

Values in Conflict & Harmony

Understanding Tensions & Alignment in Human Motivation

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Introduction & Scope of Paper

Human values rarely operate in isolation. While most of us can name the motivations that matter—family, achievement, belonging, creativity—these priorities constantly interact, sometimes reinforcing one another and sometimes pulling in opposite directions. At their best, aligned values bring clarity and ease; at their worst, conflicting values create tension, stress, or difficult trade-offs. These dynamics are not anomalies but a core feature of human motivation and decision-making.

This white paper examines values in conflict and harmony, drawing on both established research and original data from users of the Values Bridge assessment. It explores how and why values collide, how they align, and what these patterns mean for personal growth, education, and organizational practice. The analysis builds on decades of work in psychology and sociology on congruence, role conflict, and value structures, while translating these ideas into insights supported by large-scale data.

Our focus is twofold: first, to explain how the Values Bridge defines and measures conflicts and harmonies, highlighting the most common patterns across tens of thousands of users; and second, to show how these dynamics vary across generations and income groups, offering a window into how context shapes the way people balance their values.

The paper is written for coaches, educators, organizational leaders, and other professionals seeking a deeper understanding of the forces that shape motivation and well-being. It is not a technical report but a synthesis of theory, data, and application. The goal is to show how understanding values in conflict and harmony can help individuals and organizations navigate trade-offs, strengthen alignments, and make more purposeful choices.

1. Theoretical Background of Values in Tension and Alignment

Human motivation is rarely straightforward. People are often pulled between competing priorities—seeking career advancement while also wanting more time with family, or working for financial security while craving freedom and leisure. At other times, values align in ways that make life feel easier and more coherent, such as when a drive for achievement strengthens commitment to work, or altruism deepens a sense of belonging. These patterns of tension and reinforcement are not incidental. They are central to how values function, and they have been the subject of decades of research across psychology, sociology, and organizational studies.

The Nature of Values Conflicts: Competing Motivational Priorities

Values have long been defined as enduring beliefs about what is desirable and worth striving for. They guide decisions across time and situations, pointing to what people most want to achieve, protect, or express. Milton Rokeach's *The Nature of Human Values* (1973) was a foundational attempt to classify values as terminal (end states) and instrumental (modes of conduct). Shalom Schwartz later extended this work in a series of cross-cultural studies that confirmed values are not random but organized into a coherent system (1992; Schwartz et al., 2012). His circumplex model arranges values in a circular continuum, showing both tensions and compatibilities.

Adjacent values tend to support each other—for example, self-direction and stimulation—while values positioned on opposite sides of the circle often pull in different directions. One enduring opposition exists between self-enhancement (achievement, power) and self-transcendence (benevolence, universalism). Another is between openness to change (stimulation, self-direction, hedonism) and conservation (security, conformity, tradition). By mapping values in this way, Schwartz demonstrated how pursuing one priority can make another more difficult to realize, and conversely, how certain motivations naturally align (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Schwartz's Circumplex Model of Values

Note: Adjacent values tend to align, while values on opposite sides are in tension. Source: Schwartz et al. (2012), "Refining the Theory of Basic Individual Values"

These dynamics have been observed in specific life domains. Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) classic study of work-family conflict highlighted the strain of pursuing career achievement while meeting family obligations. Subsequent empirical research shows similar costs of misalignment. Sagiv and Schwartz (2000) found that people whose behaviors conflicted with their prioritized values reported lower well-being. Michel and colleagues' (2011) meta-analysis linked work-family value conflicts to stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction. More recently, Sorthaix and Schwartz (2017) documented how alignment between personal values and life circumstances predicts well-being across cultures. Together, these studies confirm that value conflict is not only a theoretical concept but a lived experience with measurable consequences.

Cultural and generational studies further show that conflicts shift with social context. Inglehart and Welzel's (2005) theory of cultural change demonstrated that societies emphasize different values, such as survival versus self-expression, depending on their stage of modernization. Twenge and colleagues (2012) found that U.S. young adults increasingly prioritize extrinsic values such as affluence and leisure, while giving less weight to intrinsic or prosocial ones. This suggests that younger cohorts may face greater tension between self-enhancement and communal values, while older groups may navigate conflicts shaped by earlier cultural conditions.

The Case for Values Harmony

If conflict reveals the trade-offs in human motivation, harmony shows the potential for

reinforcement. Certain values naturally work together, such as achievement and workcentrism, or altruism (Non Sibi) and belonging. These complementarities create coherence in decision-making, making choices feel easier and more purposeful. Schwartz's circumplex anticipates such synergies by clustering values that share compatible motivational goals, for example stimulation with self-direction or benevolence with universalism.

Psychological research underscores the benefits of this alignment. Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory shows that when goals are self-concordant—aligned with intrinsic values of autonomy, competence, and relatedness—people report greater vitality, persistence, and satisfaction. Sheldon and Elliot (1999) found that individuals whose goals matched their personal values were more likely to make progress and feel fulfilled. At the relational level, Sagiv, Roccas, and Hazan (2004) observed that couples with shared value congruence reported stronger satisfaction. Harmony, in short, is not simply the absence of conflict but a positive state that supports well-being and thriving.

Sociological and organizational research also highlight the power of alignment. Oyserman's (2009) identity-based motivation framework demonstrates that when values and identities are congruent with context, individuals act with greater confidence and persistence. Research on person-environment fit echoes the same principle. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson's (2005) meta-analysis found that person-job and person-organization fit predict higher satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Edwards and Cable (2009) showed that when personal and organizational values align, trust and cooperation improve. These findings reinforce the broader lesson that congruence between personal values and social environments fosters thriving.

From Theory to Practice

Theories of conflict and harmony explain how values interact, but they often remain abstract or limited to specific domains such as work, family, or culture. The Values Bridge builds on this foundation by measuring conflicts and harmonies across the full range of life domains. By capturing when values collide and when they reinforce one another, the tool makes visible what decades of research have established but not always operationalized. The following sections outline how the Values Bridge defines and measures these dynamics, and present patterns drawn from tens of thousands of assessments that show how conflicts and harmonies appear in practice.

