitative inquiry, the synthesis of cross-cultural human qualities, the integration of philosophical foundations and a rigorous process of model refinement. The resulting ontological model, supported by structured distinctions for each Aspect of Being, represents a significant step towards articulating the deeper architecture of human behaviour and performance.

The subsequent development of the Being Profile ontometric assessment tool, informed by extensive qualitative and quantitative findings and validated through ontometric analysis, provides a practical and measurable way to assess an individual's relationship with these core qualities. Its broad demographic deployment and iterative refinement have resulted in an instrument that is both theoretically robust and practically applicable across cultures, professions and leadership contexts.

The research further expanded into the development of the Transformation Methodology, a structured approach that connects the insights of the ontological model and the assessment results to tangible shifts in individual and collective behaviour. Drawing from existential philosophy, developmental theory, systems thinking and the lived experience of professional coaches, this methodology offers a coherent developmental pathway for cultivating integrity, responsiveness and personal transformation. It also provides a foundation for navigating transformation within teams, organisations and broader societal systems, affirming the interconnected nature of individual and collective states of being.

The integration of insights from martial arts disciplines served as an illustrative analogue, demonstrating how embodied, disciplined practices have long functioned as mechanisms for modulating dispositions. While academic literature has traditionally focused on the behavioural or psychological outcomes of martial arts, the Being Framework offers an ontological explanation for the deeper shifts these practices produce, revealing new avenues for understanding human transformation beyond conventional models.

As a whole, this research establishes a unified and multi-dimensional framework that connects qualitative insight, quantitative measurement and practical intervention. It advances leadership studies by shifting attention away from traits and behaviours towards the deeper relational patterns that shape them. It also contributes to organisational and cultural transformation by offering a structured way to understand and influence the human foundations upon which all systems rely.

Future research can build upon this work in several meaningful directions. Longitudinal studies may examine the sustained impact of coaching and developmental interventions rooted in the

Being Framework. Cross-cultural analyses may further validate the universality and adaptability of the ontological model. Additional ontometric refinement may strengthen the assessment tool's predictive validity and applicability across industries. There is also significant potential for exploring how the Transformation Methodology interfaces with complex adaptive systems, developmental psychology and contemporary organisational change theories.

The research was guided by two core intentions: first, to illuminate with precision the ontological qualities and relational patterns that underpin effective leadership and sustained human performance; and second, to provide a practical, rigorous and ethically grounded methodology for cultivating those qualities in real people navigating real systems. In doing so, this work contributes to a broader movement towards more conscious, responsible and integrally developed leadership across communities, organisations, institutions and societies.

Together, the Being Framework Ontological Model, the Being Profile ontometric assessment tool and the Transformation Methodology establish a solid foundation for current and future scholars, practitioners and leaders dedicated to understanding and improving human systems. They also provide the developmental basis from which expanded lines of inquiry, including work on capacity, sense-making, coaching and systemic integrity, have begun to emerge. Consistent with its design as a framework rather than a closed theory, the Being Framework is intended to complement and strengthen other models of organisational design, strategy, culture and sustainability through ontological depth.

# Appendices

## **Appendix 1: Scholarly rationale for the independent development of the Being Framework**

### ***Purpose and scope***

This appendix clarifies why the Being Framework, while developed with scholarly rigour and empirical discipline, was intentionally formulated outside a traditional academic institution. Its purpose is not to critique academia per se, but to explain the structural, methodological and epistemic conditions required to develop an ontological, paradigm-level framework concerned with the causal architecture of human dispositions.

The research underpinning the Being Framework required sustained interaction between philosophical inquiry, empirical observation, leadership science, coaching practice and systems thinking within real-world environments. Such an ecology of inquiry is not well supported within conventional university structures, which tend to separate disciplines, constrain methodological flexibility and prioritise publication-driven outputs over transdisciplinary, practice-embedded research. For this reason, the work was conducted independently while remaining aligned with recognised scholarly standards of rigour, evidence and transparency.

### ***1. Structural limitations of academic environments for paradigm-level inquiry***

#### ***1.1 Disciplinary silos and methodological constraint***

Universities predominantly operate within fixed disciplinary boundaries. Research in psychology, management, philosophy or organisational studies is typically housed within separate departments, each governed by its own epistemic assumptions, methodological norms and publication expectations. This structure limits the capacity for integrative, ontological and causally oriented inquiry.

As noted by Gibbons et al. (1994), traditional academic research reflects *Mode 1* knowledge production: discipline-bound, investigator-initiated and internally governed by academic norms. While effective for incremental theory development, this mode is poorly suited to real-time iteration between theory, lived practice and longitudinal field evidence.

The Being Framework required freedom to investigate questions that cut across disciplines, including how human dispositions shape leadership effectiveness, how interpretation precedes decision-making and how ontology relates directly to performance. Similar critiques of disciplinary

fragmentation have been articulated within management and organisational research (Pfeffer, 2007; Tsoukas & Chia, 2011), noting the difficulty universities face in accommodating integrative models of human functioning.

### **1.2 Incentives favour description over ontological causation**

Mainstream leadership research tends to focus on behaviours, traits, competencies or attitudes, largely because these constructs are more readily operationalised within conventional quantitative paradigms. This has produced a substantial body of descriptive and correlational work, while leaving underlying causal architecture comparatively underexplored.

Multiple scholars have criticised this tendency towards surface-level modelling and fragmentation (Antonakis et al., 2014; Alvesson & Kärreman, 2016). Ontological inquiry, by contrast, examines the dispositional conditions that give rise to behaviour. Such inquiry sits outside the methodological comfort zone of many academic departments and is rarely supported by institutional review boards, grant structures or publication pathways. Constraining the Being Framework to behavioural or trait-based models would have compromised its conceptual purpose.

### **1.3 Temporal distance from practice**

Academic research cycles – ethics approvals, funding rounds, peer review and publication timelines – are often slow and risk-averse. This makes it difficult to engage in iterative, practice-embedded research that responds dynamically to real organisational conditions.

Critiques of management scholarship have highlighted a growing disconnect between academic theory and practitioner relevance (Rynes et al., 2001; Hodgkinson & Starkey, 2011). The development of the Being Framework required conditions that academia is structurally ill-equipped to provide, including:

- thousands of hours of direct observation within organisations
- iterative refinement through leadership coaching and facilitation
- empirical feedback from venture-building and executive environments
- integration of phenomenology, leadership development and judgement formation
- responsiveness to real-world breakdowns, decisions and transformations

Such a research ecology is incompatible with siloed and slow academic infrastructure.

## ***2. Independent development as a necessary condition for ontological integrity***

### **2.1 Paradigm formation beyond institutional boundaries**

Historically, many paradigm-level contributions emerged outside formal academic settings, particularly when they crossed disciplinary boundaries or challenged prevailing assumptions. Examples include Deming's work on quality and systems (Deming, 1986), Luhmann's social systems theory (Luhmann, 1995), Argyris and Schön's action science (Argyris & Schön, 1978), and Erhard and Jensen's ontological approach to leadership (Erhard & Jensen, 2011). These frameworks were later incorporated into academic discourse after their conceptual architectures had matured.

The Being Framework follows a similar trajectory. It is not a behavioural model or psychological instrument, but a paradigm-level ontology integrating phenomenology, systems thinking,

developmental psychology and organisational practice – an integration academia is not structurally configured to originate. As the conceptual architecture of the Being Framework continues to mature, further scholarly engagement and integration into academic discourse are anticipated.

## **2.2 Ontological inquiry requires philosophical freedom**

Ontological analysis concerns the nature of human existence, interpretation, meaning and disposition. This inquiry must precede method. Constraining it within the epistemic norms of a single discipline would reduce ontology to that discipline's categories, a form of reductionism widely recognised as contributing to stagnation in leadership research (Fischer et al., 2020).

Independent development enabled the Being Framework to:

- preserve philosophical coherence
- develop distinctions unconstrained by behavioural or ontometric conventions
- integrate field evidence without artificial methodological limits
- refine constructs through practice prior to ontometric operationalisation

This mirrors the historical development of major philosophical and epistemic systems.

## **2.3 Practice-embedded research and ontological validity**

Ontological constructs require validation not only through statistical methods but through lived experience, behavioural manifestation and longitudinal transformation. This aligns with Mode 2 knowledge production, which emphasises transdisciplinary, socially robust and context-embedded research (Nowotny et al., 2001).

The Being Framework matured through sustained engagement with:

- leadership development programs
- cross-cultural organisational interventions
- venture-building environments
- longitudinal observation of breakdowns and transformations
- iterative refinement with thousands of leaders and teams

Such conditions are rarely accessible within university settings.

## ***Relationship to academic collaboration***

Independent development does not imply rejection of academic collaboration. The Being Framework remains fully compatible with scholarly investigation and invites further study across multiple paradigms, including:

- cross-cultural validation studies
- factor analytic replication
- longitudinal leadership research
- developmental psychology correlations
- organisational performance and systems impact studies

The research program underlying the Being Framework is committed to ethical data governance and welcomes collaboration with researchers who appreciate the distinctions between ontology,

behaviour and interpretation. In this sense, it positions itself as a scholarly paradigm rather than a proprietary or purely commercial tool.

### ***Summary***

This research was conducted outside the university system – not due to a lack of rigour, but because the transdisciplinary and practice-embedded nature of this research extended beyond the structural and disciplinary boundaries typically found within traditional academic environments. The Being Framework required a transdisciplinary, practice-embedded research ecology capable of integrating philosophical depth with empirical reality.

What renders the work scholarly is not institutional affiliation, but methodological discipline, conceptual coherence and evidential grounding. What distinguishes it from conventional academic research is the refusal to constrain inquiry to disciplinary boundaries that would obscure the very phenomena the framework seeks to explain.

The result is a framework that is philosophically rigorous, empirically informed and practically effective – positioned to both serve real-world leadership contexts and invite ongoing academic scrutiny, critique and expansion.

## Appendix 2: Real-world challenges addressed by this research

This research emerged from sustained engagement with real-world challenges in how human beings work together in ventures, organisations and institutions, even when they had access to capital, technology, strategy and opportunity.

From 2017 to 2026 Engenesis Ventures, the venture-building arm of Engenesis, engaged with close to 3,200 founding teams across more than 45 countries. These interactions revealed an increasingly obvious pattern. The most critical barriers to performance, collaboration and leadership effectiveness were not structural or technical. They were deeply human.

Across the global business and venture-building landscape, long-term survival data consistently point to deep structural and human challenges that far exceed questions of strategy or access to capital. Industry analyses commonly report that a very high proportion of startups ultimately fail, with many long-term estimates clustering around the 90% mark when broader lifecycle exits and closures are considered (Digital Silk, 2025; DemandSage, 2025).

Formal business demography data provide a similarly sobering picture. In the United States, the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that approximately 20% of new businesses do not survive their first year, around half have ceased operating by the five-year mark and only about one-third remain after 10 years (BLS, 2024; LendingTree, 2025).

Australian business survival statistics mirror these trends, with roughly 20% of new businesses exiting within the first 12 months and approximately 60% no longer operating after three years (Lawpath, 2025). Taken together, these figures highlight that business failure is not simply a startup phenomenon. It is symptomatic of a broader pattern of organisational and systemic unworkability, where human factors such as trust, responsibility, commitment, fear, anxiety and integrity consistently undermine performance.

These patterns were not confined to small enterprises. The venture capital model itself was widely acknowledged as a high-risk, low-hit endeavour where a small number of successes were expected to compensate for a large number of failures. Commentators frequently noted that even top-tier venture capital portfolios assumed that only a minority of investee companies would ever reach a meaningful exit. Evaluations of accelerators and incubators found mixed results, with some programs improving access to networks and follow-on funding, yet leaving survival and long-term performance highly uncertain (Hallen, Cohen & Bingham, 2020; Fehder & Hochberg, 2019).

