OrgIQ: The Core of Everything

How worldview, fear, and basic needs are connected

OrgIQ

*passion for people builds
systems for success*

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OrgIQ Manifest: Passion for People builds Systems for Success

OrgIQ—Organizational Intelligence (Quotient)—is a framework that redefines how we see organizations. At its heart lies a simple but profound shift: to think from the perspective of the individual. Every person experiences their own reality, shaped by their network of relationships. Each perspective is unique. There is no single right or wrong.

An organization is the superposition of all these *Networks*. This is complexity. We can never fully model or control it—but we can give it direction and purpose. Intelligent organizations embrace this complexity rather than ignore or oversimplify it.

When we focus on human complexity, the range of possible solutions expands dramatically. Business practices and structures can be brought into harmony with the natural dynamics of human relationships, psychology, and social interaction.

Our manifesto is rooted in lived experience. We have seen the transformative power of genuine connection, individuality, and purpose-driven leadership. OrgIQ helps create environments where empathy, understanding, and mutual respect thrive—where people feel seen, heard, and valued. This sense of emotional safety is the foundation on which individuals and groups reach their full potential.

We believe in value over control. Control breaks perspective, creates overhead, and breeds mistrust. Relationships and trust, on the other hand, unleash extraordinary productivity and fulfillment. Purpose is not measured by words, but by results.

Join us in redefining organizational excellence. Let's build intelligent systems, embrace complexity, and make space for purpose and joy. **Welcome to OrgIQ— where the true potential of your people becomes the strength of your organization.**

Content

Introduction

This text is the core of **OrgIQ**.

OrgIQ stands for **Organizational Intelligence (Quotient)**. And intelligence is a measure of a system's ability to **learn and adapt**. The higher the intelligence, the more likely it is that a system will survive—and succeed—over the long term.

That's why we want to understand what intelligence actually is. What makes an organization—a family, club, company, team, classroom, …—**intelligent** or, conversely, **unintelligent**? And how can we *increase* that intelligence? What are the building blocks?

To answer that, we need to understand **human beings**. If we don't understand people, we can't understand the systems made of people. And to understand people, we need to understand their **basic needs** and their **worldview**. What are these, and how do they work?

Glasses: Black and white or color?

A worldview can be imagined as a pair of glasses our parents and teachers put on us. They give us the same glasses they wear. And they're not aware of it. They don't even know they're wearing glasses. So neither do we. We believe the world really **is** the way we see it.

How does this work, and what is the problem?
As long as I wear these glasses (this worldview), I see only shades of grey. And when someone shows me real colors, my glasses reduce them to greyscale, and I think I understand what the other person means—because yes, they are different shades of grey. But I miss the essential part.

If I catch a glimpse of color from the corner of my eye, where the glasses don't cover, I can feel that something is there. But as soon as I look at it directly—with conscious focus (worldview/glasses)—I see only grey again and force it back into my concept. I remain blind.

If I have the courage to look from the corner of my eye, I will understand how blind I have been my whole life. And either I am delighted that I can take off the glasses and let color into my life, or shame takes over and I try to avoid losing face by denying the possibility of another reality. I close my eyes to it and banish that truth from my life.

Closing my eyes follows three basic mechanisms:

1. **Rationalizing:** "I already know all this," or "this is nothing but xyz." I make it smaller and force it to fit my worldview. I know I'm deceiving myself in that moment, but it's easier (Dan Ariely: "Our brain loves what is simple, familiar, and coherent.") to keep the worldview small and stable than to grow.

2. **I want to believe it, but my beliefs are stronger:** "It would be wonderful if this kind of relationship you describe existed, but xyz doesn't exist for me." There is hope, but my beliefs—protecting the worldview—suffocate it. Similar to (1), except here I'm passive, in the victim role. This is also where "ghosting" (ignoring) can appear, because then we don't have to face the conflict between hope and belief.

3. **We want to believe it, and we want color to become real in our lives. But our environment doesn't want that.** Usually the people who planted our beliefs in us, or who benefit from them. They suffocate our transformation or let us wither instead of supporting us.

Worldviews often have something to do with injury. They store the wounds we've experienced, and the beliefs justify those injuries. And this is important to understand when we later get triggered or hurt. If something hurts me (e.g., bullying), then only because there is an inner truth connected to it. If I *know* something isn't true, I stay relaxed. But if something resonates with one of my beliefs (one I want to suppress), then I react as "triggered." What hurts us is an inner truth we suppress or deny. It brings something buried back to the surface, and in that sense it is therapy, not an attack. It is a gift.

So if anything in what follows triggers you, then it's a gift.

Executive Summary

The core of OrgIQ in one paragraph: The violation of basic needs leads to fear patterns as survival mechanisms—expressed through resistance and compensation. Living in fear patterns then causes further violations of basic needs, both in others and in ourselves. The way out is deep relationship (between the Limbis). The skills for this are missing, because we never had the chance to learn them. Intelligent organizations create an environment in which this kind of connection emerges and grows, with all its effects.

On one page, explained a bit more: People come in two versions—with or without injured basic needs (attachment, safety, self-worth, self-determination). This determines their picture of the world. An injury to the basic needs means they were chronically violated in childhood (<10 years). That injury suppresses the Limbi (the limbic system—a network of seven biological systems in the center of the brain). When my basic needs were violated, I see the world as dangerous or even hostile. This puts me into a state of constant uncertainty and fear. My behavior is then driven by the Gecko. The Gecko (brainstem, reptile brain) is the part of the brain that keeps us alive. When the Gecko takes over, the other systems shut down. They don't disappear, but they run quietly in the background—heavily throttled.

Gecko means we are in autopilot or survival mode. Depression, burnout, dominant behavior, withdrawal, conformity, boreout, overthinking, ghosting, procrastination, dissociation and many other patterns are reliable markers of Gecko-mode. This is what we know as fight, flight, or freeze.

If we stay in this mode for a longer time, we try to slip into socially accepted roles. That is Fawn. We put on a good face in a bad game. And no matter what we consciously do, we remain in the injury—and so we injure others. Because our Limbi is suppressed (the direct effect of injured basic needs), we cannot form deep positive connections with others. But we do learn to pretend. That is Fawn. We disguise our pain and fake connection. This dysfunctional variant is what we call irrelationships.

Fear patterns are the best solutions our worldview can offer us. We try to replace our basic needs with other things. That is external emotional regulation. And these mechanisms are present in all interactions in organizations—families, schools, companies, all of them.

All of this consumes enormous amounts of strength, time, energy, and creates even more friction and disturbance. And when humans build systems, the blueprint they build from follows their inner worldview.

