

Existential concerns at work

Evaluation of an organizational model

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Abstract

Is there a relationship between existential concerns and growth at work?

The present study aims at studying and evaluating an organizational model called the ‘4-V model’. The Dutch network company Reset Capacity Building developed for diagnostic use a model of basic needs called the 4-V model. The name is based on the four pillars of the model in Dutch: Safety (Veiligheid), Connection (Verbinding), Freedom (Vrijheid) and Achievement (Verwezenlijking) that according to Zerbo (2010) are essential to hold the roof ‘Growth’ (Groei) on a personal and organizational level. Employees need to feel safe at work, in control, interconnected to their company and to their colleagues and have the impression to achieve something doing their job to be able to grow personally and professionally. According to Zerbo (2010) the satisfaction of these basic needs rely on how employees deal with four groups of existential concerns: death, disease and loss; abandonment and rejection; loss of autonomy or freedom; existential void.

More insight into the mechanisms behind the satisfaction of basic needs is both positive for the employee himself and for the organization where the individual is working. The present study attempted to answer the question of whether there are indeed four (groups of) existential concerns that are equally important and looked at how existential concerns relate to the satisfaction of basic needs along with the level of growth. Employees from different Dutch organizations filled out two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was distributed in March 2011 and returned by 170 participants (Study 1). To avoid carry over effects, the second questionnaire was circulated among a new sample in May 2011 and filled in by 82 different participants (Study 2). In the first study, through principal component analysis we initially tried to answer the question of whether there were indeed four (groups of) existential concerns. The results revealed that contrary to Zerbo’s (2010) predictions there were five existential concerns (Death, Loss of Autonomy, Isolation,

Identity and Meaninglessness). Then, we studied the relationship between existential concerns and the satisfaction of needs. The results showed that all existential concerns are negatively associated with the satisfaction of basic needs except the concern for Isolation which has a positive impact on the satisfaction of basic needs. Moreover, it appears that the concern for Loss of Autonomy is the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of almost each basic need. Concerning the relationship between existential concerns and the level of growth, it was found that there was no significant direct effect. However, it was confirmed that the satisfaction of basic needs plays a mediating role between existential concerns and the level of growth. In the second study, we tried to answer the question of whether there is a hierarchy between the five existential concerns. The results revealed that there is a hierarchy of concerns. In the first position comes the concern for Death, then the concern for Loss of Autonomy, next the concern for Isolation, after that the concern for Identity and at last the concern for Meaninglessness.

Our results indicate that allowing employees to work in an autonomous way will create an environment where basic needs will be highly satisfied. These findings are interesting for the development of human resources strategies.

Introduction

During the last decades, developments on the political, social, economical and technological level have impacted the context in which the organization functions. Likewise, these changes transformed how people work, the skills they need, the knowledge they can and should contribute to the organization, and the kinds of careers they can expect. These transformations deeply affected how organizations are perceived. It is now suggested that organizations have not only observable structures and functions, but also an unconscious life comparable to that described by psychoanalysis in an individual. Consequently, this modern organization challenges many of the theories that are used in organizational consultancy today and asks for a new model of consultation that can combine the social and the psychoanalytical perspectives (Obholzer & Roberts, 1994).

The 4V model developed by Zerbo (2010) attempts to fill in this gap. Indeed, Zerbo views the organization as a social system to be studied using the established methodologies of the social sciences, but with an unconscious layer to be studied using knowledge stemming from the psychotherapeutical field. This approach is distinctive within the field of organizational consultancy, a field that traditionally would dismiss such an attempt based on the assumption that the study of non-rational processes is irrelevant within an organizational setting (Huffington, Armstrong, Halton, Hoyle, & Pooley, 2005). The working hypothesis beneath the model is that bringing this undertow of behaviour and experiences into view can shed new lights on the challenges and dilemmas that an organization and its employees are facing.

The 4V model suggests that there are four basic needs: the need for Safety, the need for Connection, the need for Freedom and the need for Achievement (Houwaart, 2011). Needs that are defined as stemming from existential concerns and are nutriments necessary for one's growth. The model is based on a pillar principle, meaning that there should be a balance between at least three pillars in an organism (person or organization) to be able to uphold the roof, namely growth, from

collapsing (Figure 1). The model is named after the label of the four needs in Dutch as they all start with the letter V: Veiligheid (Safety), Verbinding (Connection), Vrijheid (Freedom), Verwezenlijking (Achievement). More specifically, Safety is defined as the satisfaction of physiological needs (food, water) but also a place to live, hygiene and a minimum income. It also covers psychological needs as regularity and structure. This can be translated within a company to the clarity and predictability of the instruments used by a company to implement strategies and policies. Connection is the need to feel connected to others. This can be translated within a company to the corporate identity and commitment and inspiration of employees. Freedom is the need to function autonomously. This can be translated within a company to the degree of autonomy employees have in doing their job. And Achievement which is the desire to believe life is meaningful and that our journey on earth would not pass unnoticed. This can be translated within a company to the possibility to grow at your own pace.

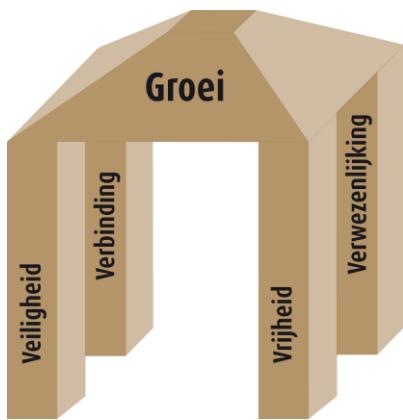


Figure 1: The pillar principle of the 4-V model

Apart from seeing an organization as a living organism that struggles with the same issues as an individual, what is also distinctive about the model developed by Zerbo (2010) is that this approach focuses on the mechanism underlying the needs. Zerbo (2010) suggests that these basic needs are not innate as mainly believed among social psychologists (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004) but stem from existential concerns, fears, anxieties, drives or angsts. This

idea is quite revolutionary in the organizational consultancy practice and is an extension of the existential psychotherapeutical view of the human being. Hereunder, in Figure 2, a visual description of the relationship between concerns and needs as depicted by Zerbo (2010):

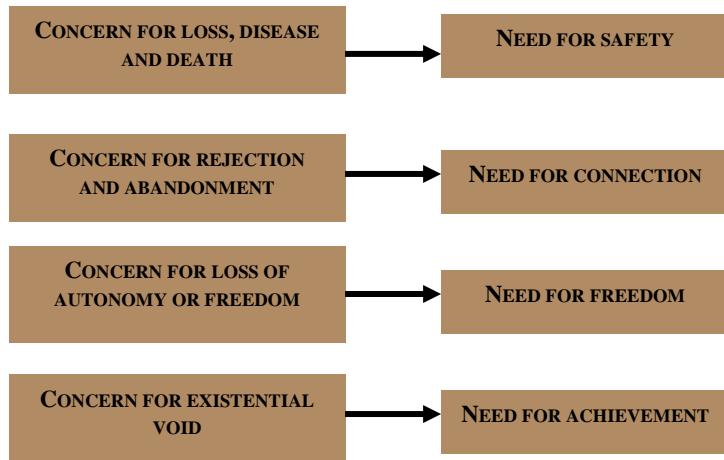


Figure 2: Relationship between concerns and needs

There are two principal frameworks of applied thinking and research on which this approach draws. First, there is existential psychotherapy practice and the extension of it to study the connection between concerns and basic needs. This view is principally based on the work of Yalom (1980). Then, there are the social sciences which include the motivational theories as described by Maslow (1943), McGregor (1960) and Herzberg (1959).

Existential psychology framework

Zerbo's work (2010) has been greatly influenced by the thinking of Irvin Yalom, an existential psychotherapist and thinker. Before starting to analyze his work, it seems important to define the term existentialism.

Existentialism is not easily defined, according to the online Stanford encyclopaedia existentialism is a term that 'belongs to intellectual history' (Crowell, 2010). Its definition is thus to some extent one of 'historical convenience' (Crowell, 2010). The term was explicitly adopted as a self-description by Jean-Paul Sartre in the 1940's, and identified with a cultural movement that flourished in Europe in the 1940's, 1950's and the 1960's that stated that the world has no meaning

and each person is alone and completely responsible for their own actions, by which they make their own character. Sartre's existentialism drew its immediate inspiration from the work of the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger. Heidegger's (1927) inquiry into the 'being that we ourselves are' (which he termed 'Dasein', a German word for existence), introduced most of the motives that would characterize later existentialist thinking: 'the tension between the individual and the "public"; an emphasis on the worldly or "situated" character of human thought and reason; a fascination with liminal experiences of anxiety, death, the "nothing" and nihilism; the rejection of science (and above all, causal explanation) as an adequate framework for understanding human being; and the introduction of "authenticity" as the norm of self-identity, tied to the project of self-definition through freedom, choice, and commitment' (Heidegger, 1927). Despite large differences in existential philosophers' positions, they are all centred on particular givens of existence:

- That humans exist without any apparent cause or reason
- That humans have freedom and with that freedom comes responsibility
- That humans are isolated
- That death is inevitable

Yalom (1980) succeeded in providing an organizational structure that helps to understand the existential theory. He focused on four main givens that he called 'concerns': death, freedom, isolation, and meaninglessness; however, there are other conceptualizations of the givens (see Table 1). Consequently, existential psychology seeks to understand how people somehow come to terms with these basic facts of life and how these issues affect diverse aspects of their behaviour and experience (Yalom, 1980).

Table 1: An overview of existential concerns

<i>Yalom (1980)</i>	<i>May (1977)</i>	<i>Frankl (1946)</i>	<i>Koole, Greenberg, & Pyszcynski (2006)</i>	<i>Wong (2009)</i>
Death	Death		Death	Death
Isolation	Existential isolation		Isolation	Isolation
Freedom	Freedom		Freedom	Freedom
Meaninglessness	Thrownness	Existential vacuum	Meaning	Meaninglessness
			Identity	Identity
				Discontent

Yalom (1980) as a psychotherapist was primarily focused on psychopathology and the role of the four ultimate concerns in its development. He views existential psychotherapy as a form of ‘dynamic’ psychotherapy. Dynamic in this sense joins Freud’s model of mental functioning based on the assumption that there are forces (conscious and unconscious) in conflict within the individual, and that thought, emotion, and behaviour, both adaptive and psychopathological, are the resultant of these conflicting forces (Mitchel & Black, 1995). Consequently, existential psychotherapy refers to the four ultimate concerns and the conscious and unconscious fears and motives spawned by each. Yalom (1980) assumes that ‘anxiety is the fuel of psychopathology; that psychic operations, some conscious and some unconscious, evolve to deal with anxiety; that these psychic operations (defence mechanisms) constitute psychopathology; and that, though they provide safety, they invariably restrict growth and experience’ (Figure 3).

**Figure 3 : Existential psychodynamics**

Considering the above it appears that the major difference between Yalom (1980) and Zerbo (2010) is the role of anxiety. Indeed in Yalom’s perspective it seems that anxiety is a kind of

mediator between concern and defence mechanism whereas Zerbo makes no distinction between concern and anxiety.

As described in the overview table (Table 1), there are other thinkers that used the existential perspective in their work. Among them, Victor Frankl and Rollo May influenced Yalom but were not treated in Zerbo's article (2010). They were both considered as pioneers of existential psychotherapy, Victor Frankl in Europe and Rollo May in the USA.

Victor Frankl was first a psychoanalyst but after his camp experience during the Second World War he developed a new therapy 'The Logotherapy' which means therapy through meaning ('logos' is meaning in Greek). The Logotherapy and Zerbo's theory convey on their unique view on human life as they both focus on the healthy core of human beings instead of analysing their pathologies. The Logotherapy assumes that life has meaning under all circumstances, that people have a will to meaning and that they always have the freedom to activate the will to meaning and to find meaning (1946). A major difference between the Logotherapy and Zerbo's approach is that the Logotherapy focuses on one existential concern meaninglessness or 'existential vacuum' as labelled by Frankl (1946).

Rollo May was influenced by Otto Rank, a former collaborator of Sigmund Freud and a precursor of the existential psychotherapeutic movement. Rank developed a new therapy called the will therapy that emphasizes the importance of the will and of death anxiety. He used people's creativity to help them reach psychological growth. The underlying idea is that every person is responsible for their acts in the here-and-now. Rollo May in continuation of his existential influences was focusing on the human's struggles and paradox focusing mainly on one "that negation becomes affirmation" (1981). This joins Zerbo's statement that humans' growth is linked to anxieties or concerns, as from them emerge our needs and from the satisfaction of our needs can we psychologically grow.

The study of existential concerns was the domain of the therapeutic psychotherapy till the mid-1980's. There was a separation between the mainstream academic psychology and the existential therapy during most of the 20th century as they had different positions on experimental methodology. The existential psychologists refused to use empirical research methods as they considered them inappropriate to analyze people's subjective experience. On the other hand academicians focused their attention on overt behaviour that can be studied by scientific experimental methods. But, since the appearance of Yalom's book on existential psychotherapy in 1980, there seems to be an interest in the study of existential concerns among experimental psychologists. The most important work focusing on existential concerns by mainstream academicians is the Terror Management Theory developed by Greenberg, Solomon and Pyszczynski in 1986. TMT describes the role of death anxiety on behaviour and cognition (Solomon, Greenberg and Pyszczynski, 1991). According to TMT, people's awareness of their own mortality creates the potential for overwhelming Terror. To cope with this anxiety, people developed defensive mechanisms that give them an illusion of immortality. The two main mechanisms are cultural worldviews, which is a set of values and standards that allow people to view their world as meaningful and stable, and self esteem which is the belief of enduring value (Harmon-Jones, Simon, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski & McGregor, 1997). TMT posits that confrontation with death anxiety increases the stability of people's worldview and their needs for self-esteem. TMT used 'priming', an experimental procedure, to test the effect of death anxiety on people's behaviour. Consequently, they were able to empirically prove that reminding people of their own death increased self-esteem strivings and efforts to support one's cultural worldview. TMT was therefore the first theory that incorporated existential and experimental psychology.