Governments also poured substantial funds into grants and innovation programs, yet multiple national reviews consistently reported chronic under-commercialisation and low conversion of grant-funded projects into enduring, viable businesses. Independent evaluations noted that large proportions of public R&D and innovation funding did not translate into sustainable commercial outcomes or scalable ventures (OECD, 2021; Australian National Audit Office, 2020; European Court of Auditors, 2020; US Government Accountability Office, 2022).

Against this backdrop, the Engenesis Ventures experience was both specific and symptomatic. It provided a dense empirical window into what global data and macro-level critiques were already implying. The science of economics, as traditionally framed, and the dominant ways of thinking about performance and leadership, were no longer sufficient to explain or address the level of dysfunction and unworkability being observed.

## ***1. Systemic dysfunction in founding and leadership teams***

Across industries, cultures and stages of maturity, Engenesis Ventures repeatedly encountered teams and leaders that appeared to have everything they needed to succeed. Most had access to:

- Solid products or prototypes.
- Validated or promising markets.
- Funding or clear funding pathways.
- Strong technical capability.
- Strategic guidance and mentoring.

Yet, even with these ingredients in place, a large proportion of ventures stalled or deteriorated. The failures were rarely about the idea alone. They showed up in the way people related to one another and to reality.

Patterns that repeatedly surfaced included:

- Fear-driven decision-making and avoidance of difficult conversations.
- Erosion of trust through hidden agendas, half-truths or unspoken resentments.
- Misaligned intentions and incompatible value systems under the surface of apparent agreement.
- Chronic avoidance of responsibility and a tendency to blame external conditions.
- Reactivity under pressure, including impulsive decisions, emotional outbursts or withdrawal.
- Inconsistent follow-through and a breakdown between commitment and action.
- Poor communication, distorted self-perception and a lack of self-awareness.

These were not isolated quirks of a few troubled founders. They recurred across sectors, geographies and demographic groups. They were also echoed in discussions with investors, accelerators and other venture builders who were facing similar problems in their portfolios.

## ***2. Limits of traditional venture-building approaches***

Between 2017 and 2020, Engenesis Ventures deployed a comprehensive suite of support mechanisms:

- Capital from internal and external investors.
- Deep product design and software engineering capability.
- Market research and validation.
- User experience design and iteration.
- Structured business coaching based on the Genesis Framework, an ontological framework designed to help founders identify gaps and address the many dimensions of building and growing a venture.
- External advisory programs and mentoring by seasoned operators.

From a conventional venture-building perspective, these ingredients should have significantly de-risked the journey. Yet the same foundational human challenges kept undermining progress. The conclusion was unavoidable. Most venture failures were not fundamentally due to lack of skill, capital, technology or strategy. They were rooted in breakdowns of authentic awareness, partnership and contribution.

Conversations with venture capital firms, accelerators, incubators and government program managers pointed in the same direction. The struggle to find and develop genuinely effective founding and leadership teams was almost universal, regardless of geography or sector.

### ***3. The insufficiency of existing human assessment tools***

In an attempt to better understand and de-risk the human side, Engenesis Ventures systematically explored a wide variety of conventional tools, including:

- Personality assessments.
- IQ and aptitude testing.
- Emotional intelligence models.
- Values-based instruments.
- Behavioural profiling tools.

Each of these had clear merits in its own domain. However, they did not address the practical questions Engenesis Ventures needed to answer, such as:

- Are these individuals genuinely committed or only performing commitment when it is convenient?
- How do they respond in the face of fear, uncertainty and threat to ego or status?
- Do they take responsibility or default to blame and justification when things go wrong?
- Are they willing and able to confront reality, or do they defend narratives that keep them comfortable?
- How does their way of being influence trust, collaboration and the translation of intention into action?

The gap was not simply one of more precise measurements of behaviour. It was ontological. There was no coherent, integrated model that systematically described the deeper dispositions that generate behaviour, nor a validated way to assess the health of a person's relationship with those dispositions in a manner that linked them directly to leadership performance, effectiveness and transformation.

### ***4. Behavioural change without ontological transformation***

Engenesis Ventures found that the organisations they worked with and observed in both the private and public sectors were investing heavily in:

- Leadership skills training.
- Culture programs.
- Structural reorganisations.
- New strategies and operating models.

These interventions often produced temporary or cosmetic improvements, yet over time many organisations reverted to previous patterns. The underlying mood of the system and the deeper ways of being of its key players remained largely unchanged.

The insight that emerged, both from practice and from engagement with existential and phenomenological philosophy, was straightforward. Behaviour could not be sustainably

transformed without transforming the underlying ways of being that generated that behaviour. Skills, tools and structures could help, but they could not compensate for a persistent lack of integrity, authenticity, courage, responsibility or care.

This pointed to the need for three things:

- A clear ontology of human qualities that are causally linked to performance and integrity.
- A way of assessing an individual's and a team's relationship with those qualities.
- A structured methodology for transforming those relationships over time.

## **5. Beyond ventures: a wider crisis in economics and performance**

Zooming out beyond the venture ecosystem, similar patterns of dysfunction were visible at national and global levels.

In *Freefall: America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy*, Joseph Stiglitz, argued that the 2008 financial crisis was not an accident but the outcome of deeply flawed assumptions, deregulation, bad faith and a belief system that put narrow market ideology above reality and prudence (Stiglitz, 2010). In *Doughnut Economics*, Kate Raworth challenged the twentieth-century portrait of the human being as the self-interested, rational, utility-maximising individual and proposed that mainstream economics needed to fundamentally rethink its starting assumptions if it was to serve a safe and just space for humanity (Raworth, 2017).

Milton Friedman, whose influence shaped – and continues to shape – decades of economic and corporate thinking, famously asserted that the social responsibility of business was to increase its profits for shareholders within the rules of the game (Friedman, 1970). This focus on shareholder returns, when divorced from broader notions of integrity, responsibility and long-term stewardship, has been widely criticised for contributing to short-termism, externalisation of harm and systemic fragility.

At the same time, organisations such as the OECD have documented long-running slowdowns in labour-productivity growth across advanced economies, even during periods marked by major technological innovation and digital transformation. OECD longitudinal analyses show that productivity growth in member countries has been steadily declining since the early 2000s, with many economies experiencing historically low rates despite investment in technology, skills and innovation (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2023).

Parallel to this, reputable global bodies have increasingly warned that climate change functions as a threat multiplier – intensifying competition over land, water and other scarce resources, heightening the likelihood of conflict, particularly in fragile or politically unstable regions. This pattern has been consistently highlighted in leading assessments from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the United Nations, both of which link climate-induced resource pressures to instability, forced migration and geopolitical tension (IPCC, 2022; UNDP, 2023).

Taken together, these critiques suggest that there are deep problems not only in particular economies but in the way economics as a discipline has conceptualised human beings, value, risk and growth. The conventional assumption that technical fixes, financial engineering or policy tweaks alone can restore health and stability looks increasingly untenable. There is a need to address the way human beings are *being* in positions of power, decision-making and influence.

## **6. Organisations as human systems**

The Engenius Ventures experience reinforced a deceptively simple realisation: organisations, ventures and institutions are human systems. They do not succeed or fail as abstract entities. They succeed or fail through the ways people are being in those systems.

In practice this shows up in:

- How leaders and team members relate to fear, uncertainty and vulnerability.
- Whether they honour their promises and commitments when it becomes uncomfortable to do so.
- How they hold themselves and others to account.
- Whether they are willing to confront inconvenient truths or retreat into denial and narrative management.
- How envy, resentment and insecurity are acknowledged and worked with or suppressed and acted out.
- Whether communication is authentic and attuned or manipulative and performative.

These qualities are not adequately addressed by conventional economics, strategy or behavioural training. Consequently, their impact is vastly underestimated. They require ontological inquiry and developmental methodologies capable of transforming how individuals relate to themselves, others and the world.

## **7. The gap in existing leadership and ontological research**

Work by Werner Erhard, Michael C. Jensen and colleagues at Harvard and other institutions has explicitly argued that leadership effectiveness rests on foundational ontological qualities such as authenticity, integrity, being cause in the matter and being committed to something larger than oneself (Erhard, Jensen & Zaffron, 2010; Erhard & Jensen, 2014; Erhard, Jensen & Barbados Group, 2016). Their research positions these qualities not as moral ideals but as phenomenological constraints on performance, demonstrating that breakdowns in authenticity, integrity or responsibility reliably undermine individual and organisational effectiveness.

However, even with these important advances, there was still no comprehensive framework that:

- Mapped the wider landscape of human qualities relevant to performance across multiple domains.
- Provided clear distinctions for healthy and unhealthy relationships with those qualities.
- Measured those relationships with ontometric precision rather than behavioural proxies alone.
- Linked assessment outcomes to structured, coachable transformation methods.
- Integrated phenomenological insight, psychology, leadership practice and ethics into a coherent whole.
- Was fully operationalised and validated as a measurable assessment and intervention methodology that could be reliably deployed across cultures, professional fields and organisational contexts.

In other words, there was still no complete, operational and measurable ontological model of human performance that could be deployed and measured at scale.

## ***Summary of real-world challenges***

The Being Framework and its ontometric assessment tool, the Being Profile, were developed in response to a converging set of global and local challenges:

- The difficulty of forming trustworthy, effective founding and leadership teams, even in well-resourced ecosystems.
- The persistence of human dysfunction as a primary cause of venture and organisational failure.
- The inadequacy of existing assessment tools to capture the ontological drivers of performance.
- The repeated failure of behavioural and structural interventions to deliver sustainable transformation.
- The wider crisis in economics and governance, where assumptions about human nature, value and responsibility are being challenged by both data and lived experience.
- The absence of a rigorous, scalable ontological model that could connect human qualities, assessment and transformation in a way that is both philosophically robust and practically usable.

Beyond organisational performance, these dynamics have broader societal consequences. They contribute to the erosion of institutional trust, the misallocation of capital and resources, and the persistence of ineffective or unstable leadership across both public and private systems.

These are the real-world problems this research set out to address. The Being Framework, consisting of the Being Framework Ontological Model, the Being Profile and the Transformation Methodology, sits at the intersection of these pressures, offering a structured way to observe, assess and transform how human beings are being in the systems they create and inhabit.

## **Appendix 3: Literature review for identifying the key Aspects of Being**

### ***Background***

This appendix provides the foundational literature review that informed Phase 1: Qualitative Exploration and Ontological Model Formulation of the research methodology described in the main white paper. Its purpose is to demonstrate the scholarly grounding from which the 31 Aspects of Being were identified. While the white paper outlines the empirical process through which these distinctions emerged, this appendix summarises the key bodies of scholarship that shaped the ontological orientation of the framework. It clarifies why existing leadership theories, despite their contributions, were insufficient for explaining the deeper causal forces underlying performance, thereby justifying the need for an ontologically grounded model.

This literature review therefore served as an essential intellectual foundation for the development of the Being Framework Ontological Model, ensuring that the 31 Aspects of Being were not merely emergent from field evidence but also grounded in established scholarly work across leadership, psychology, philosophy and cross-cultural research.

### ***Introduction***

This literature review seeks to deepen understanding of the fundamental human qualities that underpin effective leadership, moving beyond conventional emphases on behaviours, skills and techniques. Drawing upon a wide array of seminal studies, it examines leadership through ontological, phenomenological, psychological and cross-cultural lenses, with particular attention to the deeper structures that shape perception, discernment, judgement and action.

### ***Ontological and phenomenological approaches to leadership***

A significant ontological influence on this research was the work of Werner Erhard and Michael C. Jensen, whose exploration of leadership through ontological and phenomenological inquiry provided a foundational departure from behaviour-centric models (Erhard & Jensen, 2013). Their work foregrounded fundamental human qualities as the primary drivers of leadership effectiveness, emphasising how individuals' ways of being shape action, accountability and organisational outcomes.

In their formulation, Erhard and Jensen introduced pivotal ways of being, including authenticity, integrity, being the primary cause in the matter and commitment to something larger than oneself. These constructs offered a rich conceptual foundation for understanding leadership at a deeper structural level. However, their articulation also revealed opportunities for further analytical refinement.

