

The Worldview Journey

*Explore, Exchange, and Expand
Perspectives in a World in Crisis*



Worldview
Journeys

“The survival of mankind will depend on the ability of people who think differently to act together.”

~ Geert Hofstede

“The more aware we are of our basic paradigms, maps, or assumptions, and the extent to which we have been influenced by our experience, the more we can take responsibility for those paradigms, examine them, test them against reality, listen to others and be open to their perceptions, thereby getting a larger picture and a far more objective view.”

~ Stephen Covey

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”

~ Albert Einstein

Why the Worldview Journey?

Our world is arguably in existential crisis, and increasingly so. This crisis poses a threat to our very existence and the continuation of our global civilization, while also powerfully confronting us with existential questions about what it means to be human, and how to exist in relation to each other and the world we find ourselves in.

The Worldview Journey supports students to explore their worldviews, in interaction with each other, and in relation to the bigger whole. It empowers them to reflect on their perspectives, take the perspectives of others, and cultivate more planetary perspectives. This has great value from a psychological, cultural, and societal/systems point of view.

Psychologically, exploring our worldviews helps us 'take perspective on our perspective'. Rather than seeing with our worldview, we learn to look at it. This helps us question engrained assumptions and become more in charge of the narratives that shape our lives.

Culturally, exploring worldviews helps us gain understanding of others' thinking and discover common ground with those who think differently. This enhances communication, collaboration, problem solving, and the strength of communities and cultures more generally.

Societally, exploring worldviews helps us reflect on the paradigms and purposes that shape our social, economic, legal, and other systems. This helps us respond more creatively to the complex issues in our world and create changes that are systemic and transformative.

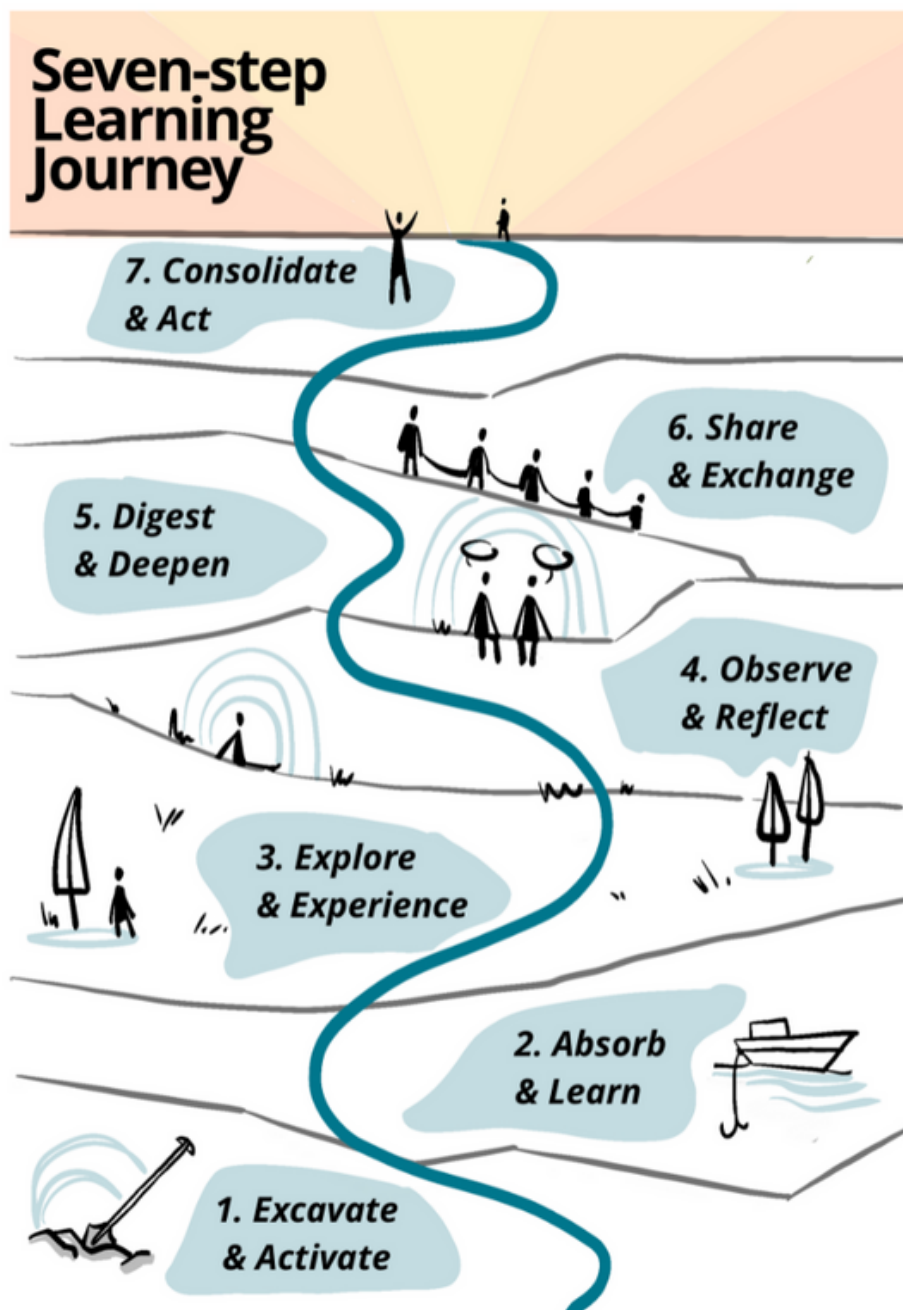


The Worldview Journey consists of three learning modules. Module 1: Explore, Module 2: Exchange, and Module 3: Expand.