That is why OrgIQ is interested in all of this and tries to create an environment in which people can truly meet each other again. OrgIQ is a worldview 2.0—a model that opens a wider field of action. OrgIQ stands for the intelligence of organizations (Organizational Intelligence Quotient). And intelligence is the measure of a system's ability to survive. The more intelligent it is, the better it learns, predicts, and adapts in order to survive. Like the brain, social intelligence is based on networking. There are nodes and edges. The nodes are the people instead of neurons, and the edges are the relationships instead of synapses. What matters is the number of connections—but even more the quality of those connections.

To build intelligent organizations, we need to measure the organization's intelligence, and a key component is the quality of relationships. To improve relationships, we need to understand and recognize fear and external emotional regulation. Then trust can be added. With these prerequisites, the network becomes increasingly resilient, flexible, and intelligent.

This makes the organization more productive, more creative, and more innovative. Because we learn continuously and fluidly, we avoid big crises and painful resets. As a side effect, administrative load decreases (the minimum reduction is 13.9%), scaling becomes seamless and effortless, and overall everyone is more satisfied—because finally, it's human again, not machine.

Another side effect: intelligent organizations handle complex environments effortlessly and almost playfully.

Understanding Humans

Healthy Basic Needs and Their Purpose

Let's start with the "laws of nature." What do we know that applies to all humans? Just as all people eat, drink, breathe, sleep, and much more, there are also psychological elements that are the same for everyone. Yet just as *what* we eat differs, the *what* and *how* of our psychological needs differ as well.

We begin with the basic needs. At the core, they are **connection** and **creation**. As humans, we have to stick together because we survive only as a pack. We are social animals, and cohesion is our success formula. Biologically, we are not a superior species. But when we join forces and use our collective intelligence, we can hold our ground.

And using intelligence means *shaping*. We are effective. We solve problems and improve life for our pack. Better means easier and safer. That is the purpose behind the basic needs.

There are many models for basic needs. Let's look at a second one. In this model, **attachment (connection)** is at the center. From genuine attachment arise the remaining emotional or psychological basic needs: **safety**, **self-worth**, and **self-determination**.
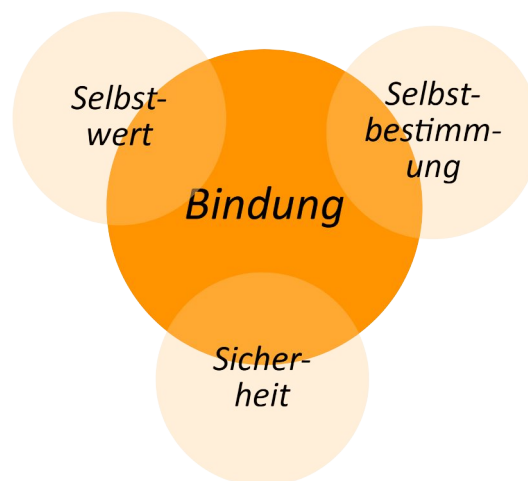

Figure 1: Simple model of basic needs.

Safety (here: psychological safety) is belonging to the pack. As I am, I'm allowed to be part of the pack. I'm allowed to show myself authentically, I'm allowed to try out and develop my abilities (the things that make me unique); and that includes failing. I'm then allowed to bring these abilities into the pack, which already links back to creation, but I'm also allowed to question what exists—which is the way each generation enables renewal. If I experience all of this, I learn that I am valuable. It is good that I exist. And it is good that I am unique. Our environment is complex and diverse, which makes it essential that we, too, are complex and diverse. I am not judged by whether others understand me, or whether my abilities are familiar, but I am accepted because there is trust in the system. We understand and feel that we benefit from diversity—as long as it serves the purpose: making life easier and safer for the pack. And this act of shaping—contributing in my unique way—is self-determination. It needs direction and purpose, but not control or suppression. So our basic needs are: attachment, and from it safety, self-worth, and self-determination. And everything serves the unfolding and well-being of the pack.

If we consider and care for the basic needs of everyone, we create an intelligent system—a maximally intelligent system that can thrive and survive for a long time, because it can handle the complexity of its environment with ease.

The Success Fallacy Makes You Stupid

This is how life *should* work. So why are 98% of us merely functioning? Eyes closed, pushing through—only to realize on our deathbed that we missed our own life. The answer is "our brain." Dan Ariely says that our brain loves what is simple, familiar, and coherent. And if we've been successful—if our strategies worked for our own life—we're easily tempted to tell our children: "Do it the way I did, and things will work out for you." It's well-meant, but it forgets that our children start from a different place and, above all, that one crucial truth applies:

> *"The world can move forward even when you don't."*

A strategy that once worked for us may not be optimal a few years later. It can even become harmful. We recall that intelligent systems rejuvenate and renew themselves. Anything that prevents this leads to stagnation. "Everything was better in the old days" is a bias—a distortion and a self-deception.

We cannot bring back the past, but we *can* recreate the essence of it again and again if that is our purpose. To reach that, however, we will always need new paths. The way forward is to trust the system, trust renewal, and trust the future.

So if my pattern becomes "I am right, and you will do what I tell you so that you stay safe," then I become systemically unintelligent. And we become unintelligent whenever we are in fear—when we perceive the world as dangerous or hostile. And that's exactly what happens when we don't feel safe within our pack. If being right is my relationship pattern, then I have already lost attachment and relationship. Still, this core pattern will accompany me for the rest of my life. When I want to protect people, I will tell them what to do. I will want to decide for them, to keep them safe. Because "I know better." It comes from worry or care, but it carries fear—and it injures their self-determination. It drives their Limbi[1] into rebellion.
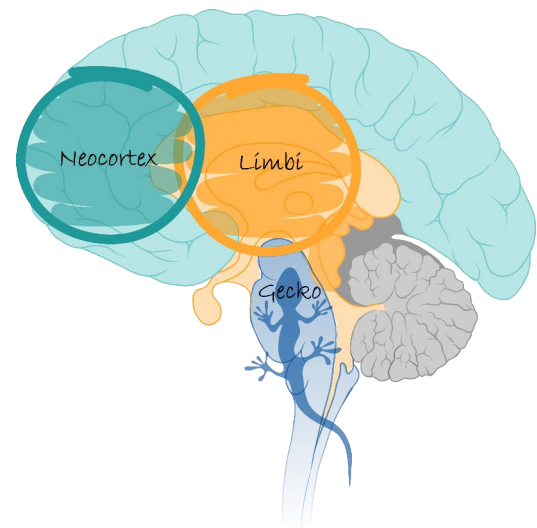

Figure 2: A simplified view of our brain. The three parts that are of particular interest to us here. The neocortex for conscious thinking, the limbic system for social intelligence, and the gecko as survival expert.

> Our Limbi is like a non-Newtonian fluid. When pressure is applied, it responds with resistance. The more pressure, the more solid—the more stubborn—it becomes.
>
> But if we *invite* it to follow, it will join with full energy rather than push against us. Every act of resistance from Limbi, every "pushing back," is a reaction to pressure and force.