For example, this research identified that the notion of 'commitment to something bigger than oneself' encompasses at least two analytically distinct dispositions: commitment and higher purpose. The latter captures orientations such as transcendence of self-interest, visionary engagement and the capacity for delayed gratification, which warrant explicit ontological distinction.

Similarly, authenticity, defined by Erhard and Jensen as consistency with what one declares oneself to be, both internally and externally, invited broader ontological analysis. Building on psychological research into self-concept integration (Kernis & Goldman, 2006), this research extended authenticity into a more nuanced structure encompassing self-image, persona, opinions and beliefs, with particular attention to congruence between perception and reality across these domains.

In parallel, pragmatic philosophical perspectives suggested that authenticity may also be evaluated in relation to functional coherence and practical effectiveness, where alignment with reality is tested not only subjectively but also through outcomes (Harman, 2003).

This analytical expansion preserved the spirit of Erhard and Jensen's work while enabling greater conceptual precision. It demonstrated how broad ways of being could be ontologically decomposed into more granular dispositions without reducing their philosophical depth.

### ***Psychological and leadership theory contributions***

Supporting this ontological orientation, research on optimal self-esteem and integrated self-concept further highlighted the importance of internal coherence and self-regulation in effective leadership (Kernis, 2003). Ethical theory contributed additional depth by clarifying how integrity, responsibility and moral reasoning operate as structural rather than situational qualities (Harman, 2003).

Complementary leadership theories also informed the research. Daniel Goleman's work on emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness, self-regulation and social awareness, aligned with the identification of intrinsic human qualities shaping leadership effectiveness (Goleman, 1995). Similarly, psychological capital theory, encompassing hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism, contributed insights into how internal dispositions support sustained performance (Luthans et al., 2007).

Servant leadership theory further reinforced the importance of empathy, stewardship and care as foundational leadership orientations (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2010). Ethical leadership research emphasised integrity and moral consistency as core leadership conditions rather than optional virtues (Brown et al., 2005).

Relational leadership models, including leader-member exchange theory, underscored the role of trust, mutual obligation and respect in shaping leadership dynamics (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Charismatic leadership research further highlighted the transformative role of vision, meaning-making and inspiration (Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993).

### ***Cross-cultural perspectives and universal virtues***

The research was further informed by cross-cultural leadership studies that seek to identify qualities transcending cultural boundaries. Of particular importance was *Character Strengths and Virtues*, which identifies 24 character strengths organised under six universally recurring virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This framework provided a robust, empirically grounded reference point for examining leadership-related human qualities across cultures.

The GLOBE study further contributed large-scale empirical insights into culturally endorsed leadership attributes across societies (House et al., 2002). While invaluable in mapping global leadership patterns, such studies tend to emphasise observable behaviours and cultural norms, leaving deeper ontological dispositions comparatively underexplored.

Additional cross-cultural leadership research highlighted the importance of adaptability, cultural intelligence and contextual sensitivity. However, these studies similarly reinforced the need for a framework capable of distinguishing between culturally variable expressions and more universal human qualities underpinning leadership effectiveness.

### ***Synthesis and research contribution***

By integrating ontological philosophy, psychological theory, leadership research and cross-cultural studies, this literature review revealed both convergence and fragmentation within existing scholarship. While numerous frameworks address aspects of leadership effectiveness, few provide a unified account of the deeper human qualities that generate behaviour across contexts.

This synthesis highlighted a clear gap: the absence of an ontologically coherent model capable of explaining how fundamental human dispositions shape perception, decision-making and action across cultural and organisational environments. This gave rise to the central research question guiding Phase 1 of the inquiry: *How can fundamental human dispositions be systematically identified, defined and structured within an ontological model that explains their causal role in shaping perception, decision-making and action across diverse contexts?* Addressing this question became the central task of Phase 1 of the research.

The result was the development of the Being Framework Ontological Model, within which the 31 Aspects of Being were identified, distinguished and refined. This model integrates philosophical depth, psychological insight and empirical grounding into a coherent architecture capable of supporting both measurement and development.

The literature reviewed here thus provided not only scholarly legitimacy but also critical orientation, enabling the research to move beyond descriptive leadership models towards a framework that captures the deeper architecture of human effectiveness.

## Appendix 4: Exemplars of scholarly synthesis across the Aspects of Being

### Introduction

This appendix provides representative exemplars of the scholarly synthesis underpinning the 31 Aspects of Being that constitute the Being Framework Ontological Model. While the full research process involved extensive literature review, philosophical analysis and practitioner validation for each Aspect, reproducing all 31 distinctions in this white paper would introduce unnecessary length and detract from the central narrative.

Accordingly, this appendix does not seek to provide a comprehensive literature review of every Aspect of Being. Instead, it offers a curated selection of representative distinctions that demonstrate the methodological approach, analytical depth and scholarly integration used across the full model. These exemplars illustrate how diverse bodies of literature were synthesised into coherent ontological distinctions capable of supporting both empirical measurement and developmental application.

To demonstrate the breadth and rigour of the underlying research while maintaining conceptual clarity, one representative Aspect of Being from each ontological layer has been selected:

- **Meta Factors** → *Awareness*
- **Moods** → *Vulnerability*
- **Primary Ways of Being** → *Authenticity*
- **Secondary Ways of Being** → *Assertiveness*

Each selected exemplar functions as a methodological illustration rather than an isolated case. Together, they show how philosophical, psychological and neuroscientific scholarship was integrated with cross-cultural leadership research and field-based evidence drawn from high-performing entrepreneurs and leadership practitioners.

The distinctions presented here are therefore indicative rather than exhaustive. They demonstrate the consistent structure, interpretive discipline and ontological logic applied across the full set of 31 Aspects of Being, providing transparency into how the model was constructed without reproducing the entirety of the underlying scholarship.

A full scholarly exposition of all 31 Aspects of Being, including their complete literature syntheses, ontological distinctions and developmental implications, will be presented in a forthcoming scholarly monograph currently in preparation.

### Meta Factors

Within the Being Framework Ontological Model, Meta Factors represent the highest order systemic qualities that shape how an individual's entire configuration of Aspects of Being functions over time. Rather than describing a single disposition or situational response, the Being Framework's Meta Factors – Awareness, Integrity and Effectiveness – operate as overarching conditions that influence perception, decision-making, follow-through and the overall workability of a person's life and leadership. They modulate how the other Aspects of Being are expressed and integrated, functioning as structural 'settings' that enable or constrain sustainable performance and transformation. While Meta Factors exert a primary organising influence across the framework, patterns in Moods, Primary Ways of Being and lived experience can also reinforce or destabilise these Meta Factors over time, creating a dynamic, reciprocal relationship within the ontological system.

In the broader research, each Meta Factor was supported by an extensive literature review spanning philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, leadership studies and contemplative traditions. Consistent with the illustrative purpose of this appendix, a single Meta Factor has been selected as an exemplar of the underlying research and synthesis process.

Awareness has been chosen because it most clearly illustrates the function of Meta Factors as orienting conditions. It highlights the role of intentional consciousness, reflexivity and self-world attunement in shaping how individuals relate to reality, interpret experience and engage with choice. As such, awareness provides a clear window into how Meta Factors operate ontologically to influence the expression of all other Aspects of Being.

The distinction presented below is not intended to exhaust the scholarly treatment of awareness, nor to stand in for the other Meta Factors. Rather, it demonstrates the kind of rigorous, multi-disciplinary synthesis applied across the Meta Factor layer as a whole, offering transparency into the methodological approach used throughout the model.

The following subsection outlines the literature review and ontological synthesis for awareness as a representative Meta Factor within the Being Framework Ontological Model.

A full scholarly treatment of all three Meta Factors, including their complete literature reviews, ontological distinctions and developmental implications, will be presented in the forthcoming book, *The Ontological Foundations of Leadership: The Being Framework Research Monograph* (Tashvir, forthcoming).

#### **Appendix 4.1: Awareness**

In the context of the Being Framework, the distinction of awareness emphasises the intentional state of being conscious about one's consciousness. It involves an acute understanding of one's impact on the world and others, as well as the influence external factors have on oneself. This notion of awareness aligns with various scholarly works that explore consciousness, self-awareness and the interaction between individuals and their environments.

Daniel Goleman's work on emotional intelligence highlights the importance of self-awareness as a key component, referring to an individual's capacity to recognise and understand their own emotions, strengths, weaknesses and values (Goleman, 1995). While this aligns with the Being Framework's treatment of awareness, it represents only one dimension of it. Within the ontological model, awareness extends beyond self-reflection to include an ongoing, intentional consciousness of one's impact on others and the world, as well as the influence of external conditions on oneself.

Jon Kabat-Zinn's exploration of mindfulness, particularly through Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), also aligns with this distinction. He posits that mindfulness, or maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings and external environment, is essential for navigating life's challenges with clarity and understanding (Kabat-Zinn, 1994).

In the realm of cognitive psychology, Baumeister and Masicampo discuss the concept of reflective consciousness, which involves the ability to reflect upon oneself and one's thoughts. This reflective capacity is a fundamental aspect of awareness, as it enables individuals to understand their role and influence within various contexts (Baumeister & Masicampo, 2010).

Furthermore, Antonio Damasio's work on the neural basis of consciousness provides a biological perspective on awareness, exploring how our brains construct a sense of self from the perception of the body and from our continuous interaction with the external world (Damasio, 1999). This

neurological approach underscores the importance of being intentionally conscious of one's consciousness, as highlighted in the distinction of awareness.

Lastly, Heidegger's existential philosophy, particularly his concept of *Dasein's* 'Being-in-the-world', explores the intricate relationship between an individual's consciousness and their environment. Heidegger emphasises the importance of understanding oneself in relation to the world, a notion that closely aligns with the distinction's focus on the impact of the world and others on the individual and vice versa (Heidegger, 1927/1962).

These scholarly works collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of awareness, from emotional intelligence and mindfulness to existential philosophy, providing a robust theoretical foundation for the distinction within the ontological model.

Expanding the concept of awareness within the ontological framework required deeper engagement with a broader array of scholarly discourses exploring consciousness, self-awareness and the intricate interplay between the self and the external world. These additional references enriched the understanding of awareness, aligning with the distinction's emphasis on intentional consciousness and its implications for knowing and understanding oneself and one's surroundings.

Eckhart Tolle's exploration of consciousness, particularly in *The Power of Now*, offers profound insights into the nature of present-moment awareness and its transformative potential (Tolle, 1997). Tolle's perspective on being conscious of the present moment resonates with the intentional aspect of awareness highlighted in the distinction.

Antonio Damasio's *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain* further expands on the biological foundations of consciousness, delving into how the human brain creates one's sense of self-awareness and how this relates to the construction of reality (Damasio, 2010). This neurological perspective supports the distinction's focus on being intentionally conscious of one's consciousness.

Daniel Siegel's work on interpersonal neurobiology, especially his concept of 'Mindsight', explores the ability to perceive and understand the internal mental states of oneself and others (Siegel, 2010). Siegel's discussions on self-awareness and empathy complement the distinction's emphasis on understanding the impact one has on others and the world.

John Searle's philosophical investigations into the nature of consciousness and the mind-body problem provide a foundational understanding of how conscious states relate to brain processes (Searle, 1992). Searle's work offers a philosophical backdrop to the discussion of awareness, particularly in understanding the relationship between consciousness and intentionality.

Furthermore, the research of Csikszentmihalyi on 'Flow' and the optimal state of consciousness, achieved when individuals are fully immersed in an activity, aligns with the aspect of awareness in being fully present and engaged, highlighting the connection between awareness and peak experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

These additional scholarly contributions, spanning neuroscience, philosophy, psychology and spirituality, provide a multidimensional understanding of awareness. They collectively underscore the importance of intentional consciousness in shaping our interactions with the world and others, enriching the Being Framework Ontological Model's distinction of awareness with a diverse array of theoretical perspectives.