How is the Worldview Journey different?

The Worldview Journey:

- Is based in a *transformative pedagogy*, aimed at empowering students to thrive under increasingly disruptive circumstances, and enact transformative change and leadership;
- Invites *perspective shifts* that allow one to see something in a qualitatively new way, inspiring change in the form of understanding itself (trans-form-ation vs in-form-ation).
- Is structured into three *seven-step learning journeys*, designed according to the newest insights as emerging from the Sciences of Learning and Development (see image below);
- Supports *whole-person learning*, through reflective, experiential, and interactive practices;
- Uses our online platform and special 'travel journals' to support *inquiry-based* and *metacognitive learning*, empowering students to formulate their own learning goals and questions, connect the new knowledge to their life and world, and leverage peer learning.



What is the Worldview Journey?

The Worldview Journey is a transformative learning journey that supports students to reflect on their worldviews; dialogue deeply with those with other worldviews; and view their worldviews in the bigger context of our world in crisis. This helps them explore, exchange, and expand perspectives.

The program is fun, interactive, and has been received very well by students and online participants alike. The Worldview Journey has been developed in collaboration with Utrecht University, where we've tested the first module of the program with more than 1000 students.

The program can be run online, on site, or in hybrid fashion. It is designed for optimal learning results for participants and easy usage and limited prep time for educators.

Facilitation of the program is relatively straightforward. The program is fully supported by our online platform, high quality teaching materials, and travel journals that guide students through the process while also scaffolding them to strategize and document their learning.



"Making deep or transformative change requires an exploration of worldviews."

~ Annick de Witt, Initiator Worldview Journeys

What's the program about?

EXPLORE. *Reflect on your worldview – Gain perspective on your perspective*

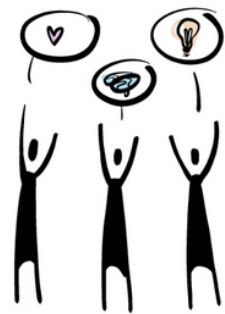
Worldviews are the 'big stories' through which humans make sense of – and thus shape – their experience and world. We'll explore the biographical and cultural roots of our worldviews and inquire into how they've changed throughout our lives. This helps us become more aware, and thus potentially more in charge of, the narratives that shape our lives. We'll also gain more understanding of the different worldviews present in contemporary society, as well as how they inform our societal debates and frame how we understand the issues in our world.

EXCHANGE. *Communicate across worldviews – Learn from other perspectives*

Our worldviews develop and change through our conversations with others. However, often we don't listen adequately and unconsciously project our views, values, and fears onto others. Practicing deep listening, neutral witnessing, and clear self-expression can enhance our conversations, leading to more constructive exchanges with those who think differently, and allowing us to explore both our own as well as other perspectives and worldviews. Learning to leverage diversity of perspective is also an asset for good collaboration and problem solving.

EXPAND. *Your worldview in the big picture – Cultivate planetary perspectives*

A view on humans' connection to nature is a fundamental aspect of worldviews. As we've entered the Anthropocene, the geological age of humans, the question of our connection to nature has grown ever more urgent. We explore our own relationship to nature, as well as its roots in our childhood experiences of nature. Seeing ourselves in the context of *Deep Time*, the story of the long evolution of the earth we're part and product of, supports us to get a more planetary perspective. This helps us reflect on our role and position in the larger whole.



For whom is this program intended?

The Worldview Journey is designed as a universal program that explores perspectives and cultivates skills that are essential in our contemporary world, with its grand challenges, no matter one's specific discipline, learning level, or study context. The program stimulates personal reflection and exploration by asking students profound questions about themselves, their relationships with others, and their understandings of nature and society.

Because it supports participants' exploration, reflection, and exchange, rather than just transmitting knowledge, the program can be used in a variety of contexts and at different learning levels. It's suitable for higher education, but can also be used in adult and life-long-learning contexts. With some adaptation, older students at the high school/secondary education level are also likely to benefit.

What's the study burden and how is the program assessed?

The study burden of the three modules is about 1 ECTS. However, the different modules can also be used independently and woven into other courses and contexts. The complete journey consists of 3 live, highly interactive 2-3-hour sessions. Each session is preceded by maximum 2 hours of preparatory work, which is required for participating in the live sessions.

Prep each session at home

Each session is structured according to a seven-step learning journey. Students start the learning process at home, where they are asked to 1) journal to excavate and activate their latent knowledge, ideas, and associations with respect to the topic of learning; 2) watch video-lectures and/or read to absorb new knowledge and ideas; 3) engage in an activity to explore the topic for themselves; and 4) engage in a reflection on that experience.