TMT created a bridge between existential psychology and experimental psychology. This enabled a new direction in psychological science to emerge: the experimental existential psychology (XXP; Greenberg, Koole, & Pyszczynski, 2004). The XXP studies how people deal

with existential concerns using empirical research methods. Koole, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski (2006) make a distinction between five ultimate concerns that they call the ‘big five existential concerns’: *death* defined as ‘the psychological conflict between the awareness of the inevitability of death versus the desire for continued existence’, *isolation* which is described as the conflict between ‘people’s need to feel connected to others versus experiences of rejection and the realization that one’s experience of reality can never be fully shared’, *identity* which is the conflict between ‘people’s desire for a clear sense of who one is and how one fits into the world and the uncertainties because of conflicts between self aspects, unclear boundaries between self and non-self, or limited self insight’, *freedom* identified as the conflict ‘between the experience of free will and the external forces on behaviour and the burden of responsibility for their choices’ and *meaning* which is delineated as the conflict ‘between people’s desire to believe that life is meaningful and the events and experiences that appear random or inconsistent with one’s bases of meaning’. Thus, this classification bears a lot of similarities with the 4V model, the main difference being that XXP added one concern, identity.

Raising from the XXP a new sub-division of the psychology science reconnected with the existential outlook. The existential positive psychology (EPP), as explained by Wong (2009), stresses that ‘positives cannot exist apart from negatives and that authentic happiness grows from pain and suffering’. Even though it seems that EPP and Zerbo’s approach have the same existential roots, there is a major distinction in their findings. This distinction lies in the number of existential concerns, where Zerbo (2010) states that humans face four existential fears or concerns Wong (2009) claims that there are six recurrent themes of human existences: death, isolation, freedom, meaninglessness, identity and discontent. He added two more existential questions related to identity and discontent. According to Wong *identity* crisis leads to the quest for authenticity, the crisis of *discontent* to the quest for happiness, the *meaninglessness* anxiety to the quest for meaning

and purpose, the *isolation* anxiety to the quest for community, the *freedom* anxiety to the quest for responsibility and the *death* anxiety to the quest for death acceptance and self-transcendence.

Motivational framework

The model created by Zerbo (2010) was developed to help the modern organization reach the optimum development through enabling the employees get to a state that gives them the potential to psychologically grow. The idea underlying the theory is that a company can not reach its optimal potential if the employees are not given the possibility to personally and professionally grow. Consequently, understanding what motivates the employees can aid the organization create the most favourable growing climate. Zerbo (2010) posits that the finest growing environment is the one that permits the employees satisfy their basic needs for: Safety, Connection, Freedom and Achievement. As stated earlier, the 4V model is mainly built upon the theories of Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor and Frederick Herzberg.

Abraham Maslow developed a hierarchical theory of needs (1943). This theory is generally called the pyramid of Maslow as it is mostly pictured in the shape of a pyramid with the lowest needs at the bottom and highest needs at the top (Figure 4). Maslow claimed that there are five levels of needs. The basic needs are physiological (food, water, sleep, etc.), when those needs are satisfied the needs for safety are activated, which are defined as the requirements for protection against danger or deprivation. In turn, when the physiological and safety needs are satisfied, the need for love and belonging can emerge, which are people's desire to be part of a group and feel affection. When these three needs have been satisfied, the needs for esteem can become dominant, which are the desire for self-respect affected and need for recognition and appreciation. Finally, when all of the foregoing needs are satisfied, then and only then are the needs for self-actualization activated, which is a push for self-development, creativity and job satisfaction. Zerbo (2010) states that at least three needs have to be satisfied to allow a person or an organization to reach growth,

this seems to be in accordance with Maslow's statement that physiological, safety, belonging and esteem needs have to be satisfied before some one can reach self-actualization or growth. The main distinction between the two theories is that Maslow sees a hierarchy in the needs whereas Zerbo states that the four needs (Safety, Connection, Freedom and Achievement) are equally important.



Figure 4: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

McGregor (1960) observed how people behave at work and rising from this observation he formulated two models which he called Theory X and Theory Y .Theory X and Theory Y describe two divergent outlooks of people at work that will influence management style. Theory X assumes that people intrinsically dislike work, resist change, are not intelligent and have no ambition at all. Basically, theory X claims that the only reason why people work is to earn money. While theory Y takes the opposite view, it states that people in the right circumstances will be creative, committed to the organization's goals, not only accept responsibilities but seek more. McGregor's theory was based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. He assembled Maslow's physiological and safety needs into Theory X (lower order needs) and belonging, esteem and self-actualization into Theory Y (higher

order needs). Translated to the 4V model, we can compare the Theory X to the Safety need and Theory Y to the needs for Connection, Freedom and Achievement.

In the motivation-hygiene theory, Herzberg (1959) established which factors in an employee's setting were source of satisfaction and which were source of dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg, there are factors causing job satisfaction (satisfiers or motivators) and factors causing job dissatisfaction (dissatisfiers or hygiene factors). The hygiene factors in a work setting can be defined as the salary, job security, working conditions and company policies. The motivational factors can be described as personal growth, achievement and job interest. This view bares a lot of similarities with the Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Indeed, the presence of motivators or satisfiers motivates employees by fulfilling higher needs (Maslow's social, esteem and self-esteem needs) causing job satisfaction whereas the absence of hygiene factors or dissatisfiers to fulfil lower needs (Maslow's physiological and safety needs) causes job dissatisfaction. Hence, Herzberg claims that those two are not the opposite of each other. He suggests that the opposite of satisfaction is 'no satisfaction' and the opposite of dissatisfaction is 'no dissatisfaction' as the absence of satisfiers will not cause job dissatisfaction and the presence of dissatisfiers will not cause job satisfaction. This theory is thus also based on a kind of hierarchy as the motivators or satisfiers factors could be seen as higher needs and the dissatisfiers or hygiene factors can be seen as lower needs.

Zerbo's main criticism to above stated theories is their hierarchical view of human needs. Zerbo intended to remedy to this flow in her model (2010). But, she was not the only one to find the idea of ranking needs outdated. Indeed, Alderfer (1969) developed his ERG theory to present an alternative to the hierarchical conceptualization of needs. According to Alderfer, there are three categories of needs that impact employee's behaviour: Existence, Relatedness and Growth (E.R.G). Existence refers to people's worry about physiological and material needs (Maslow's physiological and safety needs). Relatedness stands for the need to interact with other people

(Maslow's self-esteem and belonging needs). Growth is defined as the innate longing for personal development (Maslow's self-esteem and self-actualization needs). At odds with Maslow's proposal that access to the higher needs requested fulfilment of the lower needs, Alderfer posited that the three ERG needs were not hierarchical. Consequently the ERG theory adheres to the same outlook as the 4V model that an employee's actions are driven concurrently by more than one need. For example, satisfying your growth needs by completing a project on time even though your relatedness needs aren't especially satisfied.

Another theory that maintains that needs are linked to optimal development is the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The SDT suggests that there are three basic psychological needs: the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Needs that are defined as innate psychological nutriments necessary for one's optimal growth, well being and health are naturally inherited (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004) and share common meaning across cultures, people and time (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim & Kaplan, 2003). More specifically, autonomy is defined as the experience of self integration and independence in a sense of willingness and choice when acting (Chirkov et al., 2003). Competence is one's need to have an effect and a valued outcome on the environment. And relatedness is the need to interact and be mutually connected with love to others. Considering the above, it is evident that the innate psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness and competence are unlikely to lead individuals in optimal development and well being unless they are satisfied (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). The needs satisfaction as central psychological procedure leading to well being, is similar to what Zerbo states in her model (2010). Indeed, Zerbo also identifies four needs that should be satisfied to a certain degree (80%) in order to reach growth. The main divergence between the two approaches lies in the nature of the needs as SDT focuses on psychological needs whereas the 4V model also includes physiological needs (i.e. Safety need). Another distinction

involves the definition of needs, in fact SDT views needs as innate while the 4V model sees the needs as emerging from existential concerns.

Guided by the terminology used in the existential literature the term ‘concern’ seemed more appropriate than the initial term ‘anxiety’ used by Zerbo in her article (2010). That is why when referring to anxieties, as defined by Zerbo in her article published in 2010, we employ the word ‘concern’ (‘zorg’ in Dutch). The main reason for this switch is that ‘concern’ is generally used by all existential psychologists when referring to existential themes human beings have to face. It has been introduced by Yalom in his book *Existential Psychotherapy* in 1980, since then it has been taken over by almost every psychologist who is inspired by the existential perspective. On the other hand, existential philosophers traditionally used the term ‘existential givens’, which is too philosophically connoted to be used in an organizational setting.

Present model

The relationships between the different variables of the model, as intuitively described by Zerbo (2010), are depicted in Figure 5.

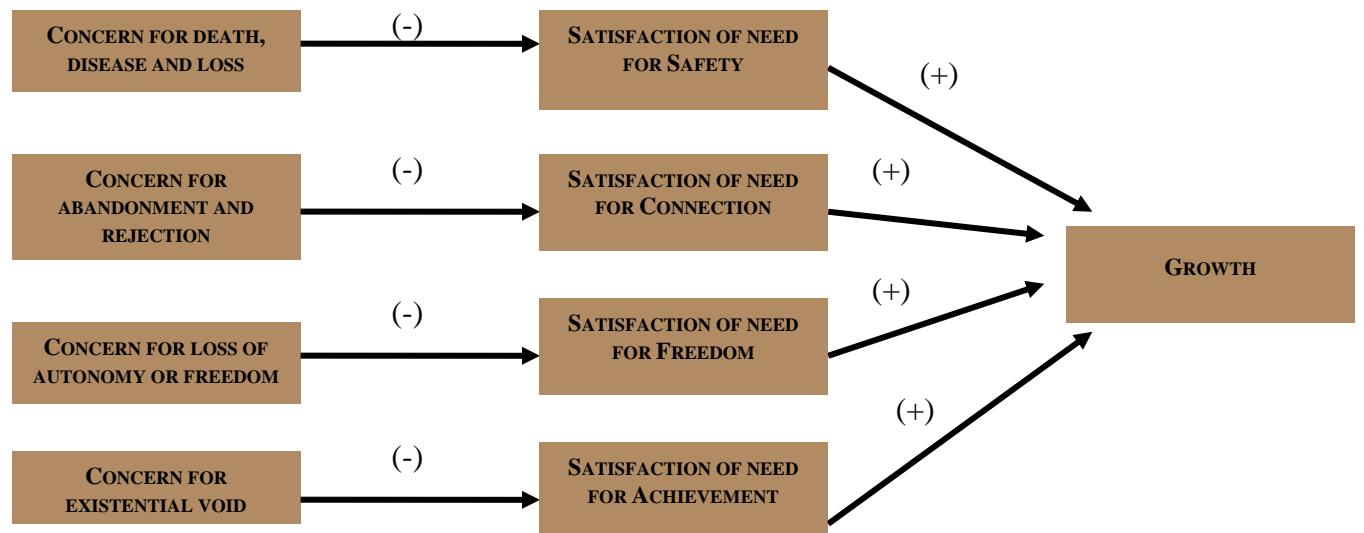


Figure 5: Hypothesized relationships in the 4V model

The idea behind this model is a simple and basic assumption made by Zerbo (2010) that existential concerns have a negative impact on the satisfaction of basic needs, which in return have a positive effect on the capacity of growth of employees both on a personal and professional level. This is what we will call the simplified model at the foundation of the 4-V model (Figure 6).



Figure 6: The simplified model

Study hypotheses

The main aim of the present study is to evaluate the 4V model developed by Zerbo (2010). The 4V model provides a clear theoretical framework that still needs to be supported by empirical evidence. This thesis will focus on the evaluation of the assumptions based on the existential framework of the model.

There appears to be a major discrepancy in the number of concerns listed by the different existential theories. Moreover, in my opinion, it is also important to look at the labels of the four concerns. In Zerbo's article (2010) the concerns are described in one sentence, while all existential psychologists define them in one single word. The one word definition is definitely more powerful and would certainly give more face validity to the model. **Therefore, the first aim of this study is to investigate whether there are really four existential concerns and to try to find a more comprehensive label than the four groups highlighted in Zerbo's article: death, disease and loss; abandonment and rejection; loss of autonomy or freedom; existential void.**

The model also indicates that there is a causal relationship between concerns and needs. **Consequently, the second aim of this study was to explore whether the reported concerns negatively impact the level of needs satisfaction.**

The model makes no assumptions about any relationship between existential concern and the level of growth. But based on the Yalom's statement that 'anxiety restricts growth' (1980), the assumption that concerns are the negative counterparts of needs and in line with Maslow's theory it was expected that concerns will negatively impact the level of growth. **The third aim of this study was to look at the relationship between concerns and growth.**

Contrary to Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor and Frederick Herzberg the 4V model refutes the hierarchical outlook to human's needs. Zerbo (2010) claims that the human needs are not hierarchical. Considering the above, it is evident that she also views the existential concerns as equally important. **Subsequently, the final aim of this study is to research whether there is a hierarchy in human existential concerns.**

More specifically, following relationships are hypothesized:

Hypothesis 1:

We expected that there are four groups of existential concerns: death, disease and loss; abandonment and rejection; loss of autonomy or freedom; existential void.