"I'm not enough"

Being right is only one example. But if, as parents, we impose our will on our children and reduce them to functioning ("clean your room," "do your homework," "pick up your things," "you're doing that wrong," "there's no time for that now"—usually something deeply important to the child, something that comes from their identity), we destroy relationship. In every interaction, in every moment when our child comes to us, there are only two possible responses: we can **turn toward** them (fully, with awareness and Limbi), or we **turn away** (we are only superficially present, we correct and block, or in the worst case, we ignore).

> *The rejection of my identity—my uniqueness—leads me to believe that I am wrong. That I am a mistake.*

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1   *Limbi* is our nickname for the limbic system. It actually consists of seven systems that form our social intelligence and feed off our basic needs, demanding that they be met.

Understanding Humans

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When we turn away as parents, it is a rejection of the child's identity. It is the destruction of the safe space. The child learns: **"I am not safe here."**

And because children (up to around age ten) cannot meaningfully question their parents, they look for the fault in themselves. The lesson becomes: **"I am wrong."** "I am the mistake"—expressed as "I am not enough," so I must be prettier, more athletic, more intelligent, more orderly, more diligent… Or the child realizes: **"I am too much."** No matter what I do, the world is better off without me. So I should not stand out. I should stay under the radar. Disappear.

Shame

So we learned as children that we are wrong. A mistake on legs. Our pack doesn't want us. They tolerate us because others expect it from them, but it is not a safe place. So we look for another safe place. And we already know we cannot show ourselves as we are, because then our new pack would also notice that we are a mistake.

> *Shame is the fear that others will also discover that we are a mistake.*

Shame is the continuation of psychological insecurity. The rejection stored inside me becomes my reality. My original pack rejected me, so now I am afraid that any new pack will reject me too. That they will see what a flawed model I am —so I try to deceive them.

Brené Brown says that three elements feed shame: *secrecy, silence, and judgment.* But because we are ashamed, we will not talk about it. We will hide ourselves (our identity and uniqueness). Behind the masks, roles, and façades we were taught. And we will judge ourselves. Because if we are a mistake, we build belief systems that protect and confirm this worldview—that we are a burden and fundamentally wrong. Whatever happens to us, we believe we deserved it. This is how you get treated when you are a mistake.

Role & Compensation

Let's start with the roles

Where do the masks, roles, and façades come from—whatever we choose to call them? They were trained into us from early childhood. First the pacifier, then food against unhappiness. Later the clear instructions (programs) for how we must function so that everyone is happy with us. Functioning instead of living. Parenting and schooling are more conditioning than growth. Because growth, uniqueness, identity—yes, life itself—are no longer desired. We have built our societal machine, and you are assigned a position in which you are expected to function, without objection, for the rest of your existence. And only in that role, as a seller of your labor, do you supposedly have worth or meaning. At least that is the story.

It sounds exaggerated, but it is exactly what children and teens have witnessed for generations—and what they rebel against. The core question is: "Dear parents, you say you love me, but at the same time you want me to become just as unhappy as you. Why? That's insane."

These roles, this functioning, are how we make ourselves fit. How we squeeze ourselves into a pack, into a job, into a pseudo-life—and suppress everything that reminds us of real life. We become the perfect machine when we no longer feel our unmet basic needs. Because those needs constantly remind us that we are meant to be human and to live.

This functioning is what Brené Brown calls **"fitting in."** We adapt in order to belong. But our basic needs want real belonging. **Connection**, and the safety that comes with it. Because safety means: *"We can do this together."*

Compensation

We were trained to deceive our pack while simultaneously "taking care of" our basic needs. And the fact that we have to perform for our pack alienates us even further from one another—until the moment we realize that everyone else is doing the same. Real fulfillment of the basic needs is only possible through belonging, but because we experienced only rejection, we don't believe in it. Belonging (attachment) is therefore not an option for us, so we need substitutes for attachment, safety, self-worth, and self-determination—substitutes we can control. And just as fake as the role we present outwardly, just as fake we must become inwardly in order to deceive ourselves.

Because we cannot trust anyone, we want control. It must be manageable by us, because everyone else is against us. They are hostile, or at least dangerous.

In this worldview, self-deception and self-harm become the desperate substitutes for self-determination. Better to hurt myself than for someone else to hurt me. If I get ahead of others' injuries and do to myself everything others could do to me, then I am still in pain—but at least it was "my choice."

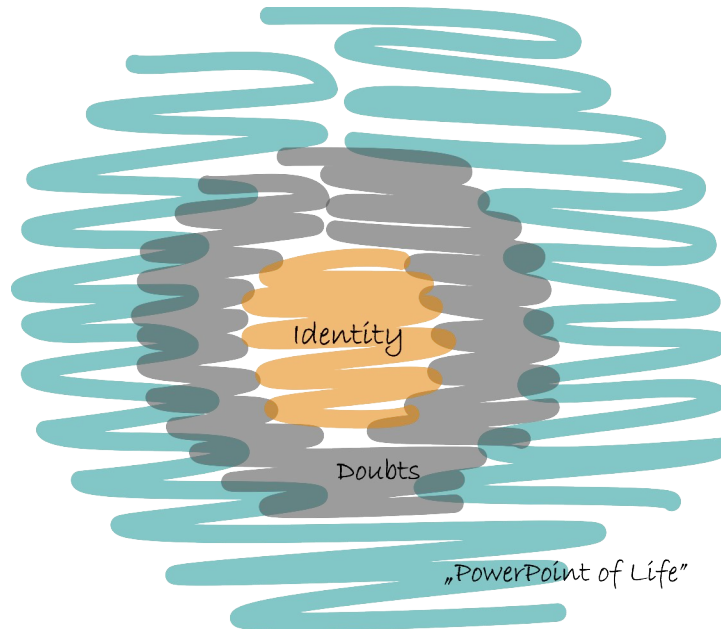Which of course is not really true. But in desperation, it feels like an attractive option.

Figure 3: Model of the "PowerPoint of Life." The core is my true identity, which I have long forgotten. Surrounded by a thick crust of pain, doubt, and "I'm not enough/I'm too much." And to the outside world, we present ourselves exactly as we were taught to. We play our roles. Theater for life. Or drama.

This may sound dramatic. And it often is. Sometimes visible to everyone, often hidden behind a façade of success, achievement, and status. The idea behind it is that we take things and use them as substitutes for one of the basic needs. This happens in two directions: we use things (external emotional regulation) to *feel* as if the basic need were okay, or we use external emotional regulation to *stop* feeling.

Drugs or medication are clear examples and were the first to be researched.

> "… [that] seriously distressed animals, like seriously distressed humans, will pharmaco-logically alleviate their distress if they can."
>
> (Bruce Alexander, based on Weissman and Haddox)

Alcohol is used to forget. I want to forget everything that hurts or drags me down. I want to stop feeling. And sometimes I want to switch off all the roles. Alcohol as access to my truth. Heroin, on the other hand, is often described by users as the "warm blanket of safety." Heroin gives the feeling we *should* have when we are at peace—when we truly belong in our place. Heroin is the feeling of belonging and connection.