2. Defining Conflicts & Harmonies

The Values Bridge framework recognizes that values rarely operate in isolation. They interact dynamically, sometimes pulling in opposite directions and sometimes reinforcing one another in ways that create clarity and momentum. To capture this reality, the tool includes two complementary analyses: Conflict Analysis and Harmony Analysis.

Conflicts occur when two highly ranked values compete for time, energy, or resources. For example, Achievement and Familycentrism often clash when career demands require sacrifices at home. Similarly, Affluence may compete with Eudemonia, as the pursuit of wealth can come at the expense of leisure or self-care. These tensions are not signs of dysfunction but natural outcomes of living in a world of trade-offs. The challenge is not to eliminate conflicts but to recognize them, understand their impact, and develop intentional strategies for managing them.

Harmonies, by contrast, emerge when two values align and reinforce one another. When Workcentrism and Achievement both rank highly, or when Non Sibi (altruism) aligns with Belonging, decisions tend to feel easier and more coherent. Harmonies reflect the natural synergies within a person's motivational structure—the pairings that generate confidence, momentum, and resilience in pursuing goals.

Taken together, Conflict and Harmony Analyses move beyond ranking individual values. They examine how values interact as a system, explaining why some decisions feel draining and others energizing, and why people thrive in certain environments but feel constrained in others.

Illustrative Patterns of Conflicts and Harmonies

Analysis of 36,649 Values Bridge assessments reveals recurring patterns in how values interact. While each individual's profile is unique, certain pairings consistently appear as sources of either conflict or harmony. Across the dataset, 76 distinct potential conflicts were identified. Table 2 highlights the 10 most common, while noting that prevalence is partly shaped by how often particular values appear in people's core set. See Table 1 for that prevalence.

Table 1. Values, Descriptions, and Prevalence Among Takers of The Values Bridge

Value	Description	% in Core
Achievement	Visible success in professional or personal spheres.	64.2%
Affluence	Wealth and/or financial security.	63.3%

(Table continues on following page)

Table 1. Values, Descriptions, and Prevalence Among Takers of The Values Bridge

Value	Description	% in Core
Beholderism	Aesthetics regarding one’s home, belongings, and/or personal appearance.	49.1%
Belonging	Community and/or connectivity with friends or affinity groups.	38.8%
Cosmos	A faith tradition.	36.5%
Eudemonia	Self-care, recreation, leisure, and other forms of personal pleasure.	34.8%
Familycenterism	Family considerations around health, wellbeing, and presence.	31.9%
Luminance	Fame, recognition, wide public renown.	25.6%
Non Sibi	Altruism on a local or personal scale.	25.5%
Place	One particular location or type of location.	24.0%
Radius	Systemic change on a societal, cultural, global, or national scale.	18.8%
Scope	Stimulation, excitement, learning, activity.	17.4%
Voice	Creative self-expression and authenticity.	9.9%
Workcenterism	Work-related activities and responsibilities.	4.3%

Note: Since this dataset was collected, a sixteenth value—Belovedness (romantic partnership as a central source of meaning)—has been added to the Values Bridge framework. While data on Belovedness are not yet included in this analysis, it will be incorporated in future iterations as the dataset expands.

These baseline frequencies help explain why some conflicts occur more often than others. A conflict can arise when two competing priorities both appear in a person’s core set, pulling in different directions, or when one value is core and a potentially supportive value is relegated to the periphery. Table 2 highlights the ten most common conflicts observed across the dataset.

Table 2. Top 10 Conflicts in the Values Bridge Dataset

Value Pairing	Conflict Description in Brief	%
Core Eudemonia Peripheral Belonging	A person prioritizes leisure, self-care, and recreation but places little importance on community or group connection, creating tension between personal fulfillment and social ties.	34.1%

(Table continues on following page)

Table 2. Top 10 Conflicts in the Values Bridge Dataset

Value Pairing	Conflict Description in Brief	%
Core Non Sibi Core Voice	Strong commitments to altruism and service can clash with a strong drive for creative self-expression, as helping others may require self-sacrifice while expression emphasizes individual authenticity.	33.1%
Core Non Sibi Core Eudemonia	Altruism and service to others can conflict with a desire for leisure, pleasure, and self-care, as dedicating energy outward may limit time for inward restoration.	32.6%
Core Familycentrism Core Eudemonia	A high priority on family obligations and presence may restrict opportunities for personal leisure, self-care, or recreation, producing tension between duty and personal renewal.	30.2%
Core Familycentrism Core Non Sibi	Commitments to family and commitments to altruism may compete for time and energy, as family responsibilities can limit availability for broader service and vice versa.	28.8%
Core Familycentrism Core Voice	Family expectations or obligations may constrain an individual's desire for self-expression and authenticity, creating tension between belonging at home and asserting individuality.	27.2%
Core Radius Peripheral Luminance	A person deeply committed to systemic change and societal impact may undervalue fame or recognition, even when visibility could advance their cause.	26.7%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Belonging	A strong commitment to altruism may feel under-supported if belonging is less important, as acts of service often rely on community connection for meaning and sustainability.	25.8%
Core Eudemonia Core Affluence	A strong desire for pleasure and leisure may conflict with the pursuit of wealth and financial security, since earning affluence can require discipline and sacrifice of leisure.	24.2%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Belonging	Placing family at the center while devaluing broader community connection can create strain, as strong family ties may limit participation in friendships or affinity groups.	23.8%

The presence of these patterns does not mean every individual with such pairings will experience conflict. Context matters. Someone who values Eudemonia over Belonging may find solitary leisure activities fully satisfying rather than isolating. Similarly, an individual with both Non Sibi and Voice in their core could integrate service and creativity by channeling artistic expression into community projects. These examples illustrate that conflicts are potential tensions, not inevitable struggles.