Hypothesis 2:

We expected that the 'concerns' will negatively impact the 'satisfaction of needs' and that:

- a) Concern for 'death, disease and loss' will negatively impact and be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Safety needs
- b) Concern for 'abandonment and rejection' will negatively impact and be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Connection needs
- c) Concern for 'loss of autonomy or freedom' will negatively impact and be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Freedom needs
- d) Concern for 'existential void' will negatively impact and be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Achievement needs

Hypothesis 3:

We expected that the ‘satisfaction of needs’ will act as a mediator between ‘existential concerns’ and ‘level of growth’.

Hypothesis 4:

We expected that the four groups of existential concerns will be equally important.

Method

Study 1

Procedure

The study was part of an internship at Reset Capacity Building. The author worked together with another intern Kimberley Houwaart to test hypotheses drawn from the model and to evaluate the model in question. The main focus of Houwaart's study (2011) was on the satisfaction of needs and growth whereas the author's focus was on existential concerns. Consequently, the author will sometimes refer to the work of her colleague when the part studied was under her scope.

Participants

The sample consisted of 170 individuals working in Dutch organizations. In order to recruit the participants, the author and the other intern (Kimberley Houwaart) sent e-mails to managers of organizations, either from Reset's Network or from their own network, to ask for permission to conduct the study. When the permission was granted, the author sent an email to each employee in order to inform them of the purpose of the study, the procedure that will follow and employees were also informed that the participation was non-compulsory and anonymous. Each participant filled in the questionnaire online. The study was divided in two parts (part 1 and part 2). The first part of the study took place in March 2011 and the second part of the study took place in May 2011. Due to electronic issues, no socio-demographic questions were added to the first questionnaire.

Materials

An electronic survey containing 107 questions was constructed based on the instrument created by reset Capacity Building. From the 107 questions, 19 were about existential concerns, 87 about the satisfaction of basic needs and one about the level of growth.

Existential concerns

The 19 questions in Dutch about existential concerns measured 4 groups of concerns. The questionnaire parts, with some sample items, are outlined below:

- Part I (6 questions): Concern for death, disease and loss
(sample item: ‘Ik ben regelmatig bang voor de dood’)
- Part II (4 questions): Concern for abandonment and rejection
(sample item: ‘Ik ben regelmatig bang om afgewezen te worden’)
- Part III (4 questions): Concern for loss of autonomy or freedom
(sample item: ‘Ik ben bang om mijn autonomie kwijt te raken’)
- Part IV (5 questions): Concern for existential void
(sample item: ‘Ik ben regelmatig bang dat het leven zinloos is’)

Items were scored on a 5-point rating scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly agree).

Variables were constructed for each concern dimension using the summing up method and sum totals were corrected for the number of items. For each constructed concern variable the scores of the pertaining items were added up and then divided by the number of items.

The satisfaction of basic needs

The satisfaction of four needs was measured: Safety, Connection, Freedom and Achievement. The instrument created by Reset was reviewed by the author and K. Houwaart and the final version of the questions was used during this study. The satisfaction of Safety needs was measured with 25 items, e.g. ‘Ik voel me veilig op het werk’. The satisfaction of Connection needs was measured with 22 items, e.g. ‘Ik voel mij verbonden met mijn collega’s’. The satisfaction of Freedom needs was measured with 21 items, e.g. ‘Ik vind dat ik vrijheden heb binnen mijn

organisatie'. The satisfaction of Achievement needs was measured with 19 items, e.g. 'Ik ben tevreden met mijn leven'.

All items were rated on a 5-point rating scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1-strongly disagree, 5- strongly agree).

A version of the questionnaire is included in the appendix.

Variables were constructed for each need satisfaction dimension using the summing up method and correcting for the number of items. For each constructed need satisfaction variable the scores of the pertaining items were added up and then divided by the number of items.

Level of growth

This part of the survey was carried out by my colleague Houwaart (2011) during the second part of the study. The target population was the same as during the first study, consequently no difference will be made between the two sets of data. The analysis will consider the data as simultaneous. The level of growth was retrieved by asking participants to grade their capacity to grow. It is a 6 point rating scale (1- not capable, 6- completely capable). This instrument provides a summary score for growth.

Data analysis

Data collected from individuals working in different organizations in the Netherlands, were analyzed in SPSS. Firstly, descriptive statistics were conducted in order to check for missing values and find out if our data were normally distributed. Next, scoring concerning instruments were described.

Results

Preliminary analysis

235 questionnaires were sent out and 170 were collected. The response rate was quite high for an organisational setting (72%). All 170 were included in the study.

The mean scores and standard deviations for each concern item are shown in Table 2.a. The mean scores and standard deviations of the constructed concerns variables (Concern for death, disease and loss, Concern for abandonment and rejection, Concern for losing autonomy or freedom, Concern for existential void) are depicted in Table 2.b. Low scores on the concern items and variables stand for low levels of concerns and high scores stand for high levels of concerns (Minimum: 1, Maximum: 5). The mean scores and standard deviations of the constructed need satisfaction variables (Safety, Connection, Freedom and Achievement) are described in Table 2.c. The need satisfaction variables were constructed after a PCA was conducted on the 87 need satisfaction items. Items were reversed, recoded and deleted when necessary, after that, they were added up and sum totals were corrected for the number of items (Houwaart, 2011). Low scores on the satisfaction of needs variables represent low levels of needs satisfaction and high scores stand for high levels of needs satisfaction (Minimum: 1, Maximum: 5). The mean score and standard deviation of the Level of Growth variable are revealed in Table 2.d (Houwaart, 2011). High scores on the level of growth variable mean that the employee has the feeling he or she can grow within the organization (Minimum: 1, Maximum: 6)

Table 2.a: ‘Concerns items: Mean and standard deviation for each item’

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
A1.1	Ik ben regelmatig bang dat ik lichamelijk niet gezond ben.	2.46	1.45
A1.2	Ik ben nooit bang voor de dood.	2.84*	1.51
A1.3	Ik ben regelmatig bang om mijn naasten te verliezen.	2.96	1.46
A1.4	Ik ben nooit bang om de mensen om mij heen te verliezen	3.28*	1.45
A1.5	Ik ben regelmatig bang voor de dood.	2.24	1.46
A1.6	Ik ben nooit bang dat ik een ziekte heb.	2.64*	1.39
A2.1	Ik ben regelmatig bang om afgewezen te worden.	2.39	1.40
A2.2	Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word verlaten.	2.54*	1.47
A2.3	Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word afgewezen.	2.73*	1.35
A2.4	Ik ben regelmatig bang om verlaten te worden.	2.06	1.34
A3.1	Ik ben bang om mijn vrijheid te verliezen.	2.48	1.44
A3.2	Ik ben niet bang dat ik mijn autonomie kwijtraak.	2.23*	1.20
A3.3	Ik ben niet bang dat mijn vrijheid wordt ingeperkt.	2.23*	1.30
A3.4	Ik ben bang om mijn autonomie kwijt te raken.	2.13	1.23
A4.1	Ik ben regelmatig bang dat het leven zinloos is.	1.38	.92
A4.2	Ik ben bang dat mijn bestaan er niet toe doet.	1.64	1.19
A4.3	Ik ben bang dat mijn leven doelloos is.	1.31	.78
A4.4	Ik ben bang dat mijn leven geen toegevoegde waarde heeft.	1.45	.94
A4.5	Ik ben nooit bang dat het leven zinloos is.	2.01*	1.40

*Means of the recoded scores

Table 2.b: ‘Concerns variables: Means and standard deviations’

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Concern for death, disease and loss	2.74	.97
Concern for abandonment and rejection	2.43	1.01
Concern for losing autonomy or freedom	2.28	.89
Concern for existential void	1.56	.80

Table 2.c: ‘Needs satisfaction variables: Means and standard deviations’

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Safety need satisfaction	4.18	.58
Connection need satisfaction	4.13	.50
Freedom need satisfaction	3.77	.76
Achievement need satisfaction	4.03	.55

Table 2.d: ‘Level of growth variable: Mean and standard deviation’

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Level of Growth	3.55	1.24

Primary analysis

First hypothesis

In hypothesis 1, we predicted that employees experience four groups of existential concerns. To test this prediction we submitted the 19 ‘concern’ items to a principal component analysis (PCA).

Before performing the PCA, the data’s suitability for factor analysis was assessed. The correlation matrix revealed several coefficients above .30. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, $KMO = .80$ which is above the recommended value of .60. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity was statistically significant, indicating that correlations between items were sufficiently large for PCA. The correlation matrix was therefore considered suitable for exploratory factor analysis.

An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each component in the data. Five components had eigenvalues above 1. The five component solution explained in total 63.63 % of the variance with the five components explaining respectively 27.18%, 13.94%, 8.29%, 8.02% and 6.20%. The screeplot was slightly ambiguous and showed inflexions that would justify retaining both 2 and 5 components. Given the fact that Koole, Greenberg and Pyszczynski stated in their review article over experimental existential psychology (2006) that there are five important concerns (‘the big five existential concerns’), and the convergence of the screeplot and the Kaiser’s criterion on five components; this is the number of components that was retained in the final analysis. Table 3 shows the factor loadings after Oblimin rotation. The items that cluster on the same components are listed hereunder:

Component 1:

- Ik ben regelmatig bang om afgewezen te worden (A2.1)
- Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word afgewezen (A2.3)
- Ik ben regelmatig bang om verlaten te worden (A2.4)

- Ik ben nooit bang dat het leven zinloos is (A4.5)

Component 2:

- Ik ben regelmatig bang om mijn naasten te verliezen (A1.3)
- Ik ben nooit bang om de mensen om mij heen te verliezen (A1.4)
- Ik ben nooit bang dat ik een ziekte heb (A1.6)
- Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word verlaten (A2.2)

Component 3:

- Ik ben bang om mijn vrijheid te verliezen (A3.1)
- Ik ben niet bang dat mijn vrijheid wordt ingeperkt (A3.3)
- Ik ben bang om mijn autonomie kwijt te raken (A3.4)

Component 4:

- Ik ben regelmatig bang dat ik lichamelijk niet gezond ben (A1.1)
- Ik ben nooit bang voor de dood (A1.2)
- Ik ben regelmatig bang voor de dood (A1.5)
- Ik ben niet bang dat ik mijn autonomie kwijtraak (A3.2)

Component 5:

- Ik ben regelmatig bang dat het leven zinloos is (A4.1)
- Ik ben bang dat mijn bestaan er niet toe doet (A4.2)
- Ik ben bang dat mijn leven doelloos is (A4.3)
- Ik ben bang dat mijn leven geen toegevoegde waarde heeft (A4.4)

Table 3: Summary of exploratory factor analysis results for the existential concern questionnaire (N=170)

Items	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
A2.3 Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word afgewezen.	.84				
A2.1 Ik ben regelmatig bang om afgewezen te worden.	.63				
A4.5 Ik ben nooit bang dat het leven zinloos is.	.62				
A2.4 Ik ben regelmatig bang om verlaten te worden.	.49				
A1.3 Ik ben regelmatig bang om mijn naasten te verliezen.	.83				
A1.4 Ik ben nooit bang om de mensen om mij heen te verliezen	.82				
A1.6 Ik ben nooit bang dat ik een ziekte heb.	.70				
A2.2 Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word verlaten.	.43				
A3.1 Ik ben bang om mijn vrijheid te verliezen.	.80				
A3.3 Ik ben niet bang dat mijn vrijheid wordt ingeperkt.	.74				
A3.4 Ik ben bang om mijn autonomie kwijt te raken.	.73				
A1.5 Ik ben regelmatig bang voor de dood.	.67				
A1.2 Ik ben nooit bang voor de dood.	.54				
A1.1 Ik ben regelmatig bang dat ik lichamelijk niet gezond ben.	.51				
A3.2 Ik ben niet bang dat ik mijn autonomie kwijtraak.	.50				
A4.4 Ik ben bang dat mijn leven doelloos is.	.82				
A4.1 Ik ben regelmatig bang dat het leven zinloos is.	.80				
A4.3 Ik ben bang dat mijn leven geen toegevoegde waarde heeft.	.77				
A4.2 Ik ben bang dat mijn bestaan er niet toe doet.	.48				
Eigenvalues	5.17	2.65	1.58	1.52	1.18
% of variance	27.18	13.94	8.29	8.02	6.20
α	.77	.73	.67	.54	.80

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

The interpretation of the five components is in agreement with the findings of Koole, Greenberg and Pyszczynski in their review article over the experimental existential psychology (2006).

The first component was interpreted as ‘concern for Identity’. The items that loaded the highest on this factor are related to one’s fear of being rejected for whom they are and on how one fits into the world. The second component was interpreted as ‘concern for Isolation’. The items that loaded the highest on this factor are related to the loss of connection with others. The third component was interpreted as ‘concern for Loss of Autonomy’. The items that loaded the highest on this factor are related to the experience of free will and autonomy. The fourth component was

interpreted as ‘concern for Death’. The items that loaded the highest on this factor are related to death, illness and loss of loved ones. The fifth component was interpreted as ‘concern for Meaninglessness’. The items that loaded the highest on this factor are related to the meaning and aim of life. From these results it appears that the questionnaire about concerns has five subscales: Death, Isolation, Loss of Autonomy, Meaninglessness and Identity.

Then, we checked for the reliability of the five components. To do this, we measured Cronbach’s α for each dimension individually (Table 4). The concern for Meaninglessness, Identity, Isolation and Loss of Autonomy dimensions all had high reliabilities; all Cronbach’s α above .65. The concern for Death had a relatively low reliability, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .54$. Then we checked if any item should be deleted by comparing the overall Cronbach’s α of the dimension with the *Cronbach’s α if item deleted*. From this analysis it appears that 2 items should be deleted:

- Ik ben niet bang dat ik mijn autonomie kwijtraak (A3.2)
- Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word verlaten (A2.2)

The deletion of these 2 items increases Cronbach’s α of the dimensions they pertain to (Table 4). Consequently, deleting these two items increases the internal consistency of the dimensions and improves reliability.