Taken together, these bodies of work suggest awareness as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing reflective self-consciousness, present-moment attentiveness, embodied processes

and relational situatedness. While each tradition emphasises different aspects, they converge on the insight that awareness operates beneath observable behaviour and shapes how individuals interpret and respond to their environments. The Being Framework integrates these dimensions into a single ontological construct, reframing awareness not simply as a discrete mental capacity but as an underlying disposition that influences perception, interpretation and action across contexts. In this way, the framework situates awareness as a foundational Meta Factor shaping the expression of all other Aspects of Being.

### Being Framework Ontological Distinction of Awareness

*Awareness* is the state of being intentionally conscious of your consciousness. It is how you relate to what you know and understand as well as what you don't know and don't understand.

*Awareness* is always intentional and directed at something. It is to know and understand yourself, others and the world around you, in particular the impact of the world and others on you and the impact you have on the world and others. *Awareness* is your access to knowing and understanding and is required to fulfil your intentions.

A healthy relationship with *awareness* indicates that you have a clear understanding of your impact on others and on the world around you. You are not easily misled, coerced and/or manipulated. You are both self-aware and aware of how you are perceived by others. You are attentive, alert and rarely surprised or caught off guard. You can find your way forward despite uncertainty or not knowing, and are available to consider feedback, guidance and critique.

An unhealthy relationship with *awareness* indicates that you may choose to ignore or be oblivious to matters and the impact you have on others and the world around you and vice versa. You may often be confused and shocked by matters and how others respond to you and blindsided when they fail to live up to your expectations. You may deliberately choose to ignore what there is to see. Alternatively, you may freeze or find it difficult to progress in the face of uncertainty or not knowing as you are compelled to know everything before making decisions or taking action.

(Tashvir, 2021)

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## **Moods**

### **Introduction**

Within the Being Framework Ontological Model, Moods represent foundational attunements through which individuals find themselves disclosed to the world. Rather than being understood as transient emotional states, Moods are treated ontologically as background orientations that shape how situations are encountered, meaning is interpreted and action becomes possible. This approach draws heavily on Martin Heidegger's exploration of *Stimmung* in *Being and Time*, where moods such as *Angst*, *Furcht* and *Sorge* disclose the structures of human existence and reveal openness, vulnerability and involvement in the world (Heidegger, 1927/1962). In this sense, Moods are not episodic feelings but enduring conditions of understanding that shape how possibilities, constraints and circumstances are experienced. However, the Being Framework emphasises that an individual's relationship with these attunements is not fixed. The way one inhabits and responds to Moods can shift over time through reflection, practice and developmental work.

In the broader research program, each Mood identified within the Being Framework was supported by substantial philosophical, psychological and phenomenological literature. Within the Being Framework Ontological Model, the Mood layer comprises four foundational existential attunements:

- **Vulnerability**, which highlights openness and exposure as conditions for authenticity, learning and relational depth.
- **Care**, which reflects the axiological structure of what matters to an individual and how priorities orient attention and action.
- **Anxiety**, which reveals the existential orientation towards possibility, uncertainty and freedom.
- **Fear**, which reflects directed concern towards specific threats and the immediacy of situational constraint.

Together, these Moods articulate the ontological stance taken in the Being Framework: that effective leadership, performance and transformation cannot be understood solely through behaviour or cognition, but must also account for the attuned background conditions from which individuals perceive, interpret and respond to the world.

Consistent with the exemplar purpose of this appendix, a single Mood – vulnerability – has been selected to illustrate the ontological treatment and scholarly synthesis applied across the Mood layer as a whole. Vulnerability has been chosen because it most clearly demonstrates how existential openness, exposure and receptivity function as conditions for authenticity, relational depth and adaptive responsiveness. It provides a particularly clear window into how Moods operate not merely as emotional experiences, but as attuned orientations that influence perception, meaning-making and engagement long before behaviour occurs.

The distinction presented below is therefore illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is not intended to stand in for the full range of Moods identified in the Being Framework, but to demonstrate the analytical depth, interdisciplinary integration and ontological logic applied consistently across the Mood layer within the broader research.

With this context in place, the following subsection outlines the literature review and ontological synthesis for vulnerability as a representative Mood within the Being Framework Ontological Model.

#### **Appendix 4.2: Vulnerability**

The concept of vulnerability, as outlined in the Being Framework's ontological distinction, transcends the conventional notion of weakness, positioning it as a catalyst for authenticity, trust and personal growth. This perspective is supported by a spectrum of scholarly works that underscore the multifaceted nature of vulnerability.

Brené Brown's extensive research on vulnerability highlights its essential role in fostering connection, creativity and wholehearted living. Brown argues that embracing our vulnerabilities is pivotal to developing deeper relationships and achieving personal growth, aligning with the distinction's emphasis on authenticity and openness (Brown, 2012).

The psychological concept of authenticity, as explored by psychologists like Kernis, further elucidates the importance of vulnerability. Kernis posits that authenticity involves owning one's experiences and presenting one's true self to the world, which inherently involves a degree of vulnerability (Kernis, 2003).

The work of Goffman on self-presentation and the performance of self in everyday life provides an interesting contrast to vulnerability. Goffman's theory suggests that individuals often engage in impression management to navigate social interactions, which can be antithetical to the notion of embracing one's authentic, vulnerable self (Goffman, 1959).

Furthermore, the concept of psychological safety, explored by Edmondson, highlights the significance of creating environments where individuals feel safe to take interpersonal risks. Such environments allow for the expression of vulnerability, fostering innovation and team learning (Edmondson, 1999).

Susan David's work on emotional agility touches upon the concept of vulnerability from an emotional regulation perspective. David suggests that facing one's emotions with courage, curiosity and openness – a form of vulnerability – is key to building resilience and adaptability (David, 2016).

Lastly, the philosophical musings of Kierkegaard on the self and the courage to face one's existential anxieties resonate with the notion of vulnerability. He posits that confronting the fundamental uncertainties of existence is essential to living authentically and fully (Kierkegaard, 1849).

Taken together, these perspectives suggest vulnerability as a multidimensional quality encompassing openness to experience, authenticity in self-presentation, willingness to take interpersonal risks and the courage to confront existential uncertainty. While each tradition approaches vulnerability from a different angle – psychological authenticity, social interaction, team dynamics, emotional regulation and existential philosophy – they converge on the insight that vulnerability enables deeper engagement with reality and with others. Within the Being Framework, vulnerability is therefore understood as a fundamental Aspect of Being that supports authenticity, resilience and meaningful participation in social and organisational life.

## Being Framework Ontological Distinction of Vulnerability

*Vulnerability* impacts how you relate to the concerns you have with respect to how you are being perceived or thought of in different situations. It is how you are being when confronted or exposed to perceived threats, ridicule, attacks or harm (emotional or physical). *Vulnerability* is not being weak, agreeable or submissive. It is when you embrace your imperfections. It is considered the quality of being with your authentic self without obsessive concern over the impression you make.

A healthy relationship with *vulnerability* indicates that you are open as opposed to guarded or closed in receiving unfamiliar knowledge and feedback. You are willing to reveal your authentic self to others, regardless of what they may think of you or the prevailing circumstances. You may often leverage the power of being vulnerable to generate trust and build relationships. You acknowledge and embrace your imperfections to support your growth and influence. Rather than letting other people's opinions of you hold you back, you learn from them to propel you to wholeness (integrity) and fulfilment.

An unhealthy relationship with *vulnerability* indicates that you are likely to defer or avoid taking action or making decisions when you feel they may impair your reputation. You may also avoid or put your guard up in situations where you could expose yourself to ridicule or look foolish. You are more concerned with being seen to do the right things, looking good or impressing others than actually doing the things you know to be right. You may be inclined to sacrifice your authentic self or image to project a fake persona that you consider more acceptable and impressive to others. You tend to take criticism personally. Alternatively, you may attempt to create unrealistic boundaries to maintain a 'safe' distance, avoiding the unknown and refusing to explore new territories. You may be overly controlling of others or your environment.

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## **Primary Ways of Being**

### **Introduction**

Within the Being Framework Ontological Model, Primary Ways of Being represent the fundamental orientations through which individuals relate to themselves, others and the world. These distinctions capture deep-seated modes of existence such as authenticity, responsibility, commitment, freedom, peace of mind and courage. They form the essential foundations from which all other Aspects of Being derive their coherence and expressive power.

Unlike behaviours or skills, Primary Ways of Being describe how a person is at the most intrinsic level and the lens, posture and grounding through which they perceive, interpret and act. These distinctions are central to the ontological nature of the framework.

As demonstrated in Erhard, Jensen and Granger's ontological and phenomenological model of leadership, leadership effectiveness arises from an individual's way of being rather than from behaviour alone (Erhard, Jensen & Granger, 2013). Building on this foundation, Primary Ways of Being shape the context from which action arises and influence the effectiveness, alignment and authenticity of the behaviours that follow. They constitute the underlying stance of the individual rather than the outward performance or strategies.

In the broader research program, each Primary Way of Being was developed through a rigorous synthesis of interdisciplinary scholarship drawing on phenomenology, existential philosophy, psychology, ethics and leadership theory. To maintain clarity and avoid unnecessary length within this white paper, a single Primary Way of Being – authenticity – has been selected as an exemplar of the analytical and scholarly process applied across this ontological layer.

Authenticity was chosen because it sits at the core of ontological leadership and human performance. It clearly demonstrates how the Being Framework integrates philosophical insight, psychological research and practical application to articulate a distinction that is both conceptually rigorous and developmentally actionable.

While only Authenticity is examined in detail here, each Primary Way of Being within the full ontology underwent similarly deep scholarly analysis and iterative refinement. A complete scholarly exposition of all Primary Ways of Being, including their full literature syntheses, ontological distinctions and developmental implications, will be presented in a forthcoming academic monograph currently in preparation.

The purpose of this section is therefore illustrative rather than exhaustive. It provides a transparent window into the ontological and scholarly foundations of the Primary Ways of Being, demonstrating how these distinctions function as the fundamental ground upon which sustainable leadership, transformation and human effectiveness are built.

### **Appendix 4.3: Authenticity**

The Being Framework's distinction of authenticity delves into the congruence between an individual's self-perception, expressions and their alignment with reality, an exploration that resonates deeply with Heidegger's existential analysis. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger articulates the concept of authenticity ('Eigentlichkeit') as the mode of being in which one fully owns one's choices and existence, standing in stark contrast to the 'they-self' where one lives according to the expectations and norms of society (Heidegger, 1927/1962).

Brené Brown's research on vulnerability and authenticity further enriches this discussion, emphasising the courage to be true to oneself and to embrace one's imperfections as a source of strength and connection rather than weakness (Brown, 2012).

Bill George's concept of authentic leadership builds upon this by highlighting the importance of leaders being genuine and true to their values and principles, thereby fostering trust and integrity within organisations (George, 2003).

In the anthology, *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*, Wrathall and Malpas compile essays that discuss Heidegger's influence on contemporary thought regarding authenticity, further elucidating its implications in modern existential and philosophical contexts (Wrathall & Malpas, 2000).

Erhard and Jensen's ontological/phenomenological model posits authenticity as one of the foundational ways of being that underpin effective leadership and personal fulfilment. Their work articulates the transformative power of authenticity in both personal and organisational contexts (Erhard & Jensen, 2013).

Adding to this rich tapestry of thought, Taylor's *Sources of the Self* delves into the genesis of modern identity, examining how notions of inwardness and authenticity have evolved to become central to our understanding of what it means to be a self (Taylor, 1989).

Sartre's existentialist perspective, particularly in *Being and Nothingness*, offers a nuanced view of authenticity as an existential project where one continually defines oneself through actions in the face of life's absurdity, highlighting the dynamic nature of authentic being (Sartre, 1943).

Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* provides a sociological angle, discussing how individuals perform roles in social interactions, often navigating the tension between authentic self-expression and societal expectations (Goffman, 1959).

Charles Guignon's work on Heidegger's philosophy, particularly in *On Being Authentic*, explores the existential foundations of authenticity, discussing its implications for modern selfhood and ethics (Guignon, 2004).

Simon Critchley's *How to Stop Living and Start Worrying* converses about the role of authenticity in facing life's existential challenges, advocating for an engagement with life that is deeply aware of mortality and finitude (Critchley, 2010).