But of course, power, status, success, and many other things can trigger similar feelings. The concert where I play in front of 70,000 fans. Or the new yacht I can finally afford. But what comes after the concert? What happens inside me when I am suddenly alone? How am I supposed to survive that emptiness?

Let's look at the four basic needs as examples. The strategies differ depending on worldview or fear pattern. *Freeze*, *Flight*, and *Fight* always have different compensation strategies—and a different focus.

Safety

With safety, the approach is often protection instead of safety. Safety comes from "together we can handle anything." We do not seek danger, but when unexpected danger arrives, we know we can deal with it together.

Protection is shifting inner safety to the outside. I want a controlled world, because if nothing happens, I am safe. And that can be helpful—but it does *not* create the feeling of safety. Control, institutions, and insurance do not reach Limbi and do not meet the basic need. On the contrary: because our world is complex, every factor we cannot control stresses us even more. We then have to suppress this helplessness again—another layer of emotional regulation.

To avoid feeling helpless in the face of life's complexity, we build an endlessly complicated world that overwhelms us completely.

Self-worth

This is what we usually mean when we talk about the "ego." There are four basic strategies, all of them familiar. Again, it's about *external* elevation. That comes in two forms: either affirmation—"what you do and think is right," a kind of role-check—or an inner boost: I get enough "likes," enough confirmation that I am impressive, valuable, important.

▶ **Self-destruction or the wish to dissolve.** "I am too much." This is deep resignation. I truly want nothing from others anymore. I have given up. Maybe I numb myself.

▶ **"I am nothing, you must pity me."** This is elevation through reflected light—foreign energy. These are victim mechanisms and energy vampires. I live off others, even if they don't give it willingly. These are also people who constantly create drama.

▶ **"I can / I have."** Elevation through substitution—ability or possession. "I am nothing, but look, I am useful to you." Here we have status again, and again I have quite a bit of external control. Yet I remain dependent on an audience. I am trapped in proving myself.

▶ **"I am more than you."** Elevation by devaluing others. Of course I see myself as low in worth, but I try to make others even smaller so that I look good again.

Self-determination

We already touched on self-determination above. The strategy depends on the size of the system. If my pain is my system, then "self-determination" already means choosing *how* and *when* I trigger the pain. Cutting is a clear example: I exercise a form of self-determination when I injure myself and take charge of the greatest pain. This principle can be applied to many mechanisms.

Another alternative is that I try to exert as much control as possible on the outside. I need a predictable, mechanistic world that I can dominate. And the more power and control I can exert over others, the more I feel "self-efficacy." *I decide.* If not over my inner state, then at least over the world.

We find many systems that were built exactly for this purpose and operate on this principle. Micromanagement is a perfect example. Instead of providing clarity and direction, I interfere in every single decision and steer arbitrarily—or at least that is how it looks from the outside. And that is the point: I don't want to be predictable, because I want to feel important, significant, needed. Every decision must be a surprise. No one could have foreseen it. They needed me to take that path.

Connection

Real attachment comes from trust. If I live in a world of mistrust, I need a strong substitute. On one side, that can be self-chosen distance or coldness. I avoid closeness so I won't be hurt again. This addresses the issue, but it's not a real substitute. Substitute actions are fear and possession (using). I try to create controlled environments in which people are afraid of me, which I can then interpret as respect. Or I push people into the fawn pattern [2]. We see this often in totalitarian systems. The higher I stand in the pyramid, the more people below me are afraid of me and will make me feel incredibly impressive and important.

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2   *Fawn* is a role that comes from my fear pattern. It's a strategy that makes my fear pattern socially compatible. I act friendly because I know I can't defeat you. This feels good for the "friendly" person, but it's very unstable. Because deep down, they hate me. So I have to keep my limbic system in pain so that I don't notice this.

Understanding Humans

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Interfaces & Insecurity

Now we understand roles and compensation. We play roles to deceive our pack and to prevent being cast out again. Roles are therefore another word for the fawn pattern, an abstracted fear pattern. Compensation means that I use things and people so I don't have to feel the injury to my basic needs. So one is what we do outwardly, the other is what we do for ourselves. And the roles are our interface to the outside. These are our programs that we run as needed.

Strictly speaking, this is done by our "autopilot": when we're in fear, our survival mode, our autopilot, runs. We function automatically. And now comes a problem: we can only run programs that were created beforehand. If we enter a situation for which no program exists, we end up in a deadlock. Gecko is in freeze or in fight. And we fall back to basic patterns. Raw survival. This also has a downside: everything we don't know, we don't understand. We reduce ourselves to the usefulness of our roles. Meaning: what we don't offer as a role (we can see this as our portfolio) no one can receive from us. If we reduce ourselves to our usefulness, we cannot have real encounter.

> Example: Sexualization
>
> Sexualization is a form of "I can." It is a role, a service or a value that I provide. If I'm in this pattern, I can understand and accept that someone wants to use me in that way. It is completely logical. It is certainly not what I truly, deeply want inside, but it is what I was told I am and what my usefulness is.
>
> Even if I complain and protest, it is what I can do. And do. And every other form of contact I will reject, because there is no entry point for it.
>
> So if I'm in sexualization and someone approaches me without reducing me to this function, my system is overwhelmed. I have no program for that. So I will reject it through fight, flight, or freeze.

Requests for interfaces that aren't covered by our roles can trigger overwhelm and insecurity. One part of me says "hey, that would be so nice" (identity), the pain says "that can't be" and the decorative layer says "we have no program for this ... there's no process for it ... ahhh, panic." And depending on the basic pattern we show different defense reactions. Panic, insecurity, distance and attack are patterns of our Gecko. If we've been in that situation more often, a fawn may also appear: a "oh well, in overload I'll just put on a good face to a bad game."

System-Failure

And that's why the inner state of our system is so important: we can extend the principle of Conway's Law[3]:

> *"Systems we build mirror our inner structure."*

Our pain, our compensation, our worldview and our beliefs become the template for the organizations we build. Whether family or company.

And this happens no matter how consciously we try to control and steer our actions. Our inner truth will show. Sooner or later. That's also because we can only consciously control such a small part. And when we try to go into "machine mode" (total control), our Limbi becomes even more destructive, and we communicate that all the time[4]. We become even more incoherent, which creates an incoherent system.
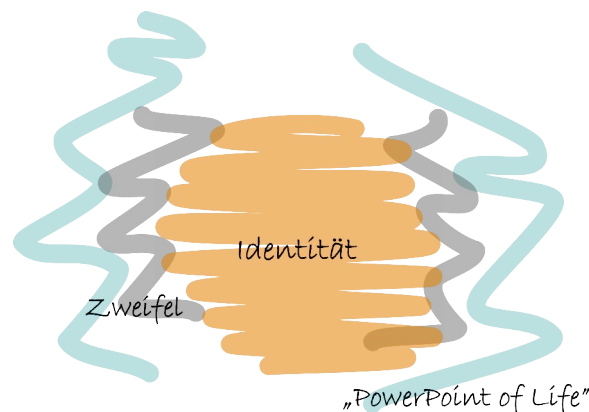

Figure 4: State of greater inner coherence; doubts and roles are greatly reduced.