Just as some values frequently conflict, others consistently reinforce each other. Across the dataset, 43 distinct harmonies were identified. The 10 most common are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Top 10 Harmonies in the Values Bridge Dataset

Value Pairing	Conflict Description in Brief	% in Core
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Achievement	Low emphasis on recognition and visible success reduces pressure to perform for external validation, supporting a simpler and more intrinsic approach to life.	31.7%
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Workcentrism	When neither fame nor work dominates, individuals may experience less stress from external demands and enjoy greater freedom to define life on their own terms.	27.8%
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Luminance	A modest need for stimulation and recognition fosters steadiness, reducing restlessness and allowing focus on other, more meaningful priorities.	25.1%
Peripheral Achievement Core Eudemonia	Not prioritizing external success leaves room for leisure, self-care, and recreation to take center stage, supporting a fulfilling, balanced life.	24.7%
Peripheral Workcentrism Core Eudemonia	De-emphasizing work while elevating leisure and self-care creates a harmony that protects time and energy for personal renewal.	24.6%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Agency	Altruistic service to others aligns smoothly with a low emphasis on personal control, allowing generosity to flow without strong need for autonomy.	23.5%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Achievement	Placing family first while caring little about visible success reduces conflict between home life and career ambition, reinforcing family commitments.	20.9%
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Belonging	Lower need for stimulation and group connection supports contentment in a quieter, simpler lifestyle with fewer social or activity pressures.	20.8%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Workcentrism	A strong focus on family, paired with a low emphasis on work, harmonizes by minimizing conflict between professional demands and family presence.	20.7%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Agency	Prioritizing family while caring little about personal control reinforces alignment, as flexibility and compromise can strengthen family bonds.	19.9%

As with conflicts, not all harmonies will feel equally relevant. Their impact depends heavily on

life context—age, environment, roles, and priorities shape whether two values feel mutually reinforcing or largely invisible. For instance, individuals low on both Workcentrism and Luminance may feel freed from external demands, but someone already retired might not notice the harmony at all. Similarly, a pairing such as peripheral Affluence and core Eudemonia may not resonate for someone with a high, stable income, since financial security may be taken for granted. For those at lower income levels, however, the same combination could feel more significant, forcing tradeoffs to choose leisure and restoration amid financial pressures.

These findings emphasize the importance of analyzing values not only in isolation but also in relation to one another. Whether through conflicts that require management or harmonies that can be leveraged as strengths, the interplay of values is central to how people make decisions, balance competing demands, and pursue meaningful lives.

3. Conflicts and Harmonies by Generation

While common conflicts and harmonies appear across the full Values Bridge dataset, patterns become more nuanced when examined through demographic lenses. Generational cohorts, in particular, reveal distinctive ways in which values interact. This reflects a larger truth in values research: alignment and conflict are not only personal but also shaped by cultural and historical forces. By situating generational differences within this wider frame, the dataset provides evidence not only of individual priorities but also of how social conditions shape the interplay of values across groups.

Value Conflicts by Generational Cohort

Generational cohorts often prioritize values differently, leading to distinct conflict profiles. Younger adults (Millennials and Gen Z) are more likely to report tension between Affluence and Eudemonia, reflecting the challenge of seeking financial security while also desiring leisure, self-care, and flexibility. These conflicts are amplified by economic pressures such as student debt and housing costs, which make it harder to pursue both wealth and rest simultaneously.

Older generations (Baby Boomers and Gen X), by contrast, more frequently report conflict between Familycentrism and values like Voice or Belonging. For many in midlife, the strain between caregiving responsibilities and the pursuit of personal expression or social connection remains a defining theme.

Despite these generational contrasts, there is notable overlap. The top three conflicts within every cohort fall into just four conflict types, showing that some tensions—such as balancing Familycentrism with Non Sibi, or Eudemonia with Belonging—are broadly shared across age groups. Generational proximity also matters: Millennials and Gen Z display more similar patterns to each other than to Boomers, whose conflicts diverge in line with later life stages and cultural context.

Table 4. Top Three Conflicts by Generation

Value Pairing	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer
Core Familycentrism Core Non Sibi	—	—	3	1
Core Non Sibi Core Voice	2	2	2	2
Core Eudemonia Peripheral Belonging	3	1	1	3
Core Non Sibi Core Eudemonia	1	3	—	—

Note: N = 36,649

Figure 2 compares the top 20 conflicts for Boomers with the percentage of each cohort reporting them, overlaying the corresponding percentages for Gen Z. This visualization highlights both areas of overlap and points of divergence.