Table 4: Cronbach’s α of each subscale before and after deletion of 2 items

	<i>Identity</i>	<i>Isolation</i>	<i>Loss of Autonomy</i>	<i>Death</i>	<i>Meaninglessness</i>
α before deletion	.77	.73	.67	.54	.80
α after deletion	.77	<u>.75</u>	.67	<u>.69</u>	.80

The final version of the questionnaire has 17 questions separated into five dimensions as stated here below:

1. Concern for Identity

- Ik ben regelmatig bang om afgewezen te worden
- Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word afgewezen

- Ik ben regelmatig bang om verlaten te worden
 - Ik ben nooit bang dat het leven zinloos is
2. Concern for Isolation
- Ik ben regelmatig bang om mijn naasten te verliezen
 - Ik ben nooit bang om de mensen om mij heen te verliezen
 - Ik ben nooit bang dat ik een ziekte heb
3. Concern for Loss of Autonomy
- Ik ben bang om mijn vrijheid te verliezen
 - Ik ben niet bang dat mijn vrijheid wordt ingeperkt
 - Ik ben bang om mijn autonomie kwijt te raken
4. Concern for Death
- Ik ben regelmatig bang dat ik lichamelijk niet gezond ben
 - Ik ben nooit bang voor de dood
 - Ik ben regelmatig bang voor de dood
5. Concern for Meaninglessness
- Ik ben regelmatig bang dat het leven zinloos is
 - Ik ben bang dat mijn bestaan er niet toe doet
 - Ik ben bang dat mijn leven doelloos is
 - Ik ben bang dat mijn leven geen toegevoegde waarde heeft

To be able to further analyse the model variables fitting the items per dimension were constructed using the summing up method. The items were added up per dimension and sum totals were corrected for the number of items. The items were recoded when necessary. The means and standard deviations of the constructed dimensions (Death, Identity, Isolation, Loss of Autonomy and Meaninglessness) are listed in Table 5. Low scores stand for low level of concerns; high scores stand for high levels of concerns.

Table 5: ‘Concern subscales: Means and standard deviations per subscale’

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Concern for Identity	2.30	1.05
Concern for Isolation	2.96	1.17
Concern for Loss of Autonomy	2.28	1.04
Concern for Death	2.51	1.15
Concern for Meaninglessness	1.44	.76

These findings partly agree with the 4V theory (Zerbo, 2010). Following from this theory, there should be 4 components:

1. death, disease and loss
2. rejection and isolation
3. loss of autonomy or freedom
4. existential void

In this study, it appears that there is an extra component ‘identity’, which is not in direct agreement with the predictions following from the 4V theory.

From now on when referring to the concerns we will refer to the five concerns as named here above: concern for Death, concern for Isolation, concern for Identity, concern for Loss of Autonomy and concern for Meaninglessness. The constructed variables will be used for further testing.

Second hypothesis

We expected, as stated in hypothesis 2, that the concerns will negatively impact on the satisfaction of needs and that concern for Death will be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Safety needs, concern for Isolation will be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of

Connection needs, concern for Loss of Autonomy will be the strongest predictor for satisfaction of Freedom needs and concern for Meaninglessness will be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Achievement needs. First, we examined the correlations between concern variables and satisfaction of needs variables. From the results, it appears that almost all the concerns variables correlate positively to each other and the satisfaction of needs correlate positively to each other. All concern variables, except concern for Isolation, correlate negatively to the need satisfaction variables. Most of the correlations were found to be significant (Table 6). In order to determine whether concerns negatively impact the satisfaction of needs multiple regression analyses were conducted. Five separate regression analyses were performed where dependent satisfaction of basic needs variables were regressed onto the independent variables. As it appears from the PCA that there are five existential concerns, the concern for Identity was included in the analysis. Preliminary analyses were performed and showed no serious violation to the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. In each regression the Enter method was used.

Table 6: Correlations between concerns variables and satisfaction of needs variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Concern for Identity	1								
Concern for Isolation	.18*	1							
Concern for Loss of Autonomy	.31**	.02	1						
Concern for Death	.51**	.39**	.23**	1					
Concern for Meaninglessness	.59**	-.04	.35**	.38**	1				
Safety need satisfaction	-.42**	.11	-.44**	-.35**	-.46**	1			
Connection need satisfaction	-.26**	.16*	-.41**	-.07	-.27**	.67**	1		
Freedom need satisfaction	-.38**	.1	-.45**	-.31**	-.30**	.78**	.67**	1	
Achievement need satisfaction	-.38**	.1	-.37**	-.13	-.38**	.67**	.73**	.67**	1

1: Concern for Identity; 2: Concern for Isolation; 3: Concern for Loss of Autonomy; 4: Concern for Death; 5: Concern for Meaninglessness;

6: Safety need satisfaction; 7: Connection need satisfaction; 8: Freedom need satisfaction; 9: Achievement need satisfaction

*p < .05, **p < .01.

To check for the general effect of existential concerns on the satisfaction of basic needs, two new variables were created. An ‘existential concerns’ variable was constructed by adding up the five concerns variables and correcting for the number of variables and a ‘satisfaction of basic

needs' variable was constructed by adding up the four needs' satisfaction variables and correcting for the number of variables. The means and standard deviations of the constructed variables are depicted in Table 7. In this regression, the satisfaction of basic needs variable was regressed onto the independent Existential concerns variable. **Existential concerns** were strongly and negatively related to *Satisfaction of basic needs* ($\beta = -.41$, $p < .001$). The model explained 16.5% of the variance in the satisfaction of basic needs, ($F(1, 168) = 33.21$, $p < .001$). Above results confirm our hypothesis that low levels of concerns are related to high level of satisfaction of basic needs (Table 8).

Table 7: Means and standard deviations of 'concerns' and 'needs satisfaction' variables

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Satisfaction of basic needs	4.03	.53
Existential concerns	2.30	.68

Table 8: Linear regression of 'satisfaction of basic needs' on 'existential concerns'

<i>Model</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Existential concerns	-.41	-5.76	.000

Then, we looked at the separate relationship of the concern variables to each needs satisfaction variable. In the first regression, the '*satisfaction of Safety needs*' scores were regressed onto the independent variables. The **concern for Death** was entered in the first step; the four other concerns (Meaninglessness, Loss of Autonomy, Isolation and Identity) were entered in the second step. The **concern for Death** was statistically significant as regards the *satisfaction of Safety needs* ($\beta = -.23$, $p < .01$), indicating that there is a negative relationship between the two variables. However, concern for Isolation ($\beta = .22$, $p < .01$), Loss of Autonomy ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .001$) and Meaninglessness ($\beta = -.18$, $p < .05$) were also found to be significant predictors. Furthermore, it appears that concern for Loss of Autonomy is also a significant predictor of *satisfaction of Safety needs* ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .001$). Concern for Meaninglessness, when included to our analysis as independent variable, along with concern for Loss of Autonomy and concern for Isolation, resulted

in an increase in R square, indicating that it strengthens our model (Table 9). The total variance explained by the model as a whole is 37.5%, ($F(4, 164) = 16.40, p < .001$).

In the second regression, the '*satisfaction of Connection needs*' scores were regressed onto the independent variables. The **concern for Isolation** was entered in the first step; the four other concerns (Meaninglessness, Loss of Autonomy, Death and Identity) were entered in the second step. The **concern for Isolation** was statistically significant as regards the *satisfaction of Connection needs* ($\beta = .18, p < .05$), indicating that there is a positive relationship between the two variables. Moreover, concern for Loss of Autonomy was also found to be a significant predictor. Furthermore, it appears that the strongest relationship is not between concern for Isolation and satisfaction of Connection needs but between concern for Loss of Autonomy and *satisfaction of Connection needs* ($\beta = -.36, p < .001$), indicating that there is a strong and negative relationship between the concern for Loss of Autonomy and satisfaction of Connection needs. Concern for Loss of Autonomy, when included to our analysis as independent variable, resulted in an increase in R square, indicating that it strengthens our model (Table 9). The total variance explained by the model as a whole is 23%, ($F(4, 164) = 10.95, p < .001$).

In the third regression, the '*satisfaction of Freedom needs*' scores were regressed onto the independent variables. The **concern for Loss of Autonomy** was entered in the first step; the four other concerns (Meaninglessness, Isolation, Death and Identity) were entered in the second step. The **concern for Loss of Autonomy** was statistically significant as regards the *satisfaction of Freedom needs* ($\beta = -.35, p < .001$), indicating that there is a negative relationship between the two variables. However, concern for Identity, Isolation and Death were also found to be significant predictors. Concern for Identity, when included to our analysis as independent variable, along with concern for Isolation and Death, resulted in an increase in R square, indicating that it strengthens our model (Table 9). The total variance explained by the model as a whole is 32.1%, ($F(4, 164) = 7.05, p < .001$).

In the fourth regression, the '*satisfaction of Achievement needs*' scores were regressed onto the independent variables. The **Concern for Meaninglessness** was entered in the first step; the four other concerns (Isolation, Loss of Autonomy, Death and Identity) were entered in the second step. The **concern for Meaninglessness** was tending to a significant relationship as regards the *satisfaction of Achievement needs* ($\beta = -.17$, $p = .061$). The variable concern for Meaninglessness was significantly and negatively related to satisfaction of achievement needs before adding the other independent variables, indicating that there is a negative relationship between the two variables but that concern for Meaninglessness is not a robust explanatory variable. However, concern for Loss of Autonomy and Identity were found to be significant predictors. Furthermore, it appears that concerns for Loss of Autonomy ($\beta = -.254$, $p < .01$) and Identity ($\beta = -.259$, $p < .01$) both strongly negatively relate to *satisfaction of Achievement needs*. Concern for Loss of Autonomy and Identity, when included in our analysis as independent variable, resulted in an increase in R square, indicating that it strengthens our model (Table 9). The total variance explained by the model as a whole is 25.8%, ($F(4, 164) = 6.13$, $p < .001$).

Above results partly disconfirm the results found earlier. It appears that not all 'concerns' variables are significantly related to the 'satisfaction of needs' variables. However, in general, low scores of concerns are related with high levels of needs' satisfaction with the exception of concern for Isolation. High scores of concern for Isolation are associated with high scores of needs' satisfaction. These results reject the hypothesis that concern for Death is the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Safety needs, that concern for Isolation is the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Connection needs, that concern for Meaninglessness is the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Achievement needs. However, it was confirmed that concern for Loss of Autonomy was the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Freedom needs. Concern for Loss of Autonomy was also found to be the strongest predictor for the satisfaction of Safety, Connection and Achievement needs. In the case of Achievement needs, there was a tie between concern for

Identity and concern for Loss of Autonomy as to being the strongest predictor. Consequently, it seems that concern for Loss of Autonomy is the best predictor for the satisfaction of all four basic needs.

Table 9: Multiple regressions of the separate satisfaction of needs variables on the existential concerns variables

<i>Model</i>		<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Safety needs satisfaction				
1	Concern for Death	-.35***	-4.91	.000
2	Concern for Death	<u>-.23**</u>	-2.97	.003
	Concern for Identity	-.15	-1.80	.073
	Concern for Isolation	.22*	3.25	.001
	Concern for Loss of Autonomy	-.28***	-4.22	.000
	Concern for Meaninglessness	-.18*	-2.23	.027
Connection needs satisfaction				
1	Concern for Isolation	.16*	2.07	.040
2	Concern for Isolation	<u>.18*</u>	2.33	.021
	Concern for Identity	-.18	-1.91	.058
	Concern for Loss of Autonomy	-.36***	-4.80	.000
	Concern for Death	.05	.54	.593
	Concern for Meaninglessness	-.05	-.57	.567
Freedom needs satisfaction				
1	Concern for Loss of Autonomy	-.45***	-6.56	.000
2	Concern for Loss of Autonomy	<u>-.35***</u>	-5.08	.000
	Concern for Identity	-.24**	-2.70	.008
	Concern for Isolation	.23**	3.21	.002
	Concern for Death	-.21*	-2.62	.010
	Concern for Meaninglessness	.05	.59	.558
Achievement needs satisfaction				
1	Concern for Meaninglessness	-.38***	-5.37	.000
2	Concern for Meaninglessness	<u>-.17</u>	-1.89	.061
	Concern for Identity	-.26**	-2.84	.005
	Concern for Isolation	.12	1.62	.106
	Concern for Loss of Autonomy	-.25**	-3.50	.001
	Concern for Death	.07	.85	.395

* p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001

Changes in R square and R square change

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Sig. R square Change
Safety needs satisfaction				
1	.35	.13	.13	.000
2	.61	.38	.25	.000
Connection needs satisfaction				
1	.16	.03	.03	.040
2	.48	.23	.20	.000
Freedom needs satisfaction				
1	.45	.20	.20	.000
2	.57	.32	.12	.000
Achievement needs satisfaction				
1	.38	.15	.15	.000
2	.51	.26	.11	.000

Third hypothesis

In order to test whether there is a mediating role of ‘satisfaction of needs’ on the relationship between ‘concerns’ and ‘growth’ the mediation analysis, according to Baron and Kenny (1986) four steps method, was conducted. For this analysis, the constructed ‘Existential concerns’ variable and the constructed ‘Satisfaction of basic needs’ variable were used. Preliminary analyses were performed and showed no serious violation to the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. In each regression the enter method was used.

In step one (Table 10), *level of Growth* was regressed onto the independent variable **Existential concerns**. **Existential concerns** was negatively associated with *level of Growth* ($\beta = -.11$, $p > .05$). However, the relationship failed to reach a significant level.

Table 10: Linear regression of ‘level of growth’ on ‘existential concerns’

Model	Beta	t	Sig.
Existential concerns	-.11	-1.30	.197

According to Baron and Kenny, if there is no significant effect of existential concerns on level of growth this means that mediation is not possible. Consequently most psychologists would stop here. However, this approach has been criticized by MacKinnon, Fairchild and Fritz (2007) as it seems that it is not necessary that existential concerns should relate to level of growth for a mediation effect to exist. According to them, this method misses a lot of mediation. That is why we will go on with the analysis.