That's why OrgIQ is such a help:

▶ It helps you recognize your patterns: QuickCheck, assessment, leadership books and training. And then dissolve the patterns. The development of inner coherence is worthwhile because you then build coherent systems.

▶ It has the "Lego bricks" (beliefs) for a healthy organization.

> Example:
>
> When you found a company, people follow you because you are the founder. But if you then build a system that rests on your shoulders, you become the bottleneck.
>
> Good founding is like giving a push: you start, people follow you. You give direction, and people walk and live your system. That's "pull'n'release."
>
> Your DNA remains, but you don't become the bottleneck, annoyance or growth barrier. You allow and foster the growth of your system.
>
> You want to pass on your identity, but not your doubts or protective layer!

▶ It has the diagnosis for people, teams and organizations: How is my fitness and my internal intelligence?

  ▷ The core idea of OrgIQ is that we can detect and treat the inner state of the system before the numbers show it.

  ▷ Through this approach we are faster and can act early instead of reacting later, when it might already be too late.

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3   https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conway%27s_law

4   Communication takes place at all levels, whether we want it to or not. But if we are nice on the outside and ignore the lower levels (pain and identity), then communication is inconsistent and predominantly dismissive. This is the most severe form of hurt.

Diagnosis

Now we are experts in the inner state, in the inner world. We know what people need and how the individual elements connect.

Now we look at two more models that deepen this. First, what shows on the outside: worldview and group formation. And then we go back into the Gecko and the basic needs.

Worldview

The idea of *Tribal Leadership* is simple: people come together when they understand each other—when they share their picture of the world. And in *Tribal Leadership*, five worldviews were defined. The core thought behind this is: I understand the people in the same stage, and maybe one stage below or above. Everyone else is suspicious and incomprehensible to me.

And that is the challenge of leadership: How do I communicate in a way that speaks to all stages? So that there is something in it for each stage? Essentially, how do we show the next step?
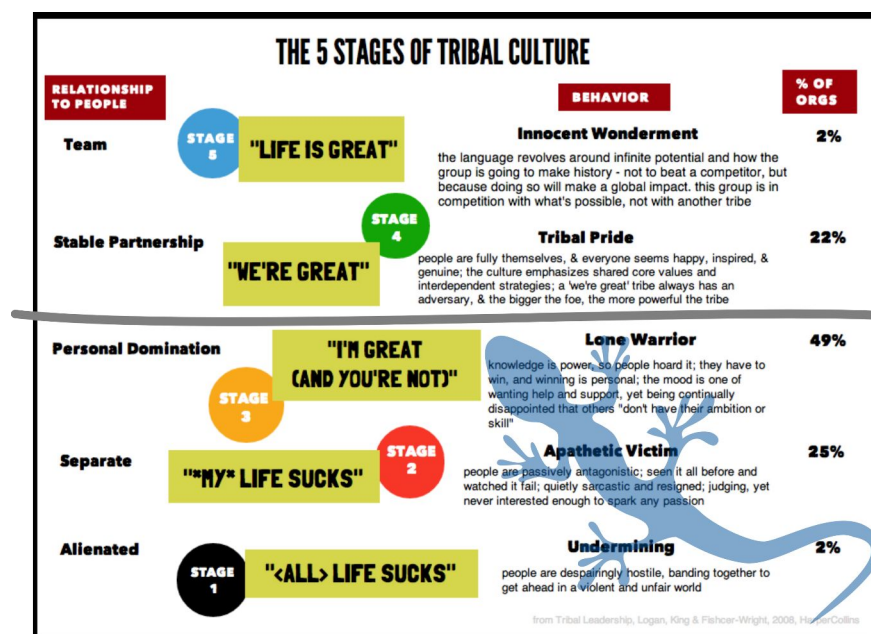
Figure 5: Tribal Leadership: A quick overview of the stages

In this model, the stages (as shown in the illustration) are arranged as developmental levels. They progress linearly from 1 to 5. And I can slowly grow through all of them, because—as we can already see from the descriptions—the quality of life becomes noticeably more relaxed at the higher stages.

Fear Patterns

This very linear approach is elegant and makes things easy, but it's not entirely accurate. Or let's say there are other perspectives that matter.

Stages 1–3 map very well onto the fear patterns.

▶ Stage 1: **Freeze**, because nothing makes sense.

▶ Stage 2: **Flight**, because *I* am the problem, but if I keep my distance, things will be okay.

▶ Stage 3: **Fight**, because I just need to prove my worth, then others can admire me.

And the fear patterns—like any form of external emotional regulation—are not the problem themselves, but our best available solution to our life situation. They are the best (or only) regulation we know. So we should not see fear patterns or other behaviors as an illness, but as a solution strategy.