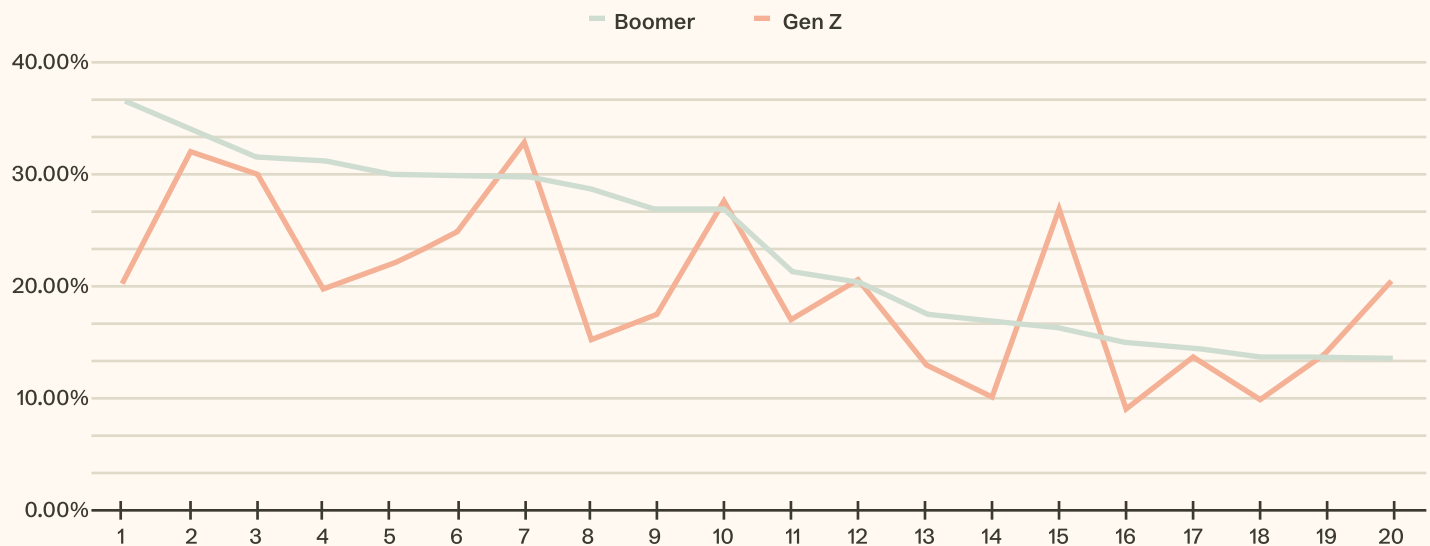


Figure 2. Overlay of Gen Z on Boomer’s Top 20 Value Conflicts

See Appendix A for a list of these 20 conflicts. Table 5 then details the five biggest divergences in value conflicts between Boomers and Gen Z, providing concrete examples of where priorities diverge most sharply.

Table 5. Top 5 Generational Divergences in Value Conflicts

Conflict	Description	Boomer %	Gen Z %	Gap %
Core Familycentrism Core Non Sibi	Boomers more often experience strain between family responsibilities and commitments to altruism, while Gen Z is less likely to hold both strongly at once.	36.61%	20.22%	16.39%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Belonging	Boomers more frequently report prioritizing family while downplaying broader social connection, creating tension between household obligations and wider community ties.	28.63%	15.22%	13.40%
Core Familycentrism Core Voice	For Boomers, family duties more often compete with creative self-expression, whereas Gen Z shows this conflict less often.	31.18%	19.83%	11.36%
Core Eudemonia Core Affluence	Gen Z more frequently faces tension between leisure/self-care and the pursuit of financial security, a conflict less common among Boomers.	16.23%	26.74%	10.51%
Core Beholderism Peripheral Agency	Prioritizing family while caring little about personal control reinforces alignment, as flexibility and compromise can strengthen family bonds.	8.40%	18.84%	10.43%

These divergences show where generations encounter value tensions differently, but they do not capture the full story. Just as conflicts vary by cohort, so too do harmonies, revealing how different generations find balance, ease, and reinforcement among their core priorities.

Value Harmonies by Generational Cohort

Generational cohorts also differ in how values align. The top three harmonies across all groups fall within a small set of pairings, such as the de-emphasis of both Luminance with Achievement or Luminance with Workcentrism. These commonalities suggest that certain forms of harmony, particularly those that reduce external pressure and allow simpler motivations, are broadly shared. At the same time, nuance emerges. For example, Boomers more often report harmony between Non Sibi and Cosmos, reflecting life stages where service is tied to faith or spiritual purpose, while Gen Z shows stronger alignment between Non Sibi and reduced emphasis on Agency, suggesting altruism that flows without a strong need for personal control.

Table 6. Top Three Harmonies by Generation

Harmony	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Achievement	—	—	3	1
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Workcentrism	3	2	2	2
Core Non Sibi Core Cosmos	—	1	1	3
Peripheral Achievement Core Eudemonia	—	3	—	—
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Agency	1	3	—	—
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Luminance	—	3	—	—
Peripheral Agency Peripheral Place	2	3	—	—

Figure 3 compares the top 20 harmonies for Boomers with those reported by Gen Z, again illustrating areas of overlap and divergence.