Live sessions

The live sessions will continue from there, starting with an introduction and group reflection, engaging in 5) interactive small group exercises, and 6) a plenary discussion and exchange. The learning journey is then completed by 7) a short journaling practice that empowers students to articulate their learning and translate it into action.

Travel journal

An inspiring travel journal supports and motivates students to take the different steps of the learning journey and engage in them deeply. Additionally, this travel journal helps students to strategize their learning, document their learning process, and treasure their hard-won insights, keeping all of it for later review, deepening, and integration. The travel journal also offers great input for the reflective essays students write at the end of the course.

Assessment

Students complete the program by writing a reflective essay that details their learning process, reflects on how their worldviews may have changed and evolved, and what this means for their personal lives, as well as their views on society and nature.



"We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience"

~ John Dewey

Testimonials of module 1 the Worldview Journey

Module 1 of the *Worldview Journey* has been piloted with more than 1000 students at Utrecht University. This module has been very well received. Read some testimonials here.

"I had a really educational and useful experience. I learned a lot and was supported to think about things I had never thought (this deeply) about."

"Inspiring, mindful and useful!"

"It was different and refreshing!"

"I learned a lot of new things and my awareness of my own worldview really grew."

"It was intriguing and self actualising."

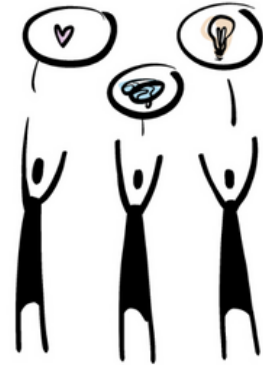
"I thought it was a really eye-opening experience! It was also interesting to discuss with people who had different worldviews than me."

"It was a nice experience! I liked taking the test and learning about my worldview. And then discussing this with others to see how they think differently. I became more aware of the different worldviews and their qualities and limitations, as well as about my own. I liked understanding where my way of thinking comes from, and how it needs to evolve if I want to change my worldview."

"One insight that I've learned is that all worldviews are valid and there is not one "correct" worldview. It is important to have a nonjudgmental attitude towards each other and our worldviews and to hold space for the different perspectives. In order to solve issues like climate change, we have to find a common-ground where we have understanding for every worldview."

"I also realized how important it is to actually listen to someone. Sometimes listening and understanding what someone else is talking about is a very useful tool to gain a different perspective and question your own thinking, to evaluate how your thought process came to be. Sometimes we are so immersed into our own "bubble" or world that just having a conversation with someone with a different worldview can really change your mindset."

"I liked the Worldview Journey. It is different than usual, when you only listen to a lecture and ask questions. Now you get the opportunity to discuss more. I also liked that you get the opportunity to think about your own worldview and reflect upon it, and that you hear about others' worldviews."



What is Worldview Journeys Foundation?

Worldview Journeys' mission is to bring inner transformation into higher education. We do this by developing *transformative learning journeys* that examine worldviews, invite perspective-shifts, and support people to evolve their thinking, relating, and acting. Our learning journeys are designed and researched for impact and scalability, aiming to make them available to educators and facilitators everywhere.

As our world is increasingly in planetary, even existential crisis, awareness is growing that “nothing short of a wholesale shift of mindsets is needed.” Some philosophers refer to the *metacrisis* or *polycrisis*, arguing that the multitude of interrelated crises humanity is facing should be seen as manifestation of a larger or deeper crisis: A crisis of the mind or *a crisis of worldview*. A crisis in how we as human beings relate to ourselves, each other, nature, and the world around us.

Worldviews refer to the overarching, collectively shared, ‘big stories’ through which humans make sense of their experience and world. As our worldviews define for us what is possible, valuable, and expected, they shape our lives and world to a great extent. In the words of cultural historian Richard Tarnas: “worldviews create worlds.”

Because our worldviews are often considered to be both *root causes* of humanity's crisis, as well as *deep leverage points* for addressing it, individually and collectively examining our worldviews offers potent pathways forward. In other words: making deep or transformative change requires an exploration of our worldviews.

Numerous voices therefore emphasize the need for more *transformative* forms of education. *Transformative learning* goes beyond adding information to our stores of knowledge (in-form-ation) and changes the form of our thinking itself (trans-form-ation). Such learning invites for *perspective- or mind-shifts* that allow one to see something in a qualitatively new way.

However, current curricula in our Higher Education Institutions tend to focus on transmitting knowledge and cultivating cognitive skills, not on facilitating transformation. Though these institutions are educating the next generation of leaders and change-makers, they're generally not fostering the transformative change and leadership so urgently needed in today's world.

Worldview Journeys is therefore developing, piloting, researching, and scaling a transformative curriculum around worldviews, primarily aimed at students in higher education, yet intending to serve a range of communities beyond that. This curriculum consists of:

- The Worldview Journey (in collaboration with Utrecht University)
- The Deep Dive Into Your Worldview (project in starting phase)
- Worldviews & Our Planetary Challenges (still under construction)

“Nothing short of a wholesale shift of mindsets is needed.”

~ UNDP's 2020 Human Development Report

Partners and co-funders