9 Levels of Established Fear
(Established: Stuck in Unresolved Fear over a Long Period of Time)
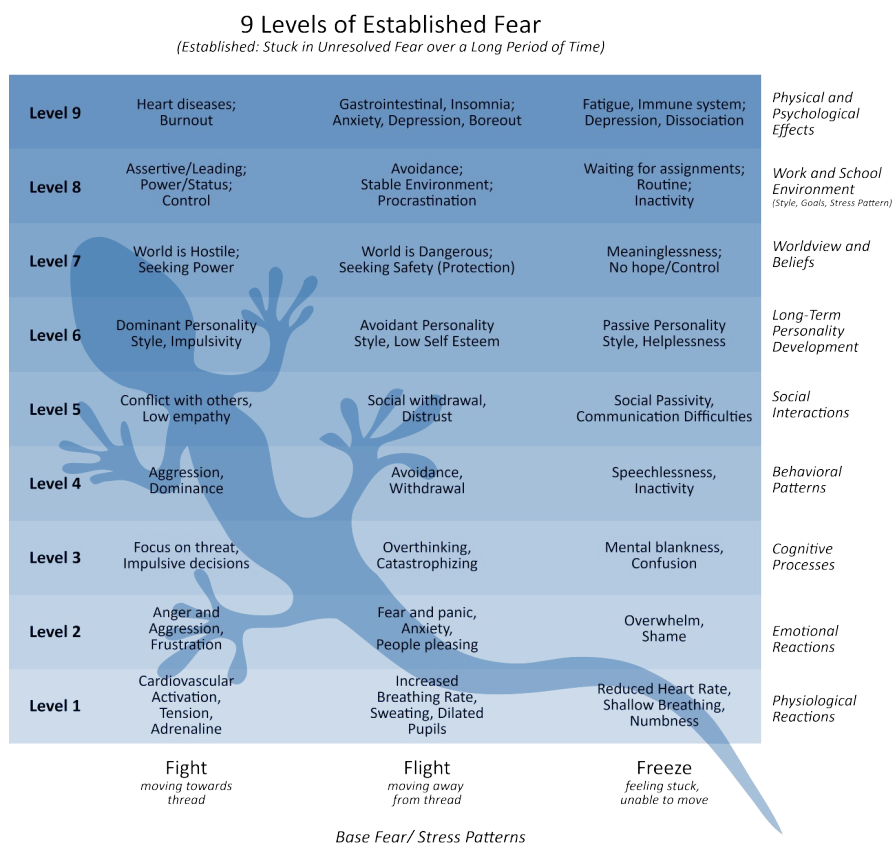
	Fight	Flight	Freeze	
Level 9	Heart diseases; Burnout	Gastrointestinal, Insomnia; Anxiety, Depression, Boreout	Fatigue, Immune system; Depression, Dissociation	*Physical and Psychological Effects*
Level 8	Assertive/Leading; Power/Status; Control	Avoidance; Stable Environment; Procrastination	Waiting for assignments; Routine; Inactivity	*Work and School Environment (Style, Goals, Stress Pattern)*
Level 7	World is Hostile; Seeking Power	World is Dangerous; Seeking Safety (Protection)	Meaninglessness; No hope/Control	*Worldview and Beliefs*
Level 6	Dominant Personality Style, Impulsivity	Avoidant Personality Style, Low Self Esteem	Passive Personality Style, Helplessness	*Long-Term Personality Development*
Level 5	Conflict with others, Low empathy	Social withdrawal, Distrust	Social Passivity, Communication Difficulties	*Social Interactions*
Level 4	Aggression, Dominance	Avoidance, Withdrawal	Speechlessness, Inactivity	*Behavioral Patterns*
Level 3	Focus on threat, Impulsive decisions	Overthinking, Catastrophizing	Mental blankness, Confusion	*Cognitive Processes*
Level 2	Anger and Aggression, Frustration	Fear and panic, Anxiety, People pleasing	Overwhelm, Shame	*Emotional Reactions*
Level 1	Cardiovascular Activation, Tension, Adrenaline	Increased Breathing Rate, Sweating, Dilated Pupils	Reduced Heart Rate, Shallow Breathing, Numbness	*Physiological Reactions*
	Fight *moving towards thread*	**Flight** *moving away from thread*	**Freeze** *feeling stuck, unable to move*	

Base Fear/ Stress Patterns

Figure 6: The Gecko in overview. There are also levels that show different aspects of fear patterns.

Because it's easier to replace one solution with another than to go from "you're doing everything wrong" to "let me show you how it works." That directional shift usually triggers resistance.

Basic-Need Substitutes

We already covered the substitute actions for the basic needs in detail above, so here we'll just bring them together again briefly before we move into resolution.

The fear patterns are also solution strategies for the basic needs. And here the three perspectives converge: Gecko, Tribal Leadership (worldviews), and basic needs:

▶ Stage 1: **Freeze** … I am looking for **safety**

Why? The freeze state *is* the state of insecurity. That's why I play dead. I am passive. I expect others to give instructions, and then I carry them out. I stay under the radar. Don't attract attention. In my invisibility lies my protection. And generally, we lean toward *protection* as a substitute for actual safety.

▶ • Stage 2: **Flight** … I am looking for **self-worth**

Why? Protection is now in place, so what I need next is interpersonal energy (attention), but people are dangerous. That's why I constantly monitor how I'm being seen. People-pleasing is the most prominent expression. Or avoidance and distance. I control closeness and visibility. I collect likes but only show a curated life through my upvaluation strategies (see above).

▶ Stage 3: **Fight** … I am looking for **self-determination**

Why? Attack instead of withdrawal. If people fear me ("respect"), that's enough. If I can tell others what to do, it's the passing on of the external control I've experienced. Control or power over others is safer and more visible. I can often even force it. If I have no control over my inner world, then at least I can have it on the outside.

Coping vs. Healing

Now we move into resolution. Or rather, into solution 2.0. And here we need to distinguish between coping and healing.

To put it visually: if we're stuck up to our necks in a pile of manure, we can hold air fresheners under our nose to make the situation more bearable. Or we can climb out of the manure, shower, and put on clean clothes.

Air fresheners are coping; getting out of the situation is healing. And even if this sounds so obvious that no one would ever choose coping, reality is different, as we've already learned above.

Healing isn't easy, because first I have to believe that something other than the manure pile exists. If the pile and its stench are my whole world, then all I have is coping—because nothing else seems possible. That's why we look at this in real life and not with oversimplified metaphors.

Control

When we compensate, it's about control. We create a "small world" in which we have control. Control becomes a substitute for safety. If I choose a world small enough, I can be sure that in this world *I* am the one who decides. For people with depression, the only safe place is often the blanket over their head. There, they have control, there they feel safe.

If I build a larger world (family, team, organization, party, church, …), then I gain a larger illusion of power and independence. The more people depend on me and need me, the more important I become. And importance is, again, a substitute for meaning. Because meaning is something people give us freely.

We already know what we do: depending on our worldview (Stage), we try to replace a basic need. Either by forgetting that we need it, or by creating the feeling inside ourselves that we already have it.
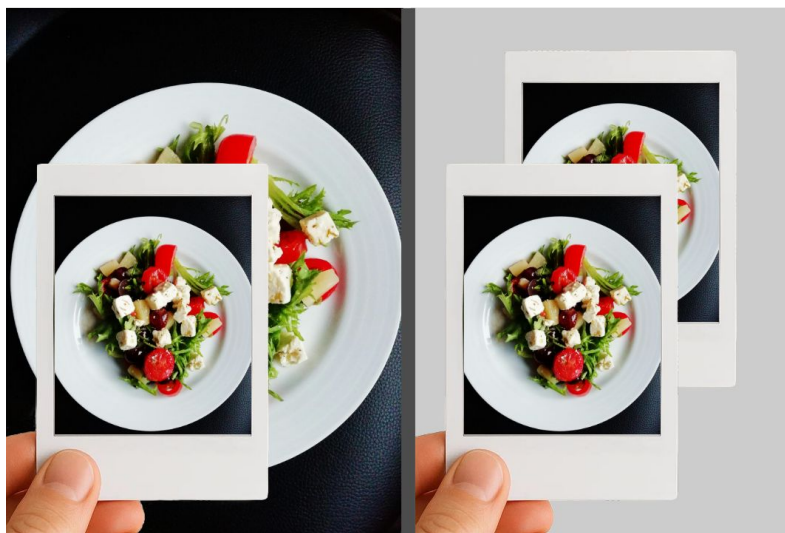

Figure 7: A picture of food or a picture of a picture of food are indistinguishable, which is why we can easily fake relationships. Outwardly. But not for ourselves. The picture does not satisfy us.