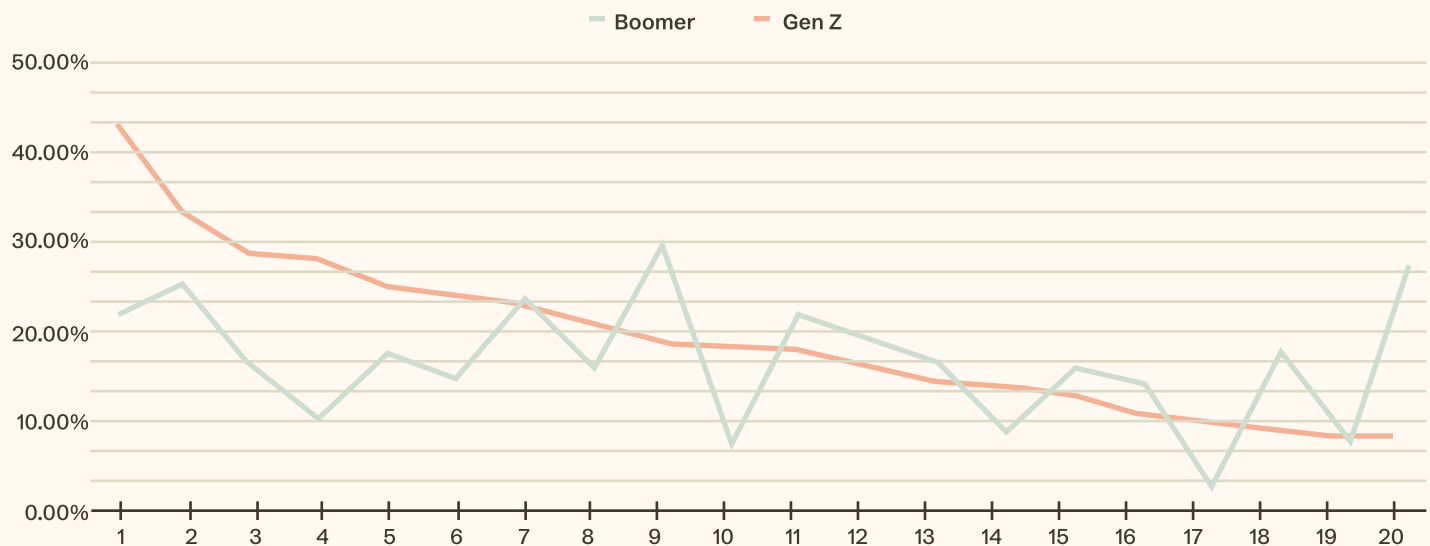


Figure 3. Overlay of Gen Z on Boomer’s Top 20 Value Harmonies

See Appendix B for a list of these 20 harmonies. Table 7 highlights the five largest gaps in value harmonies between Boomers and Gen Z. These include differences such as Boomers more frequently experiencing harmony in downplaying both Achievement and Luminance, while Gen Z more often finds harmony in de-emphasizing both Agency and Place.

Table 7. Top 5 Generational Divergences in Value Harmonies

Conflict	Description	Boomer %	Gen Z %	Gap %
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Achievement	Boomers are far more likely to experience alignment between de-emphasizing recognition and achievement, reflecting a stage of life where priorities often shift from external validation toward more intrinsic or relational sources of meaning. Gen Z, by contrast, still places greater weight on visibility and success, making this harmony less common.	43.27%	22.25%	21.02%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Achievement	Boomers more frequently report harmony between family and reduced pressure for achievement, consistent with prioritizing caregiving and relationships. For Gen Z, family and achievement are less naturally aligned, reflecting stronger career pressures earlier in life.	30.64%	12.88%	17.76%
Core Non Sibi Core Cosmos	Older generations more often connect altruism with cosmic or spiritual purpose, while Gen Z shows weaker alignment here, likely reflecting generational differences in religiosity and metaphysical orientation.	31.32%	17.76%	13.55%
Peripheral Agency Peripheral Place	Gen Z shows this harmony more strongly, suggesting that less emphasis on independence pairs with less emphasis on stability of place, consistent with younger adults' mobility and openness to change. Boomers, by contrast, tend to prioritize rootedness and autonomy more independently.	14.43%	27.29%	12.86%
Peripheral Achievement Peripheral Workcentrism	Boomers more frequently find ease in simultaneously downplaying achievement and work intensity, while Gen Z is less likely to let go of these external drivers, consistent with earlier career stages that emphasize proving oneself.	22.63%	10.81%	11.81%

It is important to note that generational differences could reflect two dynamics. Some may be cohort effects, shaped by the unique cultural and economic conditions of Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z. Others may be life-stage effects, recurring patterns tied to phases of adulthood such as early career building, midlife caregiving, or retirement. Distinguishing

between the two requires longitudinal research that follows individuals across time. For now, the findings suggest that both cultural imprinting and developmental stage shape values conflicts and harmonies.

Yet values are also influenced by material circumstances. To explore this, the next chapter turns to differences by income, where financial security, or its absence, creates a distinct backdrop for how values align or come into tension.

4. Conflicts and Harmonies by Income

Just as generational differences shape how values interact, so too does socioeconomic position. Material circumstances create distinct contexts for which values rise to the surface and how they come into conflict or alignment. By examining patterns across income groups, the Values Bridge dataset highlights the ways financial security—or its absence—frames the lived experience of values.

Value Conflicts by Income Groups

Income level is closely tied to how people experience competing priorities. Among those with lower incomes, conflicts often center on reconciling altruism, spirituality, and personal expression with limited resources. For example, tension between Non Sibi and Voice appears more frequently for respondents earning less than \$50,000, reflecting the difficulty of balancing service to others with creative self-expression when time and money are scarce.

At higher income levels, conflicts shift. Respondents earning \$150,000 or more more often report tensions between Familycentrism and Eudemonia, or between Familycentrism and Affluence. These reflect the challenge of balancing demanding careers, wealth accumulation, and family presence with personal restoration and leisure. In other words, where scarcity constrains expression in lower-income groups, abundance can create its own strains through competing commitments at the top.

Table 8. Top Three Conflicts by Income Group

Conflict	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$99,000	\$100,000 - \$149,000	\$150,000 or more
Core Familycentrism Core Non Sibi	—	—	—	3
Core Non Sibi Core Voice	1	1	2	—
Core Eudemonia Peripheral Belonging	2	3	1	2
Core Familycentrism Core Eudemonia	—	—	—	1
Core Non Sibi Core Eudemonia	3	2	3	—

Figure 4 compares the top 20 conflicts for respondents earning \$150,000 or more with the percentages reported by those earning less than \$50,000. The chart highlights both areas of overlap and points of divergence between income groups.