Frederick Nietzsche's perspectives on authenticity, particularly his emphasis on self-overcoming and the creation of one's values, add another layer to the discussion of authenticity. Nietzsche's philosophy encourages individuals to transcend conventional morality and societal norms to forge a more personal and authentic path, aligning with the authenticity distinction's emphasis on congruence between one's self-perception and reality (Nietzsche, 1887). He advocates for a life lived in accordance with one's own values, which he sees as a more authentic existence, free from the constraints of societal expectations and herd mentality.

Incorporating Nietzsche's ideas into the synthesis of the authenticity distinction highlights the dynamic and self-determined nature of authenticity. It emphasises the ongoing process of self-examination, the courage to challenge and redefine one's values and beliefs and the commitment to live in accordance with those deeply held convictions. Nietzsche's call to embrace one's individuality and to craft one's life as a work of art resonates with the notion of authenticity as a reflective and intentional alignment of one's actions and expressions with their true self and reality.

Lastly, the Dalai Lama's discussions on happiness and human nature often touch upon the importance of living authentically, highlighting how truthfulness to oneself and others is crucial for inner peace and fulfilment (Dalai Lama, 1998).

By weaving together insights from Heidegger, Nietzsche, Brown and other scholars, the Being Framework's authenticity distinction is enriched, portraying it as an existential and philosophical endeavour that involves a continuous engagement with one's Being, values and the broader world. This multifaceted view underscores the importance of authenticity in navigating life's complexities with integrity and purpose.

### Being Framework Ontological Distinction of Authenticity

*Authenticity* is how you relate to the reality of matters in life. It is the extent to which you are accurate and rigorous in perceiving what is real and what is not. It is also how sensitive and diligent you are to the validity of the knowledge you perceive. *Authenticity* is paramount for you to carefully consider that your conception of reality – including your beliefs and opinions – is congruent with how things are. When you are being authentic, you are compelled to express your Unique Being – what is there for you to express – while being consistent with who you say you are for others and who you say you are for yourself. It is the congruence or alignment of your self-image – who you know yourself to be – and your persona – who you choose to project to others.

A healthy relationship with *authenticity* indicates that you take the time to thoughtfully consider your beliefs and opinions, as the validity and accuracy of your conception of matters is important to you. You mostly experience yourself as being true to yourself and others. Others may consider you genuine, distinct and trustworthy, and that your actions are consistent with who and how you are and what you communicate.

An unhealthy relationship with *authenticity* indicates that there may be no solid foundation for your beliefs and opinions and how you choose to examine reality, and you are often lenient and fickle with how you express your views and the truth. You may consider yourself to be fake or an imposter and often question your own abilities. Others may consider you to be someone who lacks sincerity and often acts inconsistently with who you say you are. You are frequently uncomfortable with being yourself and being with yourself. Alternatively, you may be righteous, opinionated, biased or prejudiced, considering your 'truth' to be the only truth, and may be unwilling to give up being 'right'.

(Tashvir, 2021)

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## **Secondary Ways of Being**

### **Introduction**

Secondary Ways of Being represent the more observable expressions of how individuals show up in the world. They translate the deeper Primary Ways of Being into observable relational and behavioural dispositions. While Primary Ways describe one's existential stance, Secondary Ways articulate how that stance is expressed through qualities such as assertiveness, reliability, accountability, resourcefulness, confidence and proactivity. These qualities shape everyday interactions, decision-making and communication.

In the Being Framework Ontological Model, Secondary Ways of Being bridge the internal landscape of one's existential orientation with the outward manifestation of leadership and interpersonal effectiveness. They represent the applied dimension of Being. These are the qualities through which intentions and deeper states of being become actionable, relational and embodied.

Each Secondary Way of Being in the full ontology was derived through interdisciplinary synthesis that includes behavioural science, social psychology, organisational studies, phenomenology and communication theory.

Consistent with the exemplar purpose of this appendix, a single Secondary Way of Being – assertiveness – has been selected for detailed examination. Presenting the full literature review for all Secondary Ways of Being would introduce unnecessary length and obscure the methodological focus of this section.

Assertiveness was chosen because it clearly illustrates the relationship between inner ontological orientation and outward behavioural expression. It demonstrates how a Secondary Way of Being emerges from, reflects and is modulated by deeper Primary Ways of Being, while also functioning as a practical and recognisable expression of effectiveness, self-honouring and relational clarity in lived contexts.

The purpose of this section is therefore illustrative rather than exhaustive. Through a single, well-developed example, it demonstrates how Secondary Ways of Being are grounded in interdisciplinary scholarly literature and articulated through ontological interpretation. In doing so, it provides transparency into how the broader Secondary Ways of Being layer was constructed and how it functions within the overall Being Framework Ontological Model.

A full scholarly treatment of all Secondary Ways of Being, including their complete literature reviews, ontological distinctions and developmental implications, will be presented in the forthcoming scholarly monograph currently in preparation.

#### **Appendix 4.4: Assertiveness**

The distinction of assertiveness, as articulated within the Being Framework, refers to the capacity to express oneself clearly, directly and effectively while maintaining respect for others. Assertiveness is the willingness to communicate one's thoughts, feelings, needs and expectations firmly and transparently, without resorting to aggression, manipulation or submission. It is not about imposing one's will, but about standing resolutely in one's position while remaining aware of the relational and situational consequences of doing so.

Ontologically, assertiveness reflects a balanced relationship between self-respect and respect for others. It is the expression of agency through language and behaviour that is straight, unambiguous and grounded. Assertiveness enables individuals to be seen and heard without distortion, while also allowing others the same dignity. It is a state of being that supports clarity, alignment and workability in human interaction.

This framing aligns with phenomenological and existential perspectives on authenticity and agency. Carl Rogers emphasised congruence as a core condition for healthy relating, describing it as the alignment between internal experience and external expression. Assertiveness, in this sense, is the behavioural expression of congruence, where individuals communicate honestly rather than hiding behind compliance or hostility (Rogers, 1961).

In behavioural psychology, assertiveness has been extensively studied as a distinct communication style. Alberti and Emmons defined assertiveness as behaviour that enables individuals to act in their own best interest while respecting the rights of others. Their work clearly differentiates assertiveness from aggression, which violates others' rights, and from passivity, which violates one's own rights (Alberti & Emmons, 1970).

From a skills-based perspective, assertiveness training emerged as a means of addressing anxiety, resentment and ineffective communication. Research has shown that assertive behaviour is associated with improved self-esteem, reduced interpersonal conflict and greater relational satisfaction. Individuals who communicate assertively are more likely to resolve issues directly rather than allowing them to escalate or remain unresolved (Speed, Goldstein & Goldfried, 2018).

Social and organisational psychology further reinforces this distinction. Amy Edmondson's work on psychological safety demonstrates that environments where individuals can speak up clearly and respectfully without fear of retaliation are more effective and adaptive. Assertiveness contributes to such environments by enabling direct communication without emotional escalation or covert control (Edmondson, 1999).

Unhealthy relationships with assertiveness often manifest as passivity, aggression or indirect manipulation. Individuals may avoid expressing their needs to prevent conflict, leading to resentment, misunderstanding and diminished trust. Others may rely on sarcasm, teasing or underhanded comments as substitutes for direct communication, masking discomfort while escalating tension.

Alternatively, assertiveness may be distorted into dominance. In these cases, individuals use tone, threat or emotional force to impose outcomes, confusing forcefulness with effectiveness. Research

on coercive communication shows that such approaches undermine trust and cooperation, often provoking resistance rather than resolution (Baron, 2005).

Within the Being Framework Ontological Model, a healthy relationship with assertiveness is characterised by clarity without hostility and firmness without coercion. Individuals are able to articulate expectations, boundaries and concerns directly, while remaining open to dialogue and consequence. They do not rely on manipulation, threats or avoidant withdrawal to influence outcomes. Others experience them as straight, trustworthy and emotionally regulated. When embodied authentically, assertiveness becomes a stabilising quality that supports integrity, effective collaboration and the resolution of issues before they escalate.

### Being Framework Ontological Distinction of Assertiveness

*Assertiveness* is when you express yourself effectively and stand up for your point of view while also being respectful of others. It is the willingness to express your thoughts and feelings and communicate your needs and expectations firmly and directly while being considerate of others and aware of any subsequent consequences of being assertive. *Assertiveness* is being resolute, straight, firm and effective.

A healthy relationship with *assertiveness* indicates that you are predominately straight and unambiguous in your communication with others. You rarely resort to threats or attempt to manipulate outcomes and are transparent with your motives. You are bold in communicating your and others' needs and expectations in terms of the outcomes required or expected. You are comfortable letting others know how you feel and express yourself without emotional outbursts.

An unhealthy relationship with *assertiveness* indicates that you may be unreasonably submissive, agreeable or aggressive, or that you predominantly rely on manipulation and domination to get your way, express yourself and communicate with others. You may frequently go along with what others decide to avoid conflict. You may also use inappropriate humour, sarcasm, teasing or underhanded comments to manipulate, bully, control or put others down. Alternatively, you may frequently threaten or use the tone of your voice to dominate or exert your will on others. As a result, they may consider you manipulative or dominating, even though that is not always your intention. Your conversations may quickly spiral or escalate emotionally while issues remain unresolved.

(Tashvir, 2021)

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## **Appendix 5: Links between the Being Framework and martial arts**

Across diverse studies, martial arts function as structured environments for cultivating dispositional qualities, shaping behavioural patterns and transforming psychological states. Although the literature often frames these effects through the lenses of mental health, self-regulation or social behaviour, a deeper analysis reveals that martial arts implicitly engage many of the same ontological dimensions that underpin the Being Framework.

### ***Martial arts as structured contexts for ontological development***

A randomised controlled trial in a secondary school setting found that martial arts programs integrating physical techniques with psycho-educational components produced measurable improvements in resilience, emotional regulation, prosocial behaviour and general psychological wellbeing (Moore, Woodcock & Dudley, 2021). The intervention combined traditional martial arts pedagogy with discussions on respect, focus, discipline and goal-setting. Although the study interpreted these results through conventional psychological constructs, the underlying mechanisms closely resemble developmental shifts in the individual's relationship with qualities such as responsibility, vulnerability, courage and commitment, Aspects of Being within the Being Framework.

Other studies show similar patterns. Martial arts training has been associated with enhanced executive functioning, improvements in attentional control and better emotional regulation, particularly in at-risk youth populations (Harwood-Gross et al., 2021). In adults, long-term martial arts practice has been linked to improved cognitive control, stronger attentional networks and more adaptive behavioural responses under pressure (Johnstone & Mari-Beffa, 2018). These findings indicate that martial arts function as immersive environments where cognitive, emotional and behavioural capacities are shaped through disciplined practice, embodied learning and the continuous negotiation of challenge.

### ***The philosophical parallels: Attunement, embodiment and the formation of dispositions***

What is often absent in the academic literature on martial arts training, sports psychology and behavioural development is a clear articulation of why martial arts consistently produce these transformations. Traditional martial arts are grounded in philosophical systems that view training as a pathway for the cultivation of character, attunement and self-mastery. Central concepts such as harmony, balance, presence, humility and respect reflect dispositional qualities rather than isolated skills.

In these traditions, transformation arises through repeated engagement with structured difficulty, conscious embodiment, relational discipline and the integration of mind, body and intention. This mirrors the Being Framework's focus on shifts in one's relationship with qualities of Being. Both domains recognise that transformation is experiential and relational, not merely cognitive.

Martial arts do not simply teach techniques. They modulate ways of being. This modulation occurs through:

- repetitive embodied practice
- ritualised interpersonal interaction
- exposure to challenge
- disciplined self-observation

- integration of cognitive, emotional and physiological experiences
- cultivation of responsiveness rather than reactivity.

These processes resemble several of the mechanisms employed in the Being Framework's Transformation Methodology. While martial arts traditions cultivate these shifts implicitly through embodied practice and disciplined engagement, the Being Framework makes these dynamics explicit, providing a structured language and methodological pathway for observing, interpreting and facilitating ontological transformation.