▶ Stage 1: controlling the environment as a substitute for real safety. Or controlling my visibility: "If I'm not here, then I'm not a threat, and then nothing can happen to me."

▶ Stage 2: controlling the distance to people so that validation works, as a substitute for self-worth. I show only as much of myself as is needed to get approval or admiration. Or the "I'll do anything so you like me."

▶ Stage 3: controlling others as a substitute for self-determination. "I tell you how things go! I'm the boss!" The underlying idea: "If I can't shape my own life, then at least I'll dictate others'. That's something!" You can also clearly see a parallel pattern here: we often *live out* our pain. We live in external control, so we make others suffer under external control.

That's the point with control, power, or manipulation: we *take* something in order to supply ourselves with safety. But if we take something in the realm of love and relationship, what we take becomes empty and worthless. If I receive a hug as a gift (and can actually take it in), it's wonderful. But if I force a hug or take it by pressure, it becomes empty and stale. It injures more than it heals. In every relationship context we experience the same disappointment: the surrogate doesn't nourish us. Since I don't believe in acceptance and connection and can't trust anyone—because they have hurt me—I remain trapped inside myself and can only compensate. That makes me even hungrier. And I need more to numb the new emptiness again. The spiral spins faster. Downwards.

So what if we reverse the spiral? Not downward, but upward!

Because we've learned that all these mechanisms are solution-approaches. They are our *best* solutions—so far. These approaches are not "wrong"; they are genuine attempts. We are trying to survive all this. They're just not complete yet. Something is still missing.

Living (or Healing)

And now comes the big punchline: we can only satisfy the basic needs *through connection* (relationship, bondedness). Relationship is precisely the shift into Stage 4. From "I" to "We."

As long as we try to handle it ourselves—"I can do it alone"—we are doomed to fail. Real encounter depends on another person. Relationship and trust cannot be controlled. We can only make an offer, and then we have to let ourselves be gifted. And that comes with the risk of rejection.
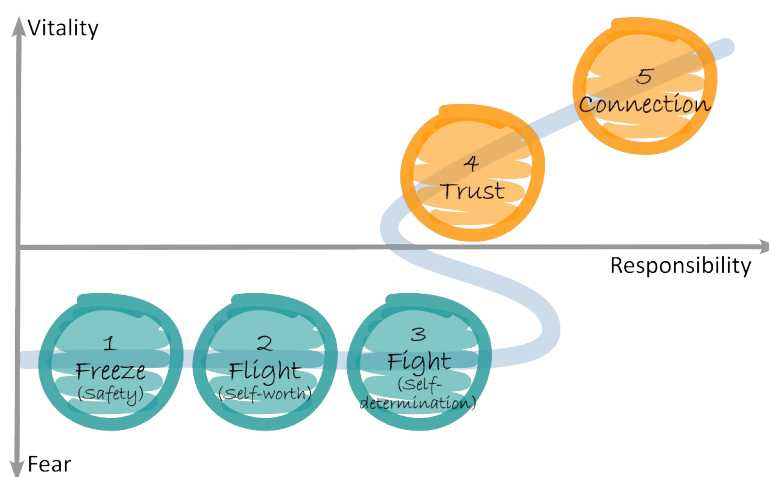

Figure 8: The compensations have different levels of responsibility that we take on, but in order to come alive, I must enter into the world of relationships.

Without the courage to face rejection, we will fail. And that is why coping sells so well: therapy and coaching based on coping sell the sideways movement between control mechanisms as progress. And control is pleasant, because I do not have to open up, do not have to become vulnerable, and I feel like I have it under control. But control is only driving in a roundabout. I am in motion, but I never move forward.

Only when I exit the roundabout does real change happen. And the change is that we open up and allow ourselves to move toward a "you," in order to become a "we."

This is not actually that hard, because it is a process, not an on/off switch. Encounter happens in small steps. Especially when we are new to the topic. I only need the courage to take the first step.

Regulation in Stages 1–3 happens on the outside, because the inside is still suppressed. We don't want to feel inside, because that is where the rejection is stored. The "I am not enough."

Healing happens along the path toward Stages 4 + 5: I move toward connection and then I experience (for the first time) acceptance. Through that, I gain safety, self-worth, and from that then self-determination (agency).

And when I experience that, it helps to be prepared for my resistance. Often unconscious, inner resistance. Our brain wants to keep us in the old (safe, because familiar) patterns and tracks. Like a lane assist system, we get steered back into the roundabout. And we even get good reasons for it, which we repeat to ourselves and others.
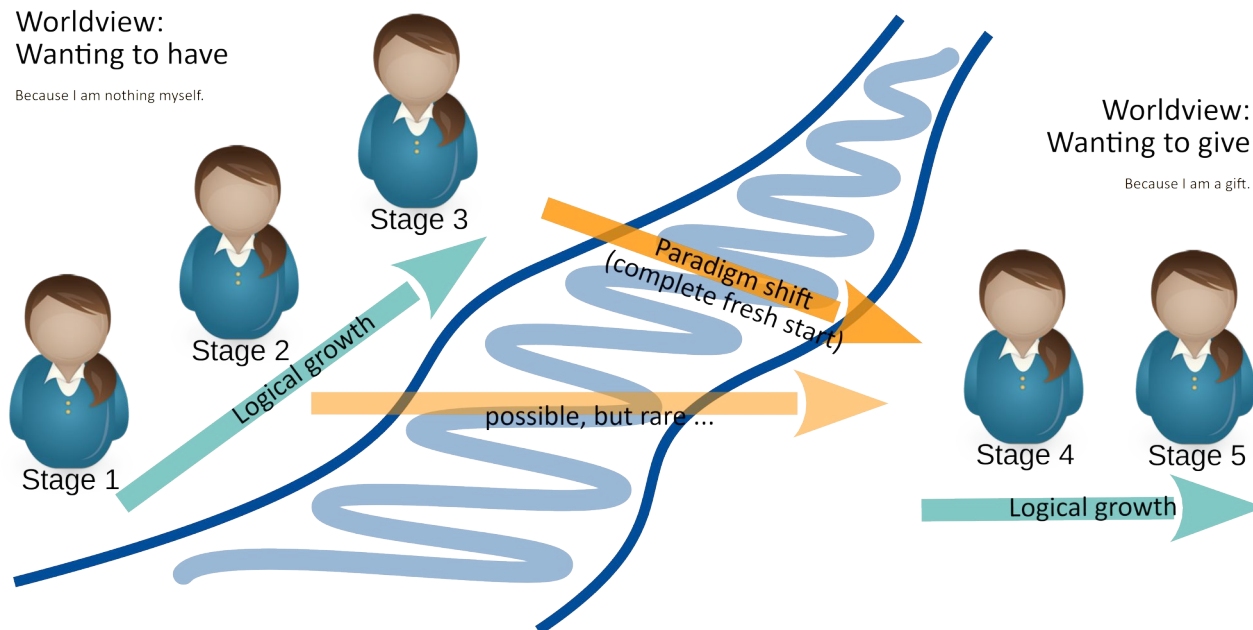
This can be frustrating. For those who try to help us. For those who listened when we said we want to leave mere functioning and start living, and who believed us. And it can frustrate us, because we stand in our own way despite our honest intentions. Why am I not allowing this? Why am I not granting myself a good life?