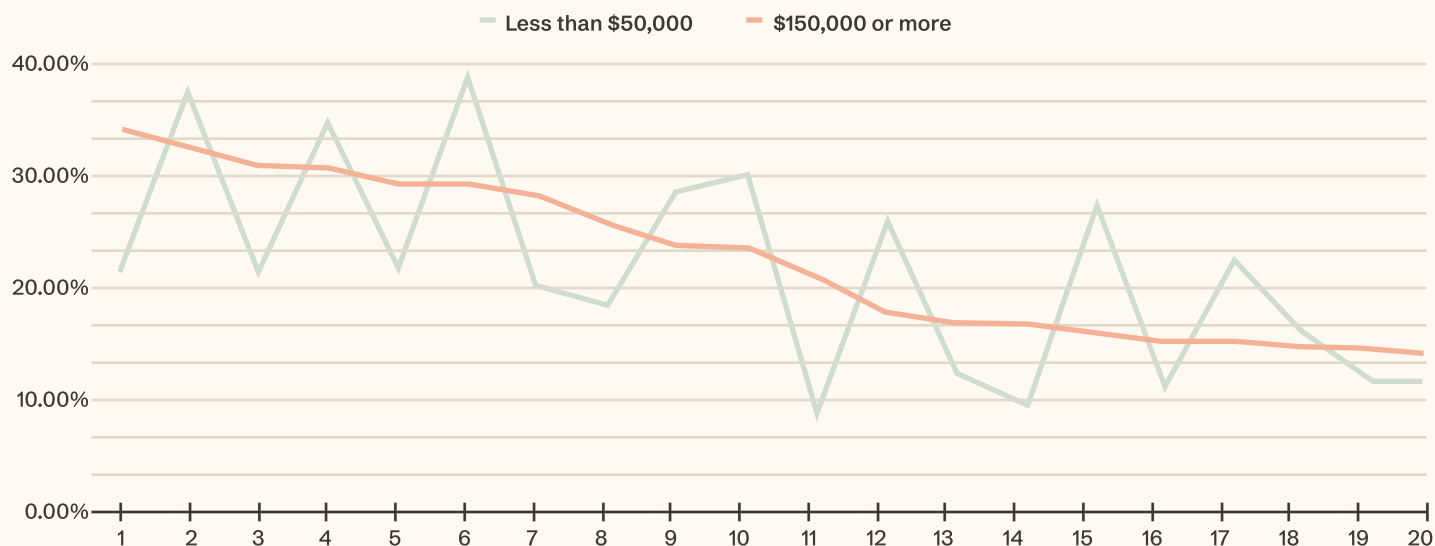


Figure 4. Overlay of Less than \$50k Income Group on \$150k+ Group's Top 20 Value Conflicts

See Appendix C for a list of these 20 conflicts. To complement the broad view of Figure 4, Table 9 highlights the five largest divergences in conflict between higher- and lower-income groups.

Table 9. Top 5 Income Divergences in Value Conflicts

Conflict	Description	\$50k or less	\$150k or more	Gap %
Core Familycentrism Core Eudemonia	Higher-income groups more often report conflict between family responsibilities and leisure/self-care, reflecting the challenge of balancing demanding careers and family life with personal restoration. Lower-income groups may face fewer opportunities for leisure to begin with, reducing the tension.	21.04%	33.94%	12.90%
Core Familycentrism Core Affluence	Those with higher incomes are more likely to feel the pull between prioritizing family and pursuing wealth accumulation, as financial success often competes with time spent at home. For lower-income groups, affluence may be more aspirational than immediate, making the tension less frequently reported.	9.12%	20.97%	11.85%

(Table continues on following page)

Table 9. Top 5 Income Divergences in Value Conflicts

Conflict	Description	\$50k or less	\$150k or more	Gap %
Core Cosmos Peripheral Belonging	Lower-income groups more frequently show tension between faith or spirituality (Cosmos) and broader social connection (Belonging), possibly reflecting the role of religious communities as primary social anchors. Higher-income groups may diversify belonging beyond faith, reducing this tension.	27.01%	16.04%	10.97%
Core Familycentrism Core Non Sibi	Higher-income respondents more often report conflict between family responsibilities and altruism, as resources and networks may pull them toward service or philanthropy even while family demands remain strong.	21.39%	30.75%	9.36%
Core Non Sibi Core Voice	Lower-income groups more frequently struggle between altruism and creative self-expression, where pursuing service can limit energy and resources available for personal expression. Higher-income groups may have more means to integrate these priorities, lessening the conflict.	38.32%	29.07%	9.25%

These divergences show that income shapes not only which values people hold strongly but also how those values collide. Higher-income groups are more likely to report conflicts at the intersection of career success, family obligations, and philanthropic or personal growth pursuits. Lower-income groups, by contrast, tend to experience conflicts rooted in reconciling altruism, faith, and expression with fewer resources to distribute among them.

Value Harmonies by Income Groups

Just as conflicts vary by income, so too do harmonies. Across all groups, some forms of alignment are widely shared, such as de-emphasizing both Luminance and Achievement, which reduces pressure for external validation. Yet certain harmonies diverge sharply across income groups.

For instance, lower-income respondents more often report harmony between higher emphasis on Eudemonia and lower emphasis on Affluence, suggesting that leisure and self-care can coexist with a reduced focus on wealth. For higher-income groups, by contrast, harmonies often reflect the ability to prioritize family while scaling back on work or personal control,

patterns that signal greater flexibility afforded by financial security.

Table 10. Top Three Harmonies by Income Group

Conflict	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$99,000	\$100,000 - \$149,000	\$150,000 or more
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Achievement	1	1	1	1
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Workcentrism	3	2	2	2
Peripheral Achievement Core Eudemonia	2	3	3	—
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Luminance	—	—	—	3

Figure 5 illustrates the top 20 harmonies for respondents earning \$150,000 or more, with the corresponding percentages from those earning less than \$50,000 overlaid for comparison.