In step two (Table 8), satisfaction of basic needs was regressed onto the variable Existential concerns. This regression was already performed to study hypothesis 2. **The Existential concerns** variable was found to strongly and negatively relate to the *satisfaction of basic needs* ($\beta = -.41$, $p <.001$).

In step three (Table 11), *level of Growth* was regressed onto the variables **satisfaction of basic needs** and **Existential concerns**. **Existential concerns** were found to negatively relate to *level of Growth*, however the relationship failed to reach a significant level ($\beta = -.01$, $p >.05$). On the other hand, **satisfaction of basic needs** had a significant relationship with *level of Growth*. Satisfaction of basic needs related positively and strongly to level of Growth ($\beta = .23$, $p <.05$).

Table 11: Multiple regression of ‘level of growth’ on ‘satisfaction of needs’ and ‘existential concerns’

Model	Beta	t	Sig.
Existential concerns	-.01	-.08	.934
Satisfaction of basic needs	.23	2.54	.012

Finally, in step four **Sobel tests** were conducted (www.danielsoper.com). More specifically, it was demonstrated that ‘the satisfaction of needs’ mediate the relationship between ‘Existential concerns’ and ‘level of Growth’ ($Z = -2.57$, $p <.05$). Above results confirm that mediation exists even though existential concerns do not significantly correlate with level of growth. Consequently, existential concerns have a significant indirect effect (‘indirect’ $\beta = -.09$) on level of Growth. The indirect effect was calculated by multiplying the partial regression effect for the satisfaction of

basic needs predicting the level of Growth ($\beta = .23$) and the simple coefficient for existential concerns predicting the satisfaction of basic needs ($\beta = -.41$).

Study 2

Procedure

Participants

In order to avoid carry over effects a new sample was approached. The sample used consisted of individuals working in different organizations in the Netherlands. From the $N=91$ invited to participate in the research, responded $N=82$ (90.1%).

Materials

An electronic survey containing the following measures was constructed with the use of Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.nl). A version of the survey is included in the appendix.

Hierarchy in concerns

The participants were asked if, according to them, there was a hierarchy between the five concerns. If their answer was ‘yes’ they were encouraged, in an open-ended question, to write their ranking.

Level of concern

For the purpose of this study a short questionnaire was developed to measure the participants’ ‘level of concern’. The questionnaire consisted of five statements concerning existential concerns (Death, Identity, Isolation, Loss of Autonomy and Meaninglessness). The participants were asked to rate each existential concern on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1-strongly disagree, 5- strongly agree).

Demographic characteristics

Participants reported demographic characteristics for gender, age and education level.

Data analysis

Firstly, descriptive statistics were conducted in order to check for missing values and find out if the data was normally distributed. Next, demographic characteristics and scoring concerning instruments were described.

Results

Preliminary analysis

Descriptive statistics concerning the sample. 91 questionnaires were administered and 82 were collected back. All the 82 questionnaires were included in the study. From the 82 participants 57 were women (69.5%) and 25 men (30.5%). Further, the participants were above 20 years old with a concentration between 36 and 40 (17.1%) and between 46 and 50 (18.6%). With regard to educational background 58.5% had highest education (WO), 35.4% had a higher education degree (HBO) and 4.9% had a technical education (MBO), the rest had lower education levels. Summary of the demographics is presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Descriptive statistics of the total sample

	<i>Total sample N=82</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	57	69.5%
Male	25	30.5%
<i>Age (in years)</i>		
21-25	4	4.9%
26-30	2	2.4%
31-35	2	2.4%
36-40	14	17.1%
41-45	12	14.6%
46-50	15	18.3%
51-55	14	17.1%
56-60	13	15.9%
61-65	4	4.9%
66 or older	2	2.4%
<i>Education</i>		
WO	48	58.5%
HBO	29	35.4%
MBO	4	4.9%
Other education	1	1.2%

Coding: Gender (female = 1, male =2); Age (< 21 = 1; 21-25 = 2, 26-30 = 3, 31-35 = 4, 36-40 = 5, 41-45 = 6, 46-50 = 7, 51-55 = 8, 56-60 = 9, 61-65 = 10, >65 = 11); Education (WO= 1, HBO= 2, MBO= 3, others =4)

First, we examined the relationship between socio demographic variables and the outcome variables (see Table 13). Concerning socio demographics, results show that men were associated with lower Identity concerns ($r = -.25, p < .05$) comparing to women. Furthermore, old people are less concerned with Meaninglessness ($r = -.27, p < .05$) and Isolation ($r = -.30, p < .01$) than young people. Considering the fact that statistically significant relationships have been found among single socio demographic and the other dependent and independent variables (concern for Meaninglessness, Death, Isolation, Loss of Autonomy, Identity and Equal importance) we continue control for socio demographics in our main analyses.

Table 13: Correlations between socio demographic, independent and dependent variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Gender	1								
Age	.40**	1							
Education	.11	.13	1						
Equal importance	.08	-.11	-.18	1					
Concern for Meaninglessness	-.11	<u>-.27*</u>	-.19	-.06	1				
Concern for Death	-.21	.06	.09	-.07	.05	1			
Concern for Isolation	-.15	<u>-.30**</u>	-.13	-.17	.40**	-.03	1		
Concern for loss of Autonomy	-.06	-.13	-.03	-.06	.26*	.04	.48**	1	
Concern for Identity	<u>-.25*</u>	-.11	-.13	.11	.45**	.12	.53**	.44**	1

1: Gender, 2: Age, 3: Education, 4: Importance, 5: Concern for Meaninglessness, 6: Concern for Death, 7: Concern for Isolation, 8: Concern for loss of Autonomy,

9: Concern for Identity

* p<.05 ** p<.01

Descriptive statistics concerning scoring instruments. Overall, descriptive statistics concerning scoring instruments, demonstrated that 29% of the participants reported that there is no hierarchy between the five concerns whereas 71% reported that there is a hierarchy between the five concerns. The mean score for Concern for Meaninglessness was 1.67 (SD=.90). The mean score for Concern for Death was 2.21 (SD=1.17). The mean score for Concern for Isolation was 1.90 (SD=.99). The mean score for Concern for Autonomy was 2.10 (SD=1.14). Finally, the mean score for Concern for Identity was 1.79 (SD=.95). Summary of descriptive statistics concerning the instruments is presented in Table 14.

Table 14: Descriptive statistics concerning instruments

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Concern for Meaninglessness	1	5	1.67	.90
Concern for Death	1	5	2.21	1.17
Concern for Isolation	1	5	1.90	.99
Concern for Loss of Autonomy	1	5	2.10	1.14
Concern for Identity	1	5	1.79	.95

Primary analysis

Fourth hypothesis

We expected, as stated in hypothesis 4, that there would be no hierarchy between the concern components. To the question of whether the five concerns are equally important 29% of the participants responded positively whereas 71% responded negatively. The two groups differed significantly from each other, $p < .001$ (Table 15).

Table 15: Binomial distribution of the importance

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Vindt u deze 5 zorgen even belangrijk? (Equal importance)	Group 1	Ja	24	.29	.50	.000
	Group 2	Nee	58	.71		
	Total		82	1.00		

Coding: 1=Ja, 2=Nee

Moreover, the scores on the existential concerns did not differ significantly between the two groups (Table 16- a, b). Participants that view the existential concerns as equally important experience greater concern for **Meaninglessness** ($M = 1.75$, $SE = .20$) than participants that view them as hierarchical ($M = 1.64$, $SE = .12$). This difference was not significant $t(80) = .51$, $p > .05$. Participants that view the existential concerns as equally important experience greater concern for **Death** ($M = 2.33$, $SE = .24$) than participants that view them as hierarchical ($M = 2.16$, $SE = .16$). This difference was not significant $t(80) = .62$, $p > .05$. Participants that view the existential concerns as equally important experience greater concern for **Isolation** ($M = 2.17$, $SE = .24$) than participants that view them as hierarchical ($M = 1.79$, $SE = .12$). This difference was not significant $t(80) = 1.57$, $p > .05$. Participants that view the existential concerns as equally important experience greater concern for **Loss of Autonomy** ($M = 2.21$, $SE = .28$) than participants that view them as hierarchical ($M = 2.05$, $SE = .14$). This difference was not significant $t(35.06) = .51$, $p > .05$. On the other hand, participants that view the existential concerns as equally important experience lower concern for **Identity** ($M = 1.63$, $SE = .21$) than participants that view them as

hierarchical ($M = 1.86$, $SE = .12$). This difference was also not significant $t(80) = -1.03$, $p >.05$ (Table 16 a & b)

Table 16-a: Means and standard errors per group

	<i>Equal importance</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Concern for Meaninglessness	Ja	1.75	.20
	Nee	1.64	.12
Concern for the Death	Ja	2.33	.24
	Nee	2.16	.16
Concern for Isolation	Ja	2.17	.24
	Nee	1.79	.12
Concern for Loss of Autonomy	Ja	2.21	.28
	Nee	2.05	.14
Concern for Identity	Ja	1.63	.21
	Nee	1.86	.12

Table 16-b: Independent t-test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>
Concern for Meaninglessness	.51	80	.612	.11
Concern for the Death	.62	80	.535	.17
Concern for Isolation	1.57	80	.120	.38
Concern for Loss of Autonomy	.51	35.06	.615	.16
Concern for Identity	-1.03	80	.308	-.23

Multiple Regression analyses were next conducted in order to control for the role of age, gender and education. Preliminary analyses were performed and showed no serious violation to the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. In each regression the Enter method was used. In each regression, the existential concern variable was regressed onto the independent ‘equal importance’ variable in the first step and then onto the socio-demographic variables in the second step. The results are presented in Table 17.

Table 17: Multiple regression analyses for the separate existential concerns variables

<i>Model</i>		<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Concern for Meaninglessness				
1	Equal importance	-.06	-.509	.612
2	Equal importance	-.12	-1.074	.286
	Gender	.03	.240	.811
	Age	-.28*	-2.320	.023
	Education	-.18	-1.582	.118
Concern for Death				
1	Equal importance	-.07	-.623	.535
2	Equal importance	-.01	-.114	.909
	Gender	-.28*	-2.343	.022
	Age	.16	1.321	.190
	Education	.10	.909	.366
Concern for Isolation				
1	Equal importance	-.17	-1.570	.120
2	Equal importance	-.23*	-2.124	.037
	Gender	.01	.055	.956
	Age	-.31*	-2.630	.010
	Education	-.14	-1.286	.202
Concern for Loss of Autonomy				
1	Equal importance	-.06	-.564	.575
2	Equal importance	-.08	-.716	.476
	Gender	.01	.060	.952
	Age	-.14	-1.095	.277
	Education	-.03	-.259	.796
Concern for Identity				
1	Equal importance	.11	1.026	.308
2	Equal importance	.12	1.063	.291
	Gender	-.25*	-2.083	.041
	Age	.01	.102	.919
	Education	-.09	-.758	.451

* p<.05

Regarding the concern for Meaninglessness, whether the participants viewed the concerns as hierarchical or not was found to remain not significant after including socio demographic variables ($\beta = -.12$, $p > .05$). Gender and education were also not significant but age proved to be significant ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .05$). More specifically, older participants tend to be less concerned with Meaninglessness than younger participants (Table 17).

As to the concern for Death, whether the participants viewed the concerns as hierarchical or not was also found to remain not significant after including socio demographic variables ($\beta = -.01$, $p > .05$). In this case age and education were also not significant whereas gender was significant ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .05$). More specifically, women are more concerned with Death than men (Table 17).

About the concern for Isolation, whether the participants viewed the concerns as hierarchical or not was found to become significant *after* including socio demographic variables ($\beta = -.23$, $p < .05$). The group that viewed the concerns as equally important scored significantly higher ($M = 2.17$) than the group that considered them as hierarchical ($M = 1.79$). Age was significant ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .05$) whilst gender and education were not significant. More specifically, older participants are less concerned with Isolation than younger participants (Table 17).

Pertaining to the concern for Loss of Autonomy, whether the participants viewed the concerns as hierarchical or not was found not significant after including socio demographic variables ($\beta = -.08$, $p > .05$). Age, gender and education were also not significant (Table 17).

Concerning the concern for Identity, whether the participants viewed the concerns as hierarchical or not was found not significant after including socio demographic variables ($\beta = .12$, $p > .05$). In this case gender was significant ($\beta = -.25$, $p < .05$) while age and education were also not significant. More specifically, women were found to be more concerned with Identity than men (Table 17).

In sum, whether the participants viewed the concerns as hierarchical or not remained not significant after including socio demographic variables as to the concern for Meaninglessness,

Death, Loss of Autonomy and Identity but became significant as to the concern for Isolation. Age was significant relating to concern for Meaninglessness and concern for Isolation whereas gender was found significant for concern for Death and Identity. These results demonstrate that gender and age play a role whereas level of education has totally no effect. Young women seem to be a group that is more concerned than the rest of the population, especially in the category between 26 and 30.