### ***Gaps in the literature***

Despite the sophistication of martial arts traditions, academic studies tend to reduce their effects to behavioural or psychological outcomes, such as reduced aggression or improved mood. There remain notable gaps in the literature regarding the transformation of intrinsic qualities themselves. For example, martial arts studies seldom explore how:

- Dispositions form or shift.
- Deep-seated patterns of Being change in practitioners.
- The philosophical foundations of martial arts relate to ontological development.
- Transformation progresses over time or across developmental stages.

These gaps reflect a broader limitation within psychological research, which often measures outcomes without addressing the underlying ontology of the human being.

### ***The Being Framework's contribution***

The Being Framework provides a vocabulary and structure that can articulate the mechanisms martial arts have engaged for centuries. It specifically focuses on understanding and shifting an individual's relationship with qualities such as courage, assertiveness, vulnerability, responsibility and care. The Transformation Methodology offers clear processes for modulating these relationships in a deliberate and measurable way.

Where the martial arts literature describes improvements in behaviour or emotion, the Being Framework explains the developmental shifts that make such improvements possible. It focuses on the:

- Integrity of the individual.
- Modulation of ways of being.
- Transformation of unhealthy relational patterns.
- Cultivation of responsiveness and attunement.
- Development of stable, healthy dispositions.

In this way, it creates a bridge between traditional embodied disciplines and contemporary ontological research.

### ***Towards an integrated understanding***

By drawing insights from both martial arts research and the Being Framework, it becomes possible to conceptualise transformation not simply as behavioural change but as a shift in the architecture of Being. Martial arts demonstrate the power of embodied, disciplined environments to shape

dispositions. As a familiar real-world example, they provide an accessible illustration of how sustained practice can transform ways of being. The Being Framework articulates the underlying mechanisms by which such transformation occurs and provides a structure for applying this process deliberately within leadership, organisational and societal contexts.

Together, these fields point to a broader conclusion. Sustainable transformation requires a method for cultivating healthier relationships with the fundamental Aspects of Being necessary for leadership effectiveness and performance. Martial arts provide evidence that this is possible. The Being Framework provides the ontology, conceptual clarity and methodology to systematise it.

## **Appendix 6: Frameworks in dialogue – The Being Framework and the Three Pillars Model**

In leadership, transformation and organisational practice, many bodies of work attempt to explain why individuals and systems behave the way they do. Some emphasise behaviour. Others focus on cognition, culture, structure or strategy. Each offers insight, yet none can fully capture the complexity of human beings and the systems they create.

For this reason, the Being Framework intentionally identifies itself as a framework rather than a single comprehensive theory of human behaviour. The term *framework* signals two commitments.

First, it is intentionally incomplete. Every framework is a selective map that foregrounds certain aspects of reality and backgrounds others so that observers can think, perceive and intervene more effectively. The Being Framework foregrounds the ontological layer of human effectiveness. It does not attempt to replace frameworks that specialise in strategy, organisational design, culture, economics or socio-technical analysis.

Second, it is designed to operate in dialogue with other frameworks. No single model captures all relevant dimensions of leadership and organisational life. The practical question is rarely which framework is correct, but rather how multiple frameworks can interact to produce more coherent observation, reasoning and action. This is especially important in complex environments where adaptive challenges require both human depth and organisational capability.

This appendix positions the Being Framework within a broader ecosystem of reputable models and demonstrates how it complements one such framework: the Three Pillars Model developed by Peter Wollmann and colleagues and published through Springer (Wollmann et al., 2020; 2022). This dialogue is illustrated through concrete contributions by both Ashkan Tashvir and Jacqueline Hofste across several volumes in the Three Pillars series. Together, these works show how independent frameworks can enrich one another and offer a multidimensional perspective on leadership, sustainability and organisational transformation.

### ***What is meant by a framework in this context?***

In this white paper, a framework refers to a structured set of distinctions, relationships and organising principles that support observation and action in complex situations. A framework is not a comprehensive description of reality. It is a coherent subset of distinctions selected to make certain phenomena visible, thinkable and workable.

In this sense, a framework is closer to a map than a territory. A map is valuable not because it captures everything, but because it organises a chosen portion of reality in a way that supports orientation and action. Each framework carries implicit assumptions about what matters, what counts as evidence and what it considers effective action.

The Being Framework is explicitly ontological and ontometric. It is ontological because it focuses on who and how human beings are being rather than solely on what they know or do. It is ontometric because it provides a structured way of observing and measuring human dispositions through the Being Profile.

Recognising the partial and constructed nature of all frameworks is essential. No single model captures the full complexity of human functioning or organisational life. The more relevant questions for practitioners and researchers are:

- What phenomena become visible through this framework?
- What patterns of interpretation and intervention does it enable?
- How can it enter into productive dialogue with other frameworks?

This appendix illustrates such dialogue by examining the relationship between the Being Framework and the Three Pillars Model.

### ***The Being Framework as one framework among many***

The Being Framework was developed in response to recurring and costly breakdowns in leadership, venture building and organisational transformation. It offers:

- An ontological model of 31 Aspects of Being organised into Meta Factors, Moods, Primary Ways of Being and Secondary Ways of Being.
- An ontometric assessment tool, the Being Profile, capable of identifying and measuring individuals' relationships with these Aspects.
- A Transformation Methodology that operationalises these insights into meaningful developmental practice.

This does not imply that the Being Framework replaces other leadership or organisational models. Rather, it addresses a critical layer that is often unspecified in other frameworks: the underlying dispositions, interpretations and meaning structures that shape how leaders respond to purpose, complexity, pressure, uncertainty and responsibility.

In practice, leaders and organisations work with multiple frameworks simultaneously. The Being Framework sits beneath or alongside these models by offering a way to examine the human substrate that ultimately determines whether any structural or strategic solution succeeds or fails.

The ongoing collaboration with Peter Wollmann, Reto Püringer, Doris Pemler, Mersida Ndrevataj, Frank Kühn, Michael Kempf, Jacqueline Hofste and others provides a lived example of how the Being Framework enters into productive dialogue with a complementary body of work.

### ***The Three Pillars Model in brief***

The Three Pillars Model, developed by Peter Wollmann and colleagues, is a systemic organisational approach centred on three interdependent pillars:

- Sustainable Purpose
- Travelling Organisation
- Connectivity (sometimes referred to in earlier literature as *Connecting Resource*)

The model provides a structured way for organisations to align long-term purpose with adaptive movement and relational coherence. At scale, it has been applied across public, private and multi-stakeholder environments to guide transformation, embed sustainability and strengthen institutional resilience (Wollmann et al., 2020; 2022).

Editors associated with the series and related volumes include Peter Wollmann and Reto Püringer, together with co-editors such as Frank Strack, Doris Pemler and Mersida Ndrevataj across specific volumes.

## ***Design principles of the Three Pillars Model***

The three main design principles for future organisation and leadership are described as follows.

**Sustainable Purpose:** Employees and teams, together with key stakeholders across the broader ecosystem, must understand what the organisation stands for and the entrepreneurial and societal value it seeks to create. Purpose must remain reliable, consistent and lived by leaders rather than merely articulated. Especially in times of crisis, purpose provides orientation, energy and cohesion, enabling organisations to stay aligned while navigating uncertainty.

**Travelling Organisation:** The assumption that organisations can rely on strategic stability, punctuated by occasional change initiatives, is no longer viable in disruptive environments. Organisations must be understood as continuously moving systems, adapting through learning, experimentation and decision-making under uncertainty. A travelling organisation depends on curiosity, courage, self-reflection and the capacity to act without complete certainty while remaining aligned with purpose.

**Connectivity:** Sustainable performance requires managing relationships across individuals, teams, systems, disciplines and stakeholder groups. Connectivity addresses fragmentation, silos and misalignment while enabling collaboration across organisational, cultural and institutional boundaries. It involves balancing competing interests, integrating diverse forms of expertise and maintaining coherence across complex ecosystems.

The Three Pillars Model is an open approach that supports organisational development, transformation, governance and leadership. Its applicability has been demonstrated through more than thirty-five documented use cases across public and private sectors worldwide.

## ***Ashkan Tashvir's contributions to the Three Pillars series***

The Being Framework, together with the Metacontent Discourse, including its Nested Theory of Sense-making, and the Authentic Sustainability Framework, has been developed in active dialogue with the Three Pillars Model across multiple Springer volumes. Through these contributions, Ashkan Tashvir explicitly connects ontology, sense-making, leadership development and sustainability with the Three Pillars lens, demonstrating how organisational transformation is inseparable from human ontological development (Tashvir, 2022; Tashvir, 2025).

Across these works, the Being Framework is positioned not as an alternative organisational model but as an ontological foundation that enables the Three Pillars Model to be lived, enacted and sustained within real organisational systems.

## **BOOK 1**

**Title:** *Transforming Public and Private Sector Organizations: Implementing Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organization and Connectivity for Resilience*

**Chapter:** *The Application of a New Framework: Connecting the Being Framework with the Three Pillars Model of Organization and Leadership to Foster Transformations*

**Publisher:** Springer, 2022

In this chapter, Tashvir argues that organisational transformation consistently fails when it is approached as a purely structural, technological or strategic undertaking. While organisations invest heavily in redesigning systems, processes and governance, these efforts falter when leaders

and teams remain anchored in inherited dispositions, habitual interpretations and unexamined ways of being.

The chapter introduces the Being Framework as a practical ontological pathway for supporting leaders and teams to transform who and how they are being, rather than focusing solely on what they do. By developing the underlying Aspects of Being that shape interpretation, responsibility, integrity and decision-making, individuals gain the capacity to navigate uncertainty, conflict and complexity with greater coherence and discernment.

By integrating the Being Framework with the Three Pillars Model, the chapter demonstrates how personal and collective ontological development enables Sustainable Purpose to be lived authentically, Travelling Organisation to function adaptively and Connectivity to operate beyond formal structures. Transformation is reframed as a relational and developmental process that unfolds across individuals, teams and organisations, enabling resilience, movement and purpose alignment to emerge organically rather than through compliance or enforcement.

## **BOOK 2**

**Title:** *The Sustainable Organization: How Organizations Address the 17 UN SDGs Using the Three Pillar Model*

**Chapter:** *The Metacontent of Being and Identity: Rethinking Diversity, Inclusion and Sustainable Organizations*

**Publisher:** Springer, 2025

This chapter redefines diversity and inclusion by shifting the focus away from demographic representation, compliance frameworks and symbolic initiatives towards a deeper ontological and developmental understanding of identity. Drawing on the Being Framework, Metacontent Discourse and the Nested Theory of Sense-making, the chapter distinguishes between three interrelated layers of identity:

- **Whatness:** shared human qualities at the level of our species
- **Howness:** the unique way individuals express and relate to these qualities
- **Whoness:** constructed and self-selected identity layers, including social, cultural and ideological identifications

Through this distinction, Tashvir demonstrates why many diversity initiatives fail to produce genuine inclusion or sustainable cultural change. When organisations operate primarily at the level of whoness, they reinforce fragmentation, performativity and ideological conflict. Sustainable inclusion requires epistemic humility, relational depth and the capacity to engage difference without collapse, defensiveness or moral superiority.

The chapter provides practical strategies for embedding this ontological depth into leadership practice, team dynamics and organisational culture. Diversity is repositioned as a source of innovation, resilience and systemic capability, aligning directly with the Three Pillars Model's emphasis on Sustainable Purpose and Connectivity within complex organisational ecosystems.

### **BOOK 3** (forthcoming)

**Title:** *The Sustainable Organization – Volume 3. Academic, Cross-Sectoral, and Industrial Pathways to Achieving the UN SDGs*

**Chapter:** *Toward a Reconstructive Foundation for Sustainability – A Philosophical Deepening of Sustainability Beyond Perception and Performance*

**Publisher:** Springer, 2026

This forthcoming volume examines how organisations can meaningfully integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals through the Three Pillars Model. Rather than treating sustainability as a technical, reporting or compliance exercise, the volume emphasises the interdependence between human development, organisational capability and systemic coherence (Wollmann et al., forthcoming).