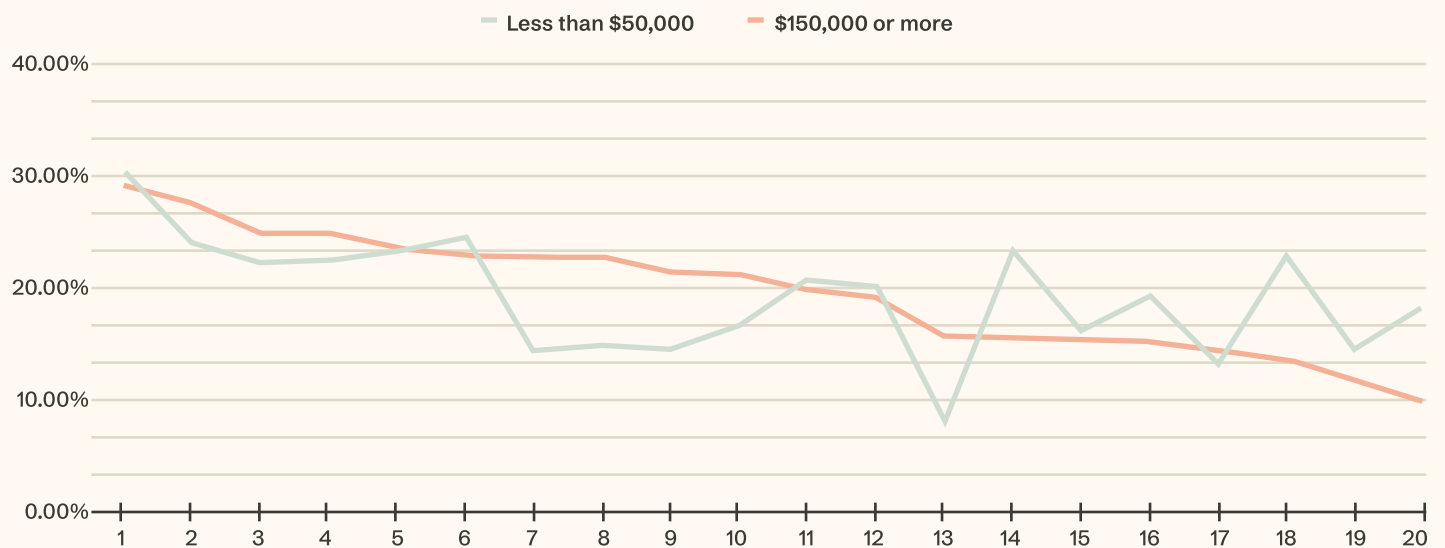


Figure 5. Overlay of Less than \$50k Income Group on \$150k+ Group’s Top 20 Value Harmonies

See Appendix D for a list of these 20 harmonies. Table 11 then highlights the five most pronounced divergences in harmonies across income groups.

Table 11. Top 5 Income Divergences in Value Harmonies

Harmony	Description	\$50k or less	\$150k or more	Gap %
Peripheral Familycentrism Core Eudemonia	Some lower-income groups may emphasize leisure and self-care while placing less weight on family obligations, whereas more higher-income groups may more frequently prioritize family presence even alongside recreation.	19.60%	10.10%	9.50%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Affluence	For lower-income respondents, pairing altruism with a reduced focus on wealth can feel like a meaningful harmony, while higher-income respondents are more likely to integrate service with financial goals. These differences highlight how economic context shapes the relationship between generosity and resources.	22.82%	13.66%	9.16%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Agency	Higher-income groups more often show harmony between prioritizing family and placing less emphasis on personal control, suggesting greater flexibility to accommodate family needs.	14.50%	22.89%	8.39%
Core Eudemonia Peripheral Affluence	Leisure and self-care combined with low emphasis on wealth is more common among lower-income respondents, reflecting trade-offs between relaxation and financial ambition, while higher-income groups less frequently report this harmony.	18.39%	10.01%	8.38%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Workcentrism	Higher-income respondents are more likely to harmonize strong family commitments with a reduced emphasis on work, reflecting resources that allow family to take precedence without major financial sacrifice.	15.03%	22.77%	7.74%

Interpreting the Patterns

Taken together, these findings show that values are lived out against the backdrop of material conditions. For higher-income groups, harmonies often involve the flexibility to prioritize family or personal restoration without sacrificing security. For lower-income groups, harmonies more often emerge from aligning altruism or leisure with reduced emphasis on wealth, reflecting trade-offs in the face of constraint.

In both cases, the analysis highlights the same principle: values do not operate in isolation.

They are continually negotiated within the realities of income, opportunity, and resources. For practitioners—whether in coaching, education, or organizational leadership—recognizing these contextual dynamics is essential. Understanding how financial position shapes conflicts and harmonies equips professionals to better support individuals in navigating trade-offs, leveraging alignments, and ultimately living in ways that reflect their most important commitments.

5. Implications and Future Applications

Coaching

For coaches, values conflicts and harmonies provide a powerful lens for deepening one-on-one work. Naming conflicts such as Achievement versus Familycentrism can surface hidden sources of stress, while identifying harmonies like Non Sibi and Belonging highlights strengths that give stability and direction. A client torn between career advancement and being present with young children, for example, may find relief in understanding this as a values conflict rather than a personal failing. Coaches can then guide them in reframing priorities, setting boundaries, and designing strategies that respect both commitments. Over time, shifts in conflicts and harmonies can also be tracked, offering a developmental arc that documents growth and adaptation.

Education

In education, conflict and harmony analyses help students build self-awareness as they navigate identity, career, and community roles. Reports can illuminate why some choices feel unusually fraught and where synergies provide energy and focus. For instance, a student struggling with conflict between Affluence and Eudemonia may recognize that pressure to maximize earnings is colliding with a need for balance and rest. Classroom discussion of such patterns normalizes the experience, fosters empathy among peers, and equips students with resilience as they make long-term career and life decisions. Conversely, recognizing a harmony between Scope (curiosity and stimulation) and Achievement can reassure students that their drive for exploration and learning will also support success in school and beyond.

Organizations

For organizations, values analysis can diagnose both cultural friction and shared strengths. At the team level, shared conflicts may signal competing priorities—such as growth versus stability—that require explicit recognition. At the organizational level, shared harmonies can become cultural anchors that reinforce mission and cohesion. For example, a nonprofit where staff share harmony between Radius (systemic change) and Non Sibi (local altruism) can draw on that synergy when designing programs that combine community service with broader advocacy. By contrast, a company uncovering widespread conflict between Workcentrism and Familycentrism may choose to revisit workload expectations, flexibility, or leave policies. Leaders who use this perspective can better anticipate challenges, align structures with values, and foster workplaces where employees experience less hidden tension and greater authentic engagement.

Continued Research & Conclusion

As the dataset grows, new opportunities emerge. Predictive analytics could identify which conflicts are most likely to arise at particular life stages or in certain industries, allowing for proactive guidance. Cross-cultural comparisons may reveal how patterns of conflict and harmony vary globally, sharpening our understanding of both universal motivations and culturally specific dynamics. Future iterations will also incorporate Belovedness, the most recent addition to the Values Bridge framework, expanding analysis to include romantic partnership as a distinct motivator. Collaboration with coaches, educators, and organizations will ensure the framework continues to evolve in ways that are both rigorous and practical.