From the participants that responded negatively a multitude of rankings were specified. Two participants had missing variables in the ranking, so they were not included in the further analysis. Consequently from here the $N=56$ for the participants that responded negatively .The different rankings provided by the participants are presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Percentage of concern rankings (from most to least important)

	Percent
Death	3.6%
Death - Identity - Isolation - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Death - Identity - Meaninglessness - Loss of Autonomy - Isolation	3.6%
Death - Isolation - Identity - Meaninglessness - Loss of Autonomy	1.8%
Death - Isolation - Loss of Autonomy - Identity - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Death - Loss of Autonomy	3.6%
Death - Loss of Autonomy - Identity - Isolation - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Death - Loss of Autonomy - Isolation - Identity - Meaninglessness	7.1%
Death - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Death - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness - Isolation - Identity	1.8%
Death - Meaninglessness - Identity - Loss of Autonomy - Isolation	1.8%
Death - Meaninglessness - Loss of Autonomy - Isolation - Identity	3.6%
Identity - Death - Isolation - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Identity - Isolation	1.8%
Identity - Isolation - Death - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Identity - Isolation - Loss of Autonomy - Death - Meaninglessness	3.6%
Identity - Isolation - Meaninglessness - Loss of Autonomy - Death	1.8%
Identity - Loss of Autonomy - Death - Isolation - Meaninglessness	5.4%
Identity - Loss of Autonomy - Isolation - Death - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Identity - Loss of Autonomy - Isolation - Meaninglessness - Death	3.6%
Identity - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness - Isolation - Death	1.8%
Identity - Meaninglessness - Death - Isolation - Loss of Autonomy	1.8%
Isolation - Death - Identity - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Isolation - Identity - Meaninglessness - Death - Loss of Autonomy	1.8%
Isolation - Loss of Autonomy - Death - Meaninglessness - Identity	1.8%
Isolation - Loss of Autonomy - Identity - Death - Meaninglessness	3.6%
Isolation - Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness - Death - Identity	1.8%
Isolation - Meaninglessness - Death - Loss of Autonomy - Identity	1.8%
Isolation - Meaninglessness -Loss of Autonomy - Identity - Death	1.8%
Loss of Autonomy - Death - Identity - Isolation - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Loss of Autonomy - Identity - Death - Isolation - Meaninglessness	7.1%
Loss of Autonomy - Identity - Meaninglessness - Death - Isolation	1.8%
Loss of Autonomy - Isolation - Death - Identity - Meaninglessness	1.8%
Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness - Identity - Isolation - Death	7.1%
Loss of Autonomy - Meaninglessness - Death - Isolation	1.8%
Meaninglessness - Death - Loss of Autonomy - Isolation - Identity	1.8%
Meaninglessness -Identity - Isolation - Death - Loss of Autonomy	1.8%
Meaninglessness - Loss of Autonomy - Death - Isolation - Identity	1.8%
Total	100.0%

There are three concern rankings that arise with each 7.1% of the participants' choice:

- 1: Concern for **Death**, 2: Concern for **Loss of Autonomy**, 3: Concern for **Isolation**, 4: Concern for **Identity**, 5: Concern for **Meaninglessness**
- 1: Concern for **Loss of Autonomy**, 2: Concern for **Identity**, 3: Concern for **Death**, 4: Concern for **Isolation**, 5: Concern for **Meaninglessness**
- 1: Concern for **Loss of Autonomy**, 2: Concern for **Meaninglessness**, 3: Concern for **Identity**, 4: Concern for **Isolation**, 5: Concern for **Death**

Then, we checked which of the five concerns was mostly ranked as most important. The percentage of participants that ordered concern for Death, Identity, Isolation, Loss of Autonomy or Meaninglessness as most important significantly differed from each other, $\chi^2(4, N = 56) = 13.11$, $p = .01$. Within the group that viewed existential concerns as hierarchical, concern for the **Death** was mostly classed as most important with 33.9% of the participants that positioned it in the first place. Followed by, concern for **Identity** which was ranked as first by 25% of the participants. Then, concern for **Loss of Autonomy** that was found as primary significant by 21.4% of the participants. After that, comes concern for **Isolation** with 14.3% of the participants that classed it as first. Finally, concern for **Meaninglessness** that was categorized as main concern by only 5.4% of the total participants (Table 19).

Table 19: Percentage primary rank of the five concerns within the group that views the concerns as hierarchical

	Frequency	Percent
Primary concern for Death	19	33.9%
Primary concern for Identity	14	25.0%
Primary concern for Loss of Autonomy	12	21.4%
Primary concern for Isolation	8	14.3%
Primary concern for Meaninglessness	3	5.4%
Total	56	100%

This ranking is partly corroborated by the reported experienced concerns. Indeed the means on the different existential concerns also confirm that concern for Death is the most important one and the concern for Meaninglessness is the least important one (Table 14). The concern for Death

has the highest mean ($M = 2.21$), followed by concern for Loss of Autonomy ($M = 2.1$), concern for Isolation ($M = 1.90$) and concern for Identity ($M = 1.79$), at the end comes concern for Meaninglessness with the lowest mean ($M = 1.67$).

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to check if the differences between means were significant (Table 20). There was a significant difference in means between concern for **Meaninglessness** ($M = 1.67$, $SD = .90$) and concern for Death ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.17$); $t(81) = -3.37$, $p < .01$; and concern for Isolation ($M = 1.90$, $SD = .99$); $t(81) = -2.03$, $p < .05$; and concern for Loss of Autonomy ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 1.14$); $t(81) = -3.07$, $p < .05$. There was no significant difference in means between concern for Meaninglessness and concern for Identity ($M = 1.79$, $SD = .95$); $t(81) = -1.13$, $p > .05$. There was a significant difference in means between concern for **Death** and concern for Identity; $t(81) = 2.66$, $p < .05$. There was no significant difference in means between concern for Death and concern for Isolation; $t(81) = 1.77$, $p > .05$; and concern for Loss of Autonomy; $t(81) = .62$, $p > .05$. There was no significant difference in means between concern for **Isolation** and concern for Loss of Autonomy $t(81) = -1.62$, $p > .05$ and concern for Identity; $t(81) = 1.05$, $p > .05$. There was a significant difference in means between concern for **Loss of Autonomy** and concern for Identity; $t(81) = 2.47$, $p < .05$.

Table 20: Paired-samples t-test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
Concern for Meaninglessness - Concern for the Death	-3.37**	81	.001
Concern for Meaninglessness - Concern for Isolation	-2.03*	81	.046
Concern for Meaninglessness - Concern for Loss of Autonomy	-3.07**	81	.003
Concern for Meaninglessness - Concern for Identity	-1.13	81	.260
Concern for the Death - Concern for Isolation	1.77	81	.081
Concern for the Death - Concern for Loss of Autonomy	.62	81	.537
Concern for the Death - Concern for Identity	2.66*	81	.010
Concern for Isolation - Concern for Loss of Autonomy	-1.62	81	.110
Concern for Isolation - Concern for Identity	1.05	81	.295
Concern for Loss of Autonomy - Concern for Identity	2.47*	81	.016

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

These results suggest that concern for Death is significantly higher than concern for Identity and Meaninglessness but not significantly higher than concern for Loss of Autonomy and it was tending to a significant level as to concern for Isolation. On the other hand, concern for Meaninglessness is significantly lower than concern for Death, Isolation and Loss of Autonomy but not significantly lower than concern for Identity.

Above results reject our hypothesis that there is no hierarchy between the concern for Death, Meaninglessness, Isolation, Loss of Autonomy and Identity. The hierarchy that seems to prevail is the hierarchy of the means:

- 1- Concern for Death
- 2- Concern for Loss of Autonomy
- 3- Concern for Isolation
- 4- Concern for Identity
- 5- Concern for Meaninglessness

This hierarchy was also one of the three prevalent ones among the participants. It was also partly confirmed by the paired t-test as concern for Death was found to be higher than the concern for Identity, Meaninglessness, and almost higher than concern for Isolation. The concern for Identity was found to be lower than loss of Autonomy, which was higher than the concern for Meaninglessness. The latest was in return lower than the concern for Isolation.

Discussion

This study aimed at evaluating the basis of an organizational model developed by Reset Capacity Building, the 4-V model. In order to achieve this goal, first a literature study on existential concerns was done to find theoretical support for the model, then empirical evidence was searched to confirm the theory and the relationships assumed in the model. After describing my findings on these two points I will underline the limitations and strengths of the study before moving towards the implications of the results and the suggestions for further studies.

Theoretical support

In the introduction different theories were described that could give more theoretical ground to the 4-V model. The 4-V model was intuitively developed by Zerbo (2010) based on her personal and professional experience as well as on a milestone of existential thinking, the work of the psychiatrist Irvin Yalom. The book *Existential Psychotherapy* (Yalom, 1980) presents a high-quality theoretical basis for the theory developed by Zerbo (2010). Both theories state that there are four existential concerns that act as a ‘major force in human behavior’ (Koole, 2008). However, Yalom refers to each existential concern in one word: *death, isolation, freedom* and *meaninglessness* whereas Zerbo is more prolific and presents the reader with a sentence for each concern giving the impression that there are actually four groups of existential concerns instead of four existential concerns: ‘*concern for loss, disease and death*'; ‘*concern for rejection and abandonment*'; ‘*concern for loss of autonomy or freedom*' and ‘*concern for existential void*'. Nevertheless, the empirical results are somehow in contradiction with above theories. The part of the model under loop in this study is thus best explained by the Experimental Existential Psychology developed by Greenberg, Koole and Pyszczynski in 2004 (XXP). The results from the Principal component analysis (PCA) showed that there are, as underlined by the XXP, five existential concerns. This was also an incentive to look for new labels to define the five existential

concerns. The reason why we did not take over the labels used by the XXP (death, isolation, freedom, meaning and identity) is that, in some way, it does not respect the spirit behind Zerbo's model. The concerns, as described by Zerbo, are negatively formulated, in the sense that it stems from something humans lack or don't want to have nor experience, while two of the existential concerns described by the XXP are actually positively formulated ('freedom' and 'meaning'). Thus, instead of using 'meaning', the choice was made to employ the negative counterpart 'Meaninglessness'. This alternative is supported by the work of other psychologists like Yalom (1980) and Wong (2009). The same reasoning is behind the selection of 'Loss of Autonomy' over 'Freedom', even if this pick goes against the idea of the one word definition. Nonetheless, this is necessary to increase the face validity of the model, as this allows the reader to differentiate between the concepts of concern and need. Consequently, concern for **Death** is defined as the anxiety emerging from the awareness of the inevitability of death, concern for **Loss of Autonomy** is identified as the fear of losing control on our own behaviour and our lives in general, concern for **Isolation** is described as the insight that living with others bears with it the risk of being rejected and abandoned and concern for **Meaninglessness** is delineated as the anxiety that life has no consistency. As to the concern for Identity, it might appear that the label has a positive formulation but actually the term identity is not negatively or positively connoted and is thus neutral. Moreover, as there was no relationship hypothesized with a particular need no confusion can be created by maintaining this terminology. Finding an adequate label for this sub-dimension was quite difficult as the identity question was not initially part of Zerbo's model. This choice was guided by the fact that the components of this particular dimension were about the meaning of life, the sense of self and its acceptance by others. According to Erikson (1968) identity is not only related to having a clear sense of who we are but also to how people view us. It is therefore very important to feel accepted. Moreover having a clear sense of who we are is closely related to how we view the world and which sense we give to our existence. This was the theoretical framework

that guided the interpretation of this component. Therefore concern for **Identity** refers to people's 'struggle to integrate their diverse experiences to create and maintain a consistent sense of who they are and how they fit into the world throughout life span' (Koole, Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 2006). Consequently, the label could have been changed to 'concern for Identity crisis' however the choice of 'concern for Identity' is consistent with other studies (Wong, 2009) that view the concerns also as negatively connoted. In addition, it is broader and therefore includes every threat to one's identity.

In sum, the aim of this research was to look into the basis of the model: the existential concerns. My conclusion is that the existential approach of Zerbo has enough theoretical ground and that there is enough theoretical support for both the four and five concerns approach. Nevertheless, the empirical research leans more towards the five concerns approach. Moreover, I believe that having clear labels gives more face validity to the model. That is why we would advise Zerbo to take over the five concerns approach along with the labels defined in this study: Concern for Death, concern for Loss of Autonomy, concern for Isolation, concern for Identity and concern for Meaninglessness.

Concerning the 'translation' from concerns to needs, the assumption that needs emerge from existential concerns is consistent with the positive existential psychology (Wong, 2009) where existential themes lead to the quest for a positive counterpart. Similarly, Yalom's statement that 'anxiety restricts growth' (1980) supports the assumption that existential concerns will negatively impact on people's capacity to grow. Likewise, the model assumed a causal direction from the satisfaction of basic needs to growth outcomes. This is a plausible causality and most considered in the literature. The research by the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) similarly indicated that the satisfaction of basic needs is necessary to reach optimal growth (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004).

Findings and impact on the model

From the results it appears that humans have to struggle with five existential concerns: concern for Death, Loss of Autonomy, Isolation, Identity and Meaninglessness. Contrary to Zerbo's assumption, these five concerns do not seem to be equally important but hierarchically organized. Indeed, to the question of whether the five concerns are equally important 29% of the participants responded positively whereas 71% responded negatively. It is worth noticing that the experienced levels of concerns were generally higher in the group that viewed the concerns as equally important than in the group that viewed them as hierarchical and that the hierarchy based on the mean scores were the same among both groups even if the differences between the two groups was not found to be significant. The hierarchy that seemed to prevail was the hierarchy of means of the experienced level of concern with concern for Death ($M = 2.21$) in the first position, secondly the concern for Loss of Autonomy ($M = 2.10$), third the concern for Isolation ($M = 1.90$), fourth the concern for Identity ($M = 1.79$) and as last the concern for Meaninglessness ($M = 1.67$). This hierarchy was partly confirmed by the paired t-test. Parallels can be drawn between this hierarchy and Maslow's hierarchy of needs. One might argue that if human needs emerge from concerns than concern for Death could lead to physiological needs, concern for Loss of Autonomy to safety needs, concern for Isolation to belonging needs, concern for Identity to esteem needs and concern for Meaninglessness to self-actualization needs (Figure 7). However, the relationship between existential concerns and needs as drawn in the 4-V model shows a very complicated pattern. Concern for Death impacts significantly and negatively on the satisfaction of Safety needs and Freedom needs, the concern for Loss of Autonomy impacts significantly and negatively on the satisfaction of all four needs, the concern for Isolation impacts significantly and positively on the satisfaction of Safety, Freedom and Connection needs, and the concern for Identity impacts significantly and negatively on the satisfaction of Freedom and Achievement needs. Finally, the concern for Meaninglessness impacts significantly and negatively on the satisfaction of Safety

needs. This discrepancy can possibly be explained by the fact that, in this thesis, the relationship between the level of concerns and the satisfaction of basic needs was researched and not the rapport between existential concerns and basic needs. Consequently, needs might emerge from concerns but other factors can also influence the satisfaction of basic needs as personality for example.