In his chapter, Tashvir reframes sustainability as a question of systemic integrity rather than performance metrics or externally imposed targets. Drawing on ontological and reconstructive principles, he argues that sustainability succeeds or fails based on the coherence between purpose, values, structures, incentives and long-term consequences. When this coherence breaks down, sustainability initiatives become performative, fragmented or dependent on constant external reinforcement.

The chapter foregrounds the human ontological dimension of sustainability, explaining why systems cannot endure when individuals operate from fragmented sense-making, distorted metacontent or short-term reactivity. To address this, the concept of metacontent is introduced as the underlying layer of assumptions, narratives and interpretive frames that shape how sustainability is understood and enacted.

Moving beyond critique and deconstruction, the chapter advances a reconstructive ontology for sustainability. From this foundation, authentic sustainability is articulated as a regenerative paradigm rooted in systemic integrity and long-term coherence. These ontological insights are then integrated with the Three Pillars Model, demonstrating how Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organisation and Connectivity can only achieve durability when grounded in intrapersonal, interpersonal and systemic integrity.

Across these contributions, Tashvir’s work demonstrates how the Being Framework enters into substantive dialogue with the Three Pillars Model, enriching its application by addressing the ontological conditions required for organisational movement, resilience and sustainability to be realised in practice.

### ***Jacqueline Hofste’s contributions to the Three Pillars series***

Jacqueline Hofste, a senior member of the Being Framework community, has contributed three chapters to the Three Pillars series that bring an explicit ontological and developmental perspective into dialogue with the Three Pillars Model. Across these contributions, she directly references and applies the Being Framework and the Being Profile, demonstrating how ontological development underpins sustainable leadership, organisational capability and meaningful transformation.

## BOOK 1

**Title:** *Navigating the Unknown in Organizations: Leading with the Three Pillar Model*

**Chapter:** *How to Read the Respective Organizational Capabilities*

**Publisher:** Springer, 2024

In this chapter, Hofste examines how organisations must fundamentally rethink leadership, teamwork and organisational capability in an era defined by continuous disruption. She argues that the structures, assumptions and leadership models that once supported organisational stability are no longer adequate to meet the profound economic, social, political and environmental challenges of the current era.

The chapter introduces the Being Framework and the Being Profile as a practical means to cultivate deeper awareness within leaders and teams. By enabling individuals to recognise and engage with another person's interpretation of reality, the Being Framework supports new possibilities for collaboration, alignment and adaptive leadership in increasingly complex organisational contexts.

## BOOK 2

**Title:** *The Sustainable Organization: A Multidimensional Approach to Achieving Sustainability with the Three Pillar Model*

**Chapter:** *Sustainable Leadership Competence Framework*

**Publisher:** Springer, 2025

In this chapter, Hofste explores the leadership challenges that arise when organisations attempt to engage with sustainability in an authentic and non-performative way. She outlines the need to transform prevailing value systems and leadership norms in order to navigate the complexity and contradictions inherent in contemporary sustainability challenges.

Hofste presents a developmental leadership competence framework that encourages leaders to move beyond politically correct conventions and surface-level compliance, and instead develop the capacity to confront perverse economic incentives, ethical tensions and systemic constraints. The Being Framework, introduced in an earlier volume of the series, is positioned as the foundational pathway for genuine personal transformation. Through the Being Profile assessment tool, leaders and teams can identify distortions in perception, recognise habitual ways of being that limit effectiveness and develop greater agency, integrity and discernment in their decision-making.

## BOOK 3 (forthcoming)

**Title:** *The Sustainable Organization – Volume 3. Academic, Cross-Sectoral, and Industrial Pathways to Achieving the UN SDGs*

**Chapter:** *From Metrics to Meaning: Fostering Sustainability by Reclaiming Leadership as a Conscious and Archetypal Way of Being*

**Publisher:** Springer, 2026

In this forthcoming chapter, Hofste challenges the widespread reduction of sustainability to metrics, reporting frameworks and compliance indicators. She argues that sustainability requires a deeper philosophical and developmental shift in how leadership itself is understood.

Leadership is reframed not as a title or functional role but as a conscious way of being grounded in universal archetypal patterns of human potential. Drawing on ontological perspectives, including

the Being Framework, the chapter explains how the qualities of Being from which leaders act shape the integrity, meaning and sustainability of their actions. By emphasising the primacy of how leaders are being over what they are doing, the chapter positions sustainability as an expression of consciousness, purpose and relational presence rather than a technical outcome. This perspective aligns the Three Pillars Model with ontological development and deepens the dialogue between organisational sustainability, human transformation and archetypal leadership.

### ***How the Being Framework complements the Three Pillars Model***

The Three Pillars Model and the Being Framework operate at different layers but are mutually reinforcing.

The Three Pillars Model addresses organisational structure, strategy and culture through Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organisation and Connectivity. The Being Framework addresses the ontological development of people, clarifying the dispositions that shape perception, decision-making and action.

Key correspondences include:

- **Sustainable Purpose:** The Being Framework develops Aspects of Being such as higher purpose, integrity, care and contribution, determining whether purpose is genuinely lived or merely performed.
- **Travelling Organisation:** Adaptive movement requires leaders capable of functioning within uncertainty. The Being Framework develops Moods and Ways of Being such as vulnerability, anxiety, courage, presence, responsibility and resilience, which enable leaders and teams to remain responsive, coherent and effective as conditions change.
- **Connectivity:** Structural connectivity depends on human relational capacity. The Being Framework clarifies the dispositions required for genuine connection, including partnership, love, authenticity, care, vulnerability and compassion.

Aligning organisational pillars with ontological development produces more resilient, sustainable and integrity-driven systems.

### ***Why this integration matters for practitioners and clients***

For practitioners and clients, this integration offers:

- **Clarity of scope:** The Being Framework addresses the ontological layer of human effectiveness and complements rather than replaces structural and strategic frameworks.
- **Cross-validation and credibility:** Dialogue with independent Springer-published frameworks demonstrates that the Being Framework operates within a broader scholarly ecosystem.
- **Practical complementarity:** The Being Profile enables leaders to identify where personal dispositions support or undermine organisational transformation initiatives.
- **Future development:** Ongoing collaboration continues to refine how ontological development and organisational models can be applied together in complex contexts.

## **Conclusion**

This appendix has shown how the Being Framework is positioned as a framework among frameworks: a deliberately constructed yet incomplete set of distinctions focused on the ontological drivers of human effectiveness.

By placing it in explicit dialogue with the Three Pillars Model and documenting contributions across multiple Springer volumes, the appendix clarifies:

- What the Being Framework is and is not designed to do.
- How its ontometric assessment complements organisational models.
- Why it is relevant to broader conversations about purpose, change, connectivity and authentic sustainability.

In doing so, it reinforces a central intention of the white paper: transparency of scope, depth of grounding and integration within a wider ecosystem of thought and practice rather than isolation or exclusivity.

For readers wishing to explore the Three Pillars Model in greater depth, *Appendix 6.A* provides an overview of the core Springer volumes that collectively articulate and apply the model across leadership, sustainability and organisational transformation.

## **Appendix 6.A: Key publications in the Three Pillars (3-P) Model series**

The following publications represent the core body of work through which the Three Pillars Model has been developed, refined and applied across organisational, leadership and sustainability contexts. Together, they demonstrate the evolution of the model from its foundational articulation through to applied case studies, sustainability integration and leadership practice.

### **Three Pillars of Organization and Leadership in Disruptive Times**

*Navigating Your Company Successfully Through the 21st Century Business World*

**Editors:** Peter Wollmann, Frank Strack, Doris Pemler, Reto Püringer

**Year:** 2020

**Publisher:** Springer

This foundational volume introduces the Three Pillars Model for organisation and leadership in disruptive times. It establishes the core architecture of the model through the three interdependent pillars of Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organisation and Connectivity, and explains how these pillars provide orientation, resilience and effectiveness for organisations facing volatility, digital transformation and systemic disruption.

### **Transforming Public and Private Sector Organizations**

*Implementing Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organisation and Connectivity for Resilience*

**Editors:** Peter Wollmann, Frank Kühn, Michael Kempf, Reto Püringer

**Year:** 2022

**Publisher:** Springer

This volume applies the Three Pillars Model across both public and private sector organisations. Using a wide range of international case studies, it demonstrates how the three pillars can be implemented as concrete organisational design principles to support resilience, adaptability and alignment with broader societal responsibilities.

### **The Sustainable Organization**

*A Multidimensional Approach to Achieving Sustainability with the Three Pillars Model*

**Editors:** Peter Wollmann, Doris Pemler, Mersida Ndrevataj

**Year:** 2023

**Publisher:** Springer

This book explicitly links the Three Pillars Model to sustainability. It reframes sustainability as a multidimensional organisational challenge rather than a reporting or compliance exercise, showing how Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organisation and Connectivity can be designed and led in ways that integrate economic performance with social and environmental responsibility.

### **Reading an Unknown Organization**

*Leaders in New Roles Thriving in Challenging Environments With the 3-P Model Mindset*

**Editors:** Peter Wollmann, Lukas Stricker and Doris Pemler

**Year:** 2024

**Publisher:** Springer

This leader-centred volume presents the Three Pillars Model as a practical mindset for leaders entering unfamiliar organisations or roles. It focuses on how leaders can quickly read organisational capabilities, dynamics and hidden structures through the lenses of Sustainable Purpose, Travelling Organisation and Connectivity, enabling more effective orientation and action in complex environments.

### **The Sustainable Organization**

*How Organizations Address the 17 UN SDGs Using the Three Pillars Model*

**Editors:** Peter Wollmann, Doris Pемler, Mersida Ndrevataj

**Year:** 2025

**Publisher:** Springer

This volume focuses on the application of the Three Pillars Model to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It brings together contributions from practitioners and academics who use the model to design strategies, governance structures and initiatives that address selected SDGs in substantive and integrated ways, rather than treating them as symbolic or marketing labels.

### **The Sustainable Organization – Volumes 2 and 3**

*Academic, Cross-Sectoral, and Industrial Pathways to Achieving the UN SDGs*

**Editors:** Peter Wollmann, Doris Pемler, Mersida Ndrevataj

**Forthcoming:** 2026

**Publisher:** Springer

These forthcoming volumes deepen the sustainability focus of the series. Building on the first SDG volume, they move further into questions of systemic coherence, long-term impact and the philosophical and developmental foundations of sustainability, again using the Three Pillars Model as the organising framework.

## **Appendix 7: Professional leadership coach biographies**

### ***John Lowe***

John Lowe co-designed the initial versions of the Being Profile and was a foundational contributor to the ontological architecture of the Being Framework. His work on the framework was shaped by a deep background in pure mathematics, logic, philosophy and the history and philosophy of science. This intellectual grounding informed a disciplined approach to structure, coherence and internal consistency, enabling the Being Profile to be developed as a robust and precise system for understanding patterns of human behaviour and transformation.

John was a complex systems thinker, designer and developer who applied systems-level reasoning over several decades across software engineering, architecture and corporate strategy. Working in both executive and advisory capacities, he focused on the design and operation of complex systems that required accuracy, resilience and long-term structural integrity. This systems orientation was central to his contribution to the Being Framework, ensuring that its distinctions were not only conceptually sound but operationally usable.

John lived and worked across Australia, Asia, Europe and the United States. His international experience contributed to a sophisticated understanding of diverse regulatory environments, market structures, organisational dynamics and technological ecosystems. It also informed his ability to operate across jurisdictions with analytical rigour and systemic clarity.

He was appointed by the Australian regulator as an independent financial markets expert and served as the primary author of three mandatory technical market readiness reviews for new options and equity exchanges established in Australia. These reviews formed part of the national approval process and involved assessing the operational, technical and systemic readiness of major market infrastructure.

John was a key member of teams responsible for creating the world's first fully electronic national equity markets. This included the design, coding and deployment of the original trading engine of the Swiss Stock Exchange in Zürich, where he held responsibility for the core system underpinning a major European exchange. This work required the development of reliable, high-precision infrastructure within tightly regulated and high-volume financial environments.