The Values Bridge moves beyond identifying individual values. It maps their inner dynamics, the tensions that demand careful management and the alignments that can be intentionally leveraged. In doing so, it transforms abstract motivations into actionable insights, equipping people to live, work, and lead with greater clarity and authenticity.

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Appendices. Conflicts and Harmonies by Generation and Income

Appendix A. Top 20 Conflicts of Boomers Contrasted with Gen Z

Conflict	Boomer	Gen Z
Core Familycentrism Core Non Sibi	36.61%	20.22%
Core Non Sibi Core Voice	34.16%	32.08%
Core Eudemonia Peripheral Belonging	31.45%	30.11%
Core Familycentrism Core Voice	31.18%	19.83%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Belonging	30.06%	21.96%
Core Familycentrism Core Eudemonia	29.88%	24.83%
Core Non Sibi Core Eudemonia	29.70%	32.76%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Belonging	28.63%	15.22%
Core Cosmos Peripheral Belonging	26.85%	17.54%
Core Radius Peripheral Luminance	26.72%	27.56%
Core Eudemonia Core Cosmos	21.29%	16.99%
Core Radius Peripheral Belonging	20.30%	20.55%
Core Scope Core Non Sibi	17.48%	13.01%
Core Familycentrism Core Radius	16.86%	10.15%
Core Eudemonia Core Affluence	16.23%	26.74%
Core Radius Peripheral Achievement	14.93%	8.91%
Core Familycentrism Core Affluence	14.46%	13.76%
Core Scope Peripheral Belonging	13.67%	9.88%
Core Familycentrism Core Beholderism	13.57%	14.07%
Core Radius Core Eudemonia	13.44%	20.59%

Appendices. Conflicts and Harmonies by Generation and Income

Appendix B. Top 20 Harmonies of Boomers Contrasted with Gen Z

Harmony	Boomer	Gen Z
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Achievement	43.27%	22.25%
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Workcentrism	34.94%	25.34%
Core Non Sibi Core Cosmos	31.32%	17.76%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Achievement	30.64%	12.88%
Peripheral Achievement Core Eudemonia	28.18%	19.03%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Workcentrism	27.53%	16.60%
Peripheral Workcentrism Core Eudemonia	26.51%	24.04%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Affluence	24.71%	17.61%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Agency	23.10%	28.56%
Peripheral Achievement Peripheral Workcentrism	22.63%	10.81%
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Luminance	22.52%	22.61%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Agency	21.06%	19.87%
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Radius	19.52%	18.11%
Core Agency Peripheral Belonging	19.15%	11.68%
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Belonging	18.35%	17.55%
Peripheral Agency Core Cosmos	16.26%	16.33%
Peripheral Achievement Peripheral Affluence	15.79%	6.55%
Core Scope Peripheral Place	15.24%	18.88%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Radius	14.43%	10.98%
Peripheral Agency Peripheral Place	14.43%	27.29%

Appendices. Conflicts and Harmonies by Generation and Income

Appendix C. Top 20 Conflicts of Upper Income Contrasted with Lower Income

Conflict	\$150,000 or more	Less than \$50,000
Core Familycentrism Core Eudemonia	33.94%	21.04%
Core Eudemonia Peripheral Belonging	32.37%	37.10%
Core Familycentrism Core Non Sibi	30.75%	21.39%
Core Non Sibi Core Eudemonia	30.60%	34.51%
Core Familycentrism Core Voice	29.08%	21.76%
Core Non Sibi Core Voice	29.07%	38.32%
Core Eudemonia Core Affluence	28.14%	19.88%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Belonging	25.60%	18.48%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Belonging	23.68%	28.57%
Core Radius Peripheral Luminance	23.50%	30.01%
Core Familycentrism Core Affluence	20.97%	9.12%
Core Radius Peripheral Belonging	17.78%	25.61%
Core Affluence Peripheral Scope	16.90%	12.42%
Core Familycentrism Core Beholderism	16.83%	9.51%
Core Cosmos Peripheral Belonging	16.04%	27.01%
Core Non Sibi Core Affluence	15.22%	11.42%
Core Radius Core Eudemonia	15.19%	22.38%
Core Radius Peripheral Agency	15.70%	16.01%
Core Familycentrism Core Radius	14.51%	11.75%
Core Beholderism Peripheral Agency	14.09%	11.48%

Appendices. Conflicts and Harmonies by Generation and Income

Appendix D. Top 20 Harmonies of Upper Income Contrasted with Lower Income

Harmony	\$150,000 or more	Less than \$50,000
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Achievement	29.31%	30.54%
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Workcentrism	27.71%	24.20%
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Luminance	25.04%	22.39%
Peripheral Workcentrism Core Eudemonia	24.93%	22.61%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Agency	23.69%	23.39%
Peripheral Achievement Core Eudemonia	23.04%	24.63%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Agency	22.89%	14.50%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Workcentrism	22.77%	15.03%
Peripheral Luminance Peripheral Radius	21.62%	14.60%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Achievement	21.30%	16.77%
Peripheral Scope Peripheral Belonging	20.02%	20.82%
Peripheral Agency Peripheral Place	19.24%	20.33%
Core Familycentrism Peripheral Radius	15.82%	8.37%
Core Non Sibi Core Cosmos	15.74%	23.46%
Core Scope Peripheral Place	15.63%	16.35%
Core Agency Peripheral Belonging	15.33%	19.33%
Peripheral Achievement Peripheral Workcentrism	14.59%	13.45%
Core Non Sibi Peripheral Affluence	13.66%	22.82%
Peripheral Agency Core Cosmos	11.77%	14.71%
Core Eudemonia Peripheral Affluence	10.01%	18.39%