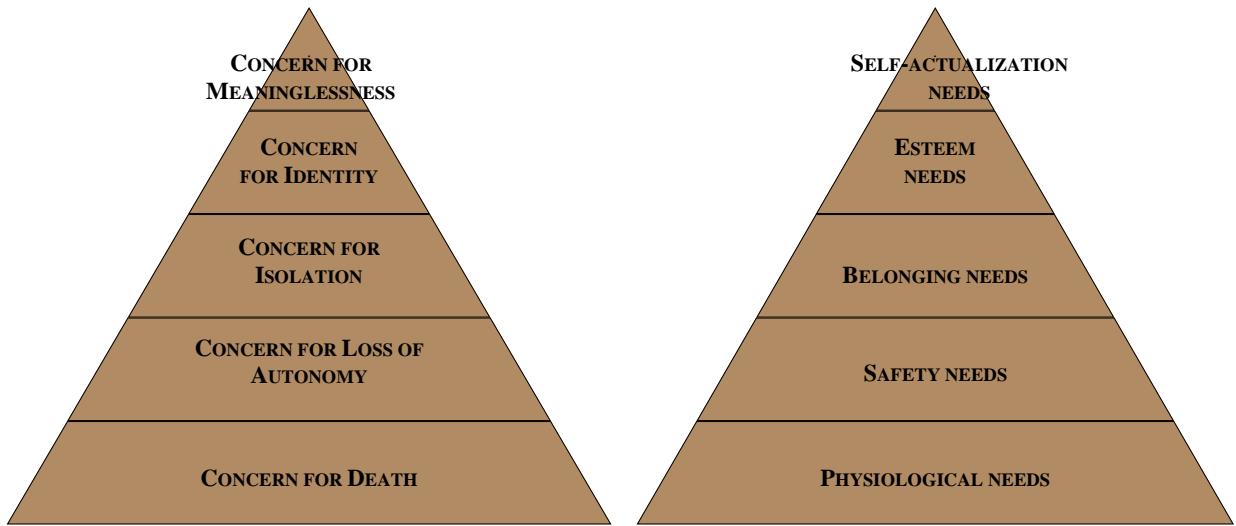


Figure 7: Comparing the hierarchy of concerns and Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Nevertheless, if we assume that the satisfaction of basic needs is mainly influenced by the level of concerns we still can confirm that concern for Death impacts significantly and negatively on the satisfaction of Safety needs and that concern for Loss of Autonomy impacts significantly, strongly and negatively on the satisfaction of Freedom needs. However it seems that concern for Isolation significantly and positively influences the satisfaction of Connection needs and that the concern for Meaninglessness fails to significantly impact on the satisfaction of Achievement needs. However the concern for Identity significantly and negatively influences the satisfaction of Achievement needs. Consequently the detailed model could be refined as follows (Figure 8):



Figure 8: Relationship between existential concerns and the satisfaction of basic needs in the 4-V model

However, it remains striking that concern for Loss of Autonomy was found to be the best predictor for the satisfaction of all four basic needs. This might challenge the model as it would mean that in a work environment only the concern for Loss of Autonomy plays a crucial role in the satisfaction of all basic needs. However, it is also possible that the work environment unconsciously activates the concern for Loss of Autonomy, which gives employees the impression that this concern is very important. This explanation is consistent with other studies, where it was proven that ‘concerns are most influential in human behaviour when these are activated outside of awareness’ (Koole, 2008). Likewise, the results showing that the amount of autonomy employees experience at work highly influences the fulfilment of their basic needs are in line with previous research. The Demand Control Model from Karasek (1989) also posits ‘autonomy’ as a very important resource that can help employees cope with work demands. Consequently, within the work environment the relationship between existential concerns and the satisfaction of basic needs could be depicted as follows (Figure 9):

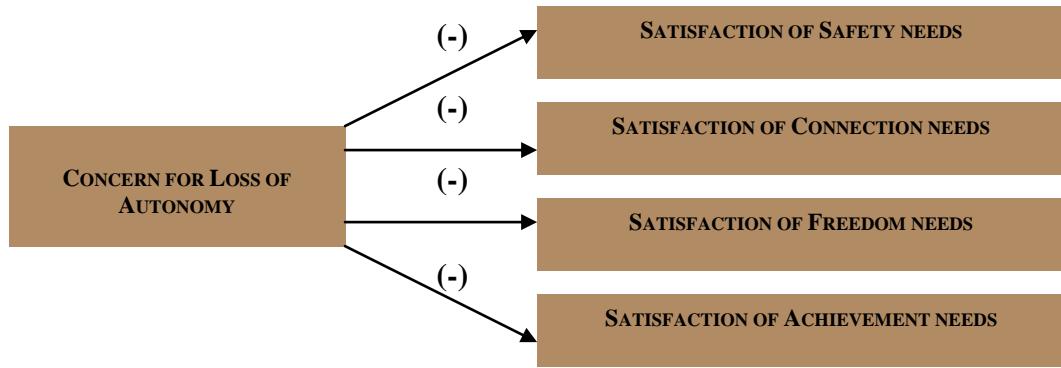


Figure 9: Existential concerns at work

Moreover, the unexpected positive impact of concern for Isolation on the satisfaction of most basic needs undermine its role as concern. However, it might be explained by the fact that the questions in this study were more focusing on physical separation from others whereas recent studies showed that existential isolation is not linked to ‘the physical presence of loved ones’ but on the ‘desire to feel a deep existential connection with others who appear to share (the same) subjective experiences’. It was proven that ‘even when friends and family are physically present, the unbridgeable gap between individuals’ subjective worlds can lead people to feel existentially isolated’ (Koole, Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 2006). We could assume that existential isolation as defined here above will be negatively related to the satisfaction of basic needs. The question remains of whether to include the concern for Isolation in the detailed model or not. It might be advised to keep it out for the time being. In consequence, the detailed model could be changed accordingly (Figure 10).

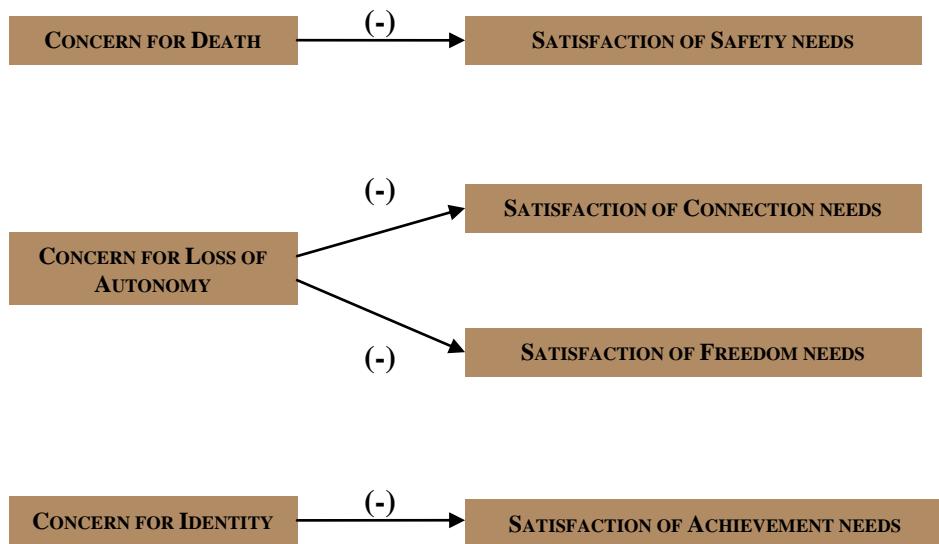


Figure 10: Relationship between existential concerns and the satisfaction of basic needs

A parallel can be drawn between the above version of the model and the Job Demands Resources Model (JD-R) (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli, 2001). Similarly, the JD-R model states that not only ‘autonomy’ but several resources can help coping with work demands.

No significant direct effect of existential concerns on the level of growth was found, however it was confirmed that the satisfaction of basic needs plays a mediating role between existential concerns and the level of growth. This could mean that employees struggling with high levels of existential concerns will face difficulties fulfilling their basic needs and sequentially this will affect their level of growth. However the levels of existential concerns, satisfaction of basic needs and growth were based on self-reported measures which raise the question of whether the employees that experience high levels of existential concerns are really not growing at work or have the impression that they are not growing at work. It seems logical to suppose that employees who struggle with high levels of existential concerns will experience emotional exhaustion. It was argued that ‘the mental health of employees changes the work environment, therefore their chances to get more interesting and challenging tasks are minimized, or that their mental health changes the

way they evaluate their work environment' (De Lange, Taris, Kompier, Houtman & Bongers, 2004). Either ways, it was proven that employees who feel emotionally exhausted experience their work as less positive (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Consequently, employees who have low levels of existential concerns will either perceive or experience high levels of growth.

In sum, even though the detailed model was challenged, it was confirmed that, in general, high levels of concerns impact on people's capacity to fulfil their basic needs and that the satisfaction of basic needs plays a mediating role between existential concerns and growth. Consequently the simplified model remains unchanged (Figure 6).

The results also showed that socio-demographic variables play a role in how existential concerns are experienced. Young employees were found to be more concerned with Meaninglessness and Isolation than older employees and women were associated with higher levels of concern for Death and Identity than men. These results demonstrate that gender and age play a role whereas level of education has totally no effect. Young women seem to be a group that is more concerned than the rest of the population, especially in the category between 26 and 30. It is quite surprising that both gender and age seem to impact on the level of experienced existential concerns while the level of education does not reach a significant level. This can possibly be explained by the fact that the approached group was quite homogeneous as to the educational level, 93.9% of the participants had a high education degree (WO or HBO).

Limitations and strengths of the study

The above findings had several methodological limitations. First, the data were provided from a cross sectional design hence no real causal conclusions can be drawn. Thus, a longitudinal design in future studies is needed in order to further investigate these relationships. Secondly, only self-reported measures were used which can not be checked for socially desirable responses. It is suggested that in future research more 'objective' behavioral assessments combining questionnaires with structured interviews with employees might provide more objective outcomes.

Another limitation of this study was that some questions about the concerns were very direct and this might have influenced how the participants filled in the questionnaire. Participants could have been confused and might have provided a social desired answer. Including a social desirability scale to the questionnaire could correct for socially desirable responses in the future. Furthermore, the questions about concern for Isolation were focusing on physical isolation whereas it should have focused on existential Isolation (ostracism, social exclusion ...). This could perhaps explain the unexpected positive relationship between concern for Isolation and the satisfaction of basic needs.

The strength of the study is that the data was collected in different work settings approaching employees who really deal with existential concerns at work. The study used a healthy working population, contrary to most existential work that focuses on patients and the psychopathological role of existential concerns (Yalom, 1980) or motivational studies that mostly involve psychology students (Ryan & Deci, 2000). We can therefore conclude that the results can apply to almost every organization in the Netherlands.

Implications for the work environment

These findings are important for both employees and the organizations where they are working. The indication that high levels of concerns for Loss of Autonomy have a strong negative impact on the satisfaction of employees' basic needs suggests that making sure that employees are not afraid of losing their autonomy at work will create the adequate environment for the fulfilment of basic needs. It has been proven that employees who have control on their work are capable to heighten the level of satisfaction of their basic needs at work. This is beneficial for the employees in two ways: on a personal level the employee is less anxious and on a professional level the employee's needs at work are more satisfied. Organizations can use the questionnaire developed by Reset, and improved by Houwaart and the author, to measure employees' level of concern for loss of Autonomy. The diagnosis can be used to set up coaching and training sessions directed to teach

employees how to take control over their work and to reduce their anxiety with the role of external factors to a manageable level in order to live a productive meaningful life at work. It is assumed that employees, who feel that their basic needs are fulfilled, develop a positive approach towards work which makes them happier, more engaged and capable to grow.

Suggestions for further research

The results of this study brought a lot of insights on the effects of existential concerns in a work environment, nevertheless some questions remain unanswered. The scores on the concern questions were lower than expected which could be explained by the fact that these concerns operate outside of awareness (Yalom, 1980; Koole, 2008). Consequently, in future studies it would be interesting to use tools that analyze unconscious foundations of human behavior. One of the most common tools in experimental existential psychology is the priming method, in which the impact of exposure to stimuli (primes) on people's thoughts, feelings and actions is observed. For instance, to measure the concern for Death the mortality salience paradigm could be used (Pyszczynski, Solomon & Greenberg, 2003) where some participants are reminded of their own mortality. Other paradigms can be used to assess the other concerns.

The reported levels of concerns were not affected by whether the participants view the concerns as equally important or hierarchical. This could be due to the fact that the term importance has been interpreted in different ways by the participants, but could also be linked to the unconscious influence of the existential concerns. The concerns might be blocked out of consciousness so that the individual can function in society; this would mean that people are not aware of how much their behavior is impacted by their profound anxieties. When the question of importance was directly asked people reported death anxiety as the most important existential concern whereas it appears that concern for loss of autonomy is most significant when it comes to the satisfaction of basic needs at work. Further research could look into the unconscious work of

the existential concerns and their implications on psychological conflicts. This could bring more light on how existential concerns are ‘unconsciously’ activated.