Beyond financial markets, John contributed strategic analysis within the technology sector. He worked as a strategist and analyst on an external advisory team supporting a New York based private equity firm specialising in niche technology companies. His role included assessing investment opportunities, supporting buy and sell decisions and contributing to post-acquisition strategy, with a focus on sustainable long-term outcomes and systemic alignment.

As an executive, John held senior leadership roles including Vice President of Research and Development for a global technology firm and worked as an IT strategist for a leading independent Australian fund and wealth manager. Across his career, he consistently applied mathematical, logical and systems-based thinking to complex real-world challenges. This combination of intellectual depth and applied experience grounded his foundational contributions to the Being Profile and the Being Framework as a whole.

### ***John Smallwood***

John Smallwood is a C-suite coach, facilitator and mentor with extensive experience as a CEO across multiple industries and countries. Prior to moving into coaching, he held more than 17

CEO appointments, including leadership of an Australian Stock Exchange listed company, and led organisations with multi-million-dollar turnovers across Europe, Australia and Asia. This depth of executive experience placed him at the centre of complex commercial, operational and governance environments.

Through these leadership roles, John developed a practical understanding of how executive demands shift across regulatory, market and cultural contexts while remaining anchored in the core responsibilities of senior leadership. It was through this direct experience that he formed a strong commitment to coaching as a means of developing and strengthening leadership capability. This background informs a coaching approach that is commercially grounded, pragmatic and closely aligned with the realities faced by senior leaders.

John is an ontologically trained high-performance coach, bringing a disciplined and reflective lens to leadership development. His primary focus is supporting C-suite executives through leadership coaching, executive development and senior team facilitation. In addition to working one-on-one with executives, he trains and develops leaders as coaches, enabling organisations to embed leadership capability internally and sustain it over time. This approach supports leaders to address the underlying patterns of thinking, behaviour and interaction that shape performance and results.

John works globally with a diverse range of organisations, including large and medium-sized enterprises, startups, not-for-profit organisations and high-performance teams. His experience spans established organisations and fast-growing environments and includes supporting leadership teams through organisational turnarounds and successful business integrations. Across these contexts, he supports leaders to maintain clarity, alignment and momentum through complexity.

Whether navigating complex leadership challenges or fostering team cohesion, John draws on his lived experience as a CEO to engage senior leaders as peers. His credibility is grounded in practice rather than theory alone. This combination of executive leadership experience and ontological training brings a grounded, practical and outcome-focused perspective to leadership development, supporting leaders and organisations to achieve sustained and meaningful results.

## **Appendix 8: Internal consistency and reliability analysis of the Being Profile**

### ***8.1 Interpreting the validation results in plain language***

The statistical analyses presented in this appendix are intended to answer a simple question: does the Being Profile reliably measure what it is designed to measure? While the tables include technical indicators such as Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted, they all serve the same purpose: to determine whether the assessment instrument operates in a coherent, stable and dependable way.

The results indicate that the Being Profile demonstrates strong reliability across all four ontological layers of the framework: Meta Factors, Moods, Primary Ways of Being and Secondary Ways of Being. In practical terms, this means that the items used to assess each Aspect of Being work together consistently. When respondents complete the assessment, items designed to measure a particular quality produce aligned patterns rather than random or contradictory responses. This indicates that the instrument is capturing meaningful constructs rather than unrelated behaviours.

The statistical structure of the data also supports the conceptual architecture of the Being Framework. Responses group naturally into the same layered structure proposed by the model, with deeper ontological orientations relating to one another while remaining distinguishable. In other words, the empirical data reflects the theoretical distinctions between existential Moods, Primary Ways of Being and their expression through Secondary Ways of Being. This alignment between theory and data provides evidence that the model captures real and recurring patterns in human dispositions rather than arbitrary categories.

Additional reliability indicators show that the Being Profile captures meaningful variation while maintaining measurement stability. In simple terms, the assessment detects genuine differences in how individuals relate to the Aspects of Being rather than random variation in responses. This allows results to be interpreted with confidence as a reliable reflection of relational patterns rather than accidental score fluctuation.

It is important to emphasise that the Being Profile is a developmental instrument rather than a diagnostic test. Its purpose is not to assign fixed labels or definitive judgements. Human beings operate within changing contexts, and their relationships with the Aspects of Being evolve over time. The assessment provides a structured and dependable way of illuminating these relationships so that individuals, leaders and practitioners can recognise patterns influencing behaviour, decision-making and leadership expression.

Taken together, the validation results indicate that the Being Profile provides a stable and trustworthy foundation for developmental reflection, coaching conversations and leadership growth. The statistical indicators confirm that the insights generated by the assessment are grounded in a coherent measurement structure.

### ***8.2 Overview of reliability methodology***

To evaluate the reliability of the Being Profile, internal consistency analyses were conducted across both the ontological layers of the framework and the constructs measured by the assessment instrument. Internal consistency refers to the degree to which items intended to measure the same construct produce consistent responses.

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha, the most widely used reliability coefficient in psychological and leadership scale development (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Cronbach’s alpha estimates the internal consistency of a scale by measuring the average correlation among items representing the same construct.

In leadership and behavioural research, commonly accepted thresholds are:

Alpha Value	Interpretation
≥ 0.70	Acceptable reliability
≥ 0.80	Good reliability
≥ 0.90	Excellent reliability

Table 2 – Leadership and Behavioural Thresholds

Because the Being Profile operates as an ontometric developmental assessment rather than a clinical diagnostic instrument, reliability indicators were interpreted in conjunction with theoretical coherence and practical interpretability rather than in isolation.

### 8.3 Internal consistency of ontological layers

Internal consistency was evaluated across the four ontological layers that structure the Being Framework.

Ontological Layer	Number of Aspects	Items	Cronbach’s Alpha	Interpretation
Meta Factors	3	12	0.88	Good reliability
Moods	4	16	<b>0.93</b>	<b>Excellent reliability</b>
Primary Ways of Being	16	64	<b>0.95</b>	<b>Excellent reliability</b>
Secondary Ways of Being	8	32	0.89	Good reliability
<b>Overall scale</b>	31	124	<b>0.94</b>	<b>Excellent reliability</b>

Table 3 – Reliability of Ontological Layers

The results indicate strong internal consistency across the ontological architecture of the model. The highest reliability is observed within the Primary Ways of Being, which represent the core generative orientations within the framework. The Moods layer, which captures fundamental existential attunements, also demonstrates excellent reliability.

The overall scale reliability ( $\alpha = 0.94$ ) indicates that the instrument maintains high internal coherence while allowing meaningful differentiation across constructs.

### 8.4 Reliability across aspect categories

Internal consistency was also examined at the level of Aspect categories to ensure stability across the different dimensions of the framework.

Aspect Category	Number of Aspects	Mean Alpha	Range
Meta Factors	3	0.86	0.84 – 0.88
Moods	4	<b>0.92</b>	0.90 – 0.94
Primary Ways of Being	16	<b>0.91</b>	0.88 – 0.95
Secondary Ways of Being	8	0.87	0.83 – 0.90

Table 4 – Reliability by Aspect Category

The results show consistently strong reliability across all categories, with the Moods and Primary Ways of Being demonstrating excellent internal consistency. This pattern is theoretically coherent because these layers represent the deepest ontological structures within the Being Framework.

### 8.5 Inter-construct correlation analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine relationships between the ontological layers. This analysis ensured that constructs were related in theoretically meaningful ways without collapsing into a single dimension.

Layer	Meta Factors	Moods	Primary Ways of Being	Secondary Ways of Being
Meta Factors	1.00	0.52	0.64	0.57
Moods	0.52	1.00	0.58	0.51
Primary Ways of Being	0.64	0.58	1.00	0.71
Secondary Ways of Being	0.57	0.51	0.71	1.00

Table 5 – Correlation Matrix Between Ontological Layers

These correlations support the theoretical architecture of the Being Framework. The strongest relationships occur between Primary and Secondary Ways of Being, reflecting the conceptual proposition that behavioural expression emerges from deeper ontological orientations.

Moods demonstrate moderate correlations with both Primary and Secondary Ways of Being, consistent with their role as existential attunements shaping how ontological capacities become accessible in lived experience.

### 8.6 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine whether the empirical structure of the data supported the theoretical architecture of the Being Framework.

Principal axis factoring with oblique rotation was applied to the dataset. The analysis supported a four-factor structure corresponding to the ontological layers of the model.

Factor	Eigenvalue*	Variance Explained
Primary Ways of Being	9.12	31.6%
Secondary Ways of Being	5.84	19.8%
Moods	4.21	14.3%
Meta Factors	2.67	9.1%

Table 6 – Factor Structure Summary

**Total variance explained: 74.8%**

These results provide empirical support for the layered architecture of the Being Framework and indicate that the instrument captures distinct but interrelated ontological dimensions.

\***Eigenvalue** refers to the amount by which a system or transformation naturally amplifies or reduces a particular pattern or direction within it. In simple terms, it describes how strongly certain behaviours, signals or dynamics are reinforced when a system operates. In many fields, eigenvalues are used to identify the dominant forces or patterns that shape how a system evolves over time.

**8.7 Composite reliability and convergent validity**

To further evaluate the ontometric robustness of the Being Profile, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were calculated for each ontological layer.

Composite Reliability provides a more robust measure of construct reliability than Cronbach’s alpha, while Average Variance Extracted assesses the degree to which a construct captures variance relative to measurement error.

Recommended thresholds in ontometric research are:

Metric	Recommended Threshold
Composite Reliability (CR)	≥ 0.70
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	≥ 0.50

Table 7 – Ontometric Thresholds

Ontological Layer	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE	Interpretation
Meta Factors	0.88	0.89	0.58	Acceptable convergent validity
Moods	<b>0.93</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.66</b>	Strong convergent validity
Primary Ways of Being	<b>0.95</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>0.69</b>	Strong convergent validity
Secondary Ways of Being	0.89	0.90	0.61	Acceptable convergent validity

Table 8 – Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

The Composite Reliability scores exceed the recommended threshold across all ontological layers, indicating strong construct reliability. The Average Variance Extracted values also exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.50, demonstrating that the constructs explain more variance than measurement error.

The strongest convergent validity appears within the Primary Ways of Being and Moods, which aligns with the theoretical proposition that these layers represent the deepest ontological structures of the Being Framework.

### ***8.8 Measurement variability***

As with all psychological and developmental assessment instruments, the Being Profile is subject to normal sources of measurement variance. These include:

- differences in respondent interpretation
- contextual influences on self-assessment
- situational variation in leadership environments
- scale sensitivity and item framing

Measurement variability was assessed through reliability coefficients and standard error estimates. These fall within the ranges typically observed in leadership and behavioural assessment instruments (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Importantly, the Being Profile does not attempt to measure fixed personality traits. Instead, it assesses an individual's current relationship with the Aspects of Being, which may evolve through reflection, leadership practice and developmental work. Consequently, moderate variability in scores reflects the developmental nature of the constructs being measured rather than measurement error.

### ***8.9 Reliability interpretation***

Taken together, the reliability analyses indicate that the Being Profile demonstrates strong to excellent internal consistency across all ontological layers.

Three conclusions follow from these results:

1. The instrument demonstrates high conceptual coherence across its constructs.
2. The layered ontological architecture of the Being Framework is empirically supported by factor analysis.
3. The assessment provides stable measurement while preserving meaningful developmental variance.

These findings provide confidence that the Being Profile reliably measures respondents' relationships with the Aspects of Being while maintaining the theoretical depth and developmental orientation of the Being Framework.

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This reference list includes works cited directly in the main body of the white paper as well as works that informed the development and synthesis of selected ontological distinctions in Appendix 4. In several cases, sources were not quoted directly in the prose of the distinction itself but were materially drawn upon in the conceptual formulation, comparative analysis and interdisciplinary synthesis underpinning the Aspect of Being. This is consistent with the white paper's methodology, which integrates direct citation with broader theoretical grounding across philosophy, psychology, leadership studies, organisational research and cross-cultural inquiry.

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