But when we are prepared—when we know that this resistance will show up, that the immune reaction against bond-edness comes because we have had bad experiences—then the effect is mild. Like a vaccination. Yes, there may be side effects. A small version of the illness. That is also how we experience resistance. Yes, it happens, but we know what it is. A learning process. We get through it.

Worldview:
Wanting to have

Because I am nothing myself.

Stage 3

Stage 2

Logical growth

Stage 1

Paradigm shift
(complete fresh start)

possible, but rare ...

Worldview:
Wanting to give

Because I am a gift.

Stage 4   Stage 5

Logical growth

Figure 9: Switching between worldviews. In the world of "wanting to have," stages are linked to status. Status rises with the number.

Preparation and understanding for ourselves is important. On the other side, we need the balance between "it's worth it" and "it's possible." We need to present healing (the paradigm shift) in such a way that the next step (added value) is visible, but also in such a way that continuity is created. Continuity then creates familiarity—90% is like xyz, which you already know. But the new 10% can give you 20%. So healing must be new enough to be worth it, but familiar enough to be possible at all. And this balance is highly individual.

Depending on the person, we need a different emphasis. Some want to redo everything anew, while others want high continuity. That is why we can see healing in different ways. It *is* a paradigm shift, because it is neither familiar nor congruent. Even if it is cognitively "simple."

On the other hand, we have learned that coping is also a solution attempt. The best we can do with what we know. Ultimately, we are addressing the right themes (basic needs). It's just missing one ingredient. Relationship. And because we have only ever experienced injury, we do not believe in it. From that perspective, we actually have high continuity and are only adding one "small thing."

Let's stay with cooking as a metaphor. Imagine that as a child you were always given completely oversalted food (or, alternatively, food with no salt at all). Then you will develop a negative attitude toward salt. Essentially: you will avoid it for different reasons. Either because you think it ruins everything, or because you do not believe in its existence or value.

In any case, we can say: your experience is that tasty food does not exist. So you will only eat as much as absolutely necessary. And you cannot understand why other people rave about food.

And your experience is valid. It is still not complete. And here we pass by the idea of the worldview: when our brain solidifies our worldview at around age 10 to 12, it says, "we have now gotten to know the world, we are still alive, so what we know is safe and works; therefore we will prefer to do it this way for the rest of our life."

And in the salt example, this will be a rejecting stance toward salt—"nobody needs that" or "it ruins everything."

And in our analogy here, food in general represents the basic needs and the salt is relationship. Without salt, our basic needs do not function. But if we have only ever experienced relationship in the form of abuse or withdrawal, then we cannot do much with relationship—nor with the basic needs.

What we then need is the opportunity to have new experiences. For example: tasting a flavorful dish with the right amount of salt. If we allow ourselves that, we can discover a new world, even though technically it is only a very small step. Just one ingredient.

It is important that we have people in our life who serve as our corrective. The big difference between coping and healing is that healing changes the inside. Healing does not happen at the facade but within the worldview, and from there it radiates into the beliefs, the thinking, the feeling, and the actions.

Coping means that I learn and play new roles, while healing is the realization that I do not need roles and can become visible.

That is also the difference between OrgIQ and almost all consulting approaches. There, new roles are trained. I want to quickly fix the numbers and show success. How the inner structure and sustainability look does not matter.

With OrgIQ it is different. We work almost entirely below the surface. We make the inner state visible and work on it systematically. This change on the inside then radiates outward as well. It moves through all layers and also changes thinking, feeling, and acting. But sustainably. Change that remains, because it happened inside. It does not matter whether in the family or in the team—because everywhere we are dealing with people.

OrgIQ—Our Core [short version]

What connects living systems

Organizations are not machines. They are living networks of people—connected through relationships, perception and meaning. Energy flows within them: through attention, trust, curiosity and shared goals.

When this energy flows freely, the system becomes intelligent. Intelligence means: perceiving, learning, adapting, growing.

This applies to human beings just as it applies to teams, companies or entire societies.

Why systems become rigid

Fear is the antagonist of intelligence. It narrows perception, separates people and lowers the capacity to learn. Fear creates control, control destroys trust—and the network loses energy.

Then **coping** begins: we stabilize symptoms instead of understanding causes. We repair processes instead of healing relationships.

But every system can only be as healthy as its inner states—and relationships are the mirror of those states.

How healing works

Healing means bringing energy back into flow. This happens when people feel safe, valued and free. These three qualities form the core of all living systems:

1. **Safety**—I am allowed to exist here without fear.
2. **Self-worth**—I am meaningful, even when I make mistakes.
3. **Self-determination**—I can influence, shape and have an impact.

Where these three qualities grow, fear becomes smaller. And the less fear there is, the more awareness, cooperation and creativity emerge. This holds biologically, emotionally and organizationally.

From the individual to the organization

Organizations are collective nervous systems. Their *relationship quality* determines how well they can perceive and learn. When people feel safe, trust emerges. Trust opens dialogue. Dialogue creates shared understanding. And shared understanding enables responsibility.

This is how **collective intelligence** arises—the ability to think and act as a whole.

That is the difference between *teamwork* and *team intelligence*.

The path of change

Real change begins on the inside. Not through new rules, but through new states. When people feel safer, they act with more clarity. When teams communicate more openly, the organization becomes adaptable. When organizations reduce fear, culture becomes alive.

Healing rather than merely **functioning**—that is the core of OrgIQ. Because learning is not a process, but a state of connectedness.

The Bridge to Practice

OrgIQ connects the human and organizational levels:

Level	Principle	Effect
Human	Security, Self-esteem, Self-determination	Trust & Energy
Relationship	Perception & Resonance	Clarity & Cooperation
Organization	Purpose & Structure	Direction & Adaptability

This creates an architecture in which life can flow again. We measure this relationship quality—and make it visible so that development can be consciously shaped.

The Essence

> *Fear constricts, trust opens.*
>
> *Control paralyzes, awareness moves.*
>
> *Organizations become intelligent when people feel secure.*

OrgIQ is the science and practice of this vitality. It shows **what happens in people** when systems grow—and how organizations learn to breathe again.

In short:

OrgIQ = Awareness in relationships. So that people, teams, and organizations can come alive again.