The importance of the five existential concerns might vary according to gender, age and personality characteristics. Consequently, longitudinal studies where a group of participants is followed for a longer period of time may bring more details on the effect of individual differences on the strength of existential concerns at different stage of one’s life. It might also reveal whether the satisfaction of basic needs is mainly influenced by existential concerns or if personal differences also play a role.

Another remaining question concerns the hierarchy of the concerns. More research into the relationship between the hierarchy of concerns and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs could be of very fascinating theoretical impact.

One more question that is worth asking is whether the levels of existential concerns affect the perception or the actual level of growth. This might be done by comparing employees’ self-reported level of growth with their manager’s view on their level of growth.

Finally, we should also study the interventions used to reduce the level of existential concerns. Mapping which interventions are effective in reducing or dealing with existential concerns would help organizations provide adequate training for their employees.

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Other consulted websites:

www.danielsoper.com

www.surveymonkey.com

Appendix

Appendix a: Vragenlijsten meetmoment 1

Deelonderzoek 1

Geachte heer, mevrouw,

Deze vragenlijst maakt onderdeel uit van een onderzoek naar groei op het werk in het kader van mijn afstudeerstage aan de Universiteit Leiden. Het onderzoek is een samenwerkingsproject tussen Universiteit Leiden en het netwerkorganisatie Reset Capacity Building.

Voor goed personeelsbeleid is het van belang inzicht te krijgen in wat voor behoeften jullie als werknemers hebben om in staat te zijn te groeien.

Het onderzoek naar groei bestaat uit 2 delen:

- 1- Deel 1 in maart (deelonderzoek 1), dit onderdeel gaat over:
 - Zorgen en behoeften op het werk
 - Definiëren van groei
- 2- Deel 2 in mei (deelonderzoek 2), dit onderdeel gaat over:
 - Bekangrijkheid behoeften
 - Werknemers groei

Onderstaande vragenlijst heeft betrekking op deelonderzoek 1.

De resultaten van het onderzoek zullen worden gebruikt om meer inzicht te verschaffen in werknemers behoeften en groei. Het is vanuit wetenschappelijk oogpunt van groot belang dat u de vragen eerlijk invult. De verkregen gegevens worden strikt vertrouwelijk en anoniem verwerkt. De vragenlijsten komen buiten de onderzoekers niemand onder ogen. Het is voor geïnteresseerden mogelijk om via de mail een korte samenvatting van de resultaten van het onderzoek te krijgen.

Het invullen van de vragenlijst neemt ongeveer 20-30 minuten in beslag. Kruis per uitspraak slechts een mogelijkheid aan. U doet er goed aan de vragen snel af te werken. Sla geen vragen over en denk bij het beantwoorden van de vragen niet te lang na, het gaat om uw eerste indruk. Uw persoonlijke mening is van belang, dus goede of foute antwoorden zijn er niet!

Voor het invullen van de vragenlijst kunt u de volgende link gebruiken: <http://www.reset.nl/4vmodel>

Uw deelnamenummer is:

De deadline voor het invullen is 31 maart 2011. Deelname is op vrijwillige basis. Voor vragen en of opmerkingen, kunt u per email contact met ons opnemen via nora@re-set.nl. Uw deelname wordt zeer op prijs gesteld!

Bij voorbaat hartelijke dank voor uw medewerking!

Met vriendelijke groet,

Nora EL MAANNI

Het 4-V model vragenlijst

Veiligheid

1. Ik vind dat ik alles goed heb geregeld op het werk.
2. Ik heb vertrouwen in mezelf op het werk.
3. Ik voel mij veilig bij mijn collega's.
4. Ik voel me veilig bij mijn directe leidinggevende.
5. Ik voel me wel eens overvallen door een beoordeling van mijn directe leidinggevende.*
6. De regels binnen mijn organisatie rondom vrije dagen en vakanties zijn duidelijk voor mij.
7. Mijn wensen rondom vrije dagen en vakanties in mijn organisatie worden gerespecteerd door mijn directe leidinggevende.
8. In het geval van wisselende roosters word ik tijdig geïnformeerd zodat ik weet waar ik aan toe ben.
9. Ik heb toegang tot informatie over het personeelsbeleid binnen mijn organisatie.
10. Ik word tijdig geïnformeerd ten aanzien van wijzigingen in het personeelsbeleid binnen mijn organisatie.
11. Mijn organisatie neemt voldoende maatregelen om ongelukken op het werk te voorkomen.
12. Ik word regelmatig gepest op het werk. *
13. Ik word nooit gepest op het werk.
14. Mijn organisatie biedt mogelijkheden voor het melden van pestgedrag op de werkvloer.
15. Ik word regelmatig (seksueel of anderszins) geïntimideerd op het werk. *
16. Ik word nooit (seksueel of anderszins) geïntimideerd op het werk.
17. Ik word regelmatig gediscrimineerd op het werk. *
18. Ik word nooit gediscrimineerd op het werk.
19. Ik vind mijn organisatie integer.
20. Ik vind dat ik met respect behandeld word door mijn directe leidinggevende wanneer ik zieke ben.

21. Ik vind dat er zorgvuldig met personeelsgegevens wordt omgegaan binnen mijn organisatie.
22. Ik durf persoonlijke informatie te delen met mijn collega's.
23. Ik vind dat ik met respect wordt behandeld door mijn collega's.
24. Ik vind dat ik met respect wordt behandeld door mijn directe leidinggevende.
25. Ik voel me veilig op het werk.

Zorgvragen met betrekking tot veiligheid

1. Ik ben regelmatig bang dat ik lichamelijk niet gezond ben.
2. Ik ben nooit bang dat ik een ziekte heb. *
3. Ik ben regelmatig bang voor de dood.
4. Ik ben nooit bang voor de dood. *
5. Ik ben regelmatig bang om mijn naasten te verliezen.
6. Ik ben nooit bang om de mensen om mij heen te verliezen *

Verbinding

1. Ik voel mij thuis binnen mijn organisatie.
2. Ik ga met plezier naar mijn werk.
3. Ik ga niet met plezier naar mijn werk. *
4. Ik ben trots op mijn organisatie.
5. Ik vind dat ik een bijdrage lever aan mijn organisatie
6. Ik denk dat ik word gemist als ik niet op het werk ben
7. Ik kan me vinden in de doelstellingen van mijn organisatie
8. Mijn collega's staan open voor mijn input.
9. Ik sta open voor input van mijn collega's.
10. Ik kan me meestal vinden in de beoordeling die ik krijg van mijn direct leidinggevende.
11. Ik kan me vinden in de normen van mijn organisatie.

12. Ik kan me vinden in de visie van mijn organisatie.
13. Ik ben trots op het product van mijn organisatie.
14. Ik ben – als mijn organisatie verlies dreigt te lijden – bereid om harder te werken zonder daar meteen voor gecompenseerd te worden.
15. Ik ben – als mijn organisatie verlies dreigt te lijden – niet bereid om meer te werken zonder daar meteen voor gecompenseerd te worden. *
16. Er wordt aandacht besteed aan verbinding met mijn collega's door mijn organisatie.
17. Ik vind dat mijn organisatie zich positief onderscheidt van andere organisaties.
18. In mijn privé-omgeving laat ik mij regelmatig in positieve zin uit over mijn organisatie.
19. Ik voel mij gewaardeerd door mijn collega's.
20. Ik voel mij verbonden met mijn collega's.
21. Het raakt me wanneer anderen slecht praten over mijn organisatie.
22. Ik word blij wanneer mijn organisatie positief in het nieuws komt.

Zorgvragen m.b.t. verbinding

1. Ik ben regelmatig bang om afgewezen te worden.
2. Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word afgewezen. *
3. Ik ben regelmatig bang om verlaten te worden.
4. Ik ben nooit bang dat ik word verlaten. *

Vrijheid

1. Ik kan uitdrukken wat ik voel, denk en vind op het werk.
2. Als ik de keuze had zou ik mijn werk geheel anders indelen.
3. Ik moet mij teveel aanpassen aan de normen van mijn organisatie. *
4. Ik denk dat mijn collega's mij anders dan anderen vinden. *
5. Ik kan zelf over mijn werkwijze beslissen.
6. Ik heb beslissingsbevoegdheid.

7. Ik vind dat ik voldoende verantwoordelijkheden heb.
8. Ik kan mijn werkplek zelf inrichten.
9. Ik kan mijn werktijden zelf indelen.
10. Ik kan zelf beslissen wanneer ik thuis wil werken.
11. Ik moet mijn kleding aanpassen aan de eisen van mijn organisatie. *
12. Ik voel me regelmatig als een nummer behandeld door mijn organisatie. *
13. Ik voel me regelmatig ingeperkt door formulieren en regeltjes op het werk. *
14. Ik heb de ruimte om fouten te maken op het werk.
15. Ik vind dat mijn vrijheid wordt beperkt door mijn organisatie. *
16. Ik kan creatief zijn op het werk.
17. Ik kan omgaan met wie ik wil op het werk.
18. Mijn ideeën worden regelmatig de kop ingedrukt. *
19. Ik kan zelf bepalen welke prioriteiten ik stel op het werk.
20. Ik vind dat veel werkzaamheden mij worden opgelegd. *
21. Ik vind dat ik vrijheden heb binnen mijn organisatie.

Zorgvragen m.b.t. vrijheid

1. Ik ben bang om mijn vrijheid te verliezen.
2. Ik ben niet bang dat mijn vrijheid wordt ingeperkt. *
3. Ik ben bang om mijn autonomie kwijt te raken.
4. Ik ben niet bang dat ik mijn autonomie kwijtraak. *

Verwezenlijking

1. Ik vind dat ik het goede werk heb gekozen.
2. Ik weet wat ik wil in mijn leven.
3. Ik stel regelmatig nieuwe doelen in mijn leven.

4. Ik kijk met tevredenheid terug op wat ik in mijn leven al verwezenlijkt heb.
5. Ik ben in staat om mijn doelen te verwezenlijken.
6. Mijn organisatie neemt mijn ambities serieus.
7. Mijn werk heeft toegevoegde waarde voor de doelen van mijn organisatie.
8. Mijn ambities en die van mijn organisatie houden gelijke tred.
9. Mijn organisatie steunt mij in mijn ontwikkeling.
10. Ik ben succesvol.
11. Ik geniet oplecht van mijn behaalde successen.
12. Ik ben in staat om complimenten te ontvangen.
13. Mijn organisatie biedt mij de mogelijkheden om door te kunnen groeien.
14. Mijn werk geeft mij energie.
15. Mijn talenten worden door mijn organisatie benut.
16. Mijn organisatie biedt mij mogelijkheden om mij te ontwikkelen.
17. Mijn organisatie biedt mij de mogelijkheden om mijn talenten te ontwikkelen.
18. Ik ben tevreden met mijn leven.
19. Binnen mijn organisatie kan ik groeien op mijn eigen tempo.

Zorgvragen m.b.t. verwezenlijking

1. Ik ben bang dat mijn bestaan er niet toe doet.
2. Ik ben regelmatig bang dat het leven zinloos is.
3. Ik ben nooit bang dat het leven zinloos is. *
4. Ik ben bang dat mijn leven geen toegevoegde waarde heeft.
5. Ik ben bang dat mijn leven doelloos is.

* Omgepoolde vragen

Groei vraag

Wat verstaat u onder groei?

Het 4V model is een diagnostisch instrument dat er vanuit gaat dat het vervullen van bepaalde behoeften ertoe leidt dat men in een staat is te groeien. Door middel van een vragenlijst probeert dit model dus te ontdekken of er groei mogelijk is. In hoeverre definiëren de volgende begrippen de mogelijkheid tot groei voor u?

Kies uit deze lijst de maximaal drie begrippen die volgens u het meest van toepassing zijn. Orden binnen deze drie begrippen, de volgens u meest toepasbare (1) naar steeds minder toepasbare (3).

- Creativiteit
- Persoonlijke ontwikkeling
- Productiviteit
- Zelfontplooiing
- Zelfregulering
- Psychologische gezondheid
- Welzijn
- Verhoogde zelf motivatie (intrinsieke motivatie)
- Mogelijkheid om te bereiken
- Ontwikkeling
- Het bereiken van doelen
- Zelf- actualisatie
- Vooruitgang
- Innovatie
- Het stellen van doelen
- Vooruit kijken
- Flexibiliteit
- Uitbreiding
- Anders, namelijk

Deelonderzoek 2

Geachte heer, mevrouw,

Om het onderzoek waarvoor u eerder een vragenlijst heeft ingevuld compleet te maken, vraag ik u om nog 2 vragen in te vullen.

Voor het invullen van deze vragen kunt u de volgende link gebruiken: <http://www.re-set.nl/4v>

Uw deelnamenummer is:

De deadline voor het invullen van de vragen is **Maandag 16 mei aanstaande, 17.00.**

Bij het invullen van de twee vragen gaat het om uw mening.

Er is hierbij geen goed of fout.

Wederom wil ik u vragen zo eerlijk mogelijk te antwoorden.

Na het afronden van de twee vragen zullen alle emailadressen met bijbehorende deelnamenummer worden verwijderd, om uw anonimiteit te waarborgen.

Dit geldt alleen indien geen individuele terugkoppeling gevraagd is, dan zullen uw gegevens verwijderd worden na deze terugkoppeling.

Als u nog vragen of opmerkingen heeft naar aanleiding van deze vragen dan kunt u een email sturen aan kimberley@re-set.nl.

Nogmaals ontzettend bedankt voor uw medewerking,

Met vriendelijke groet,

Nora El Maanni

Belangrijkheid

Het onderzoek waar u deel aan neemt gaat er vanuit dat er vier behoeften zijn die bevredigd moeten worden wil men in staat zijn te groeien in de breedste zin. Hieronder vind u een korte beschrijving van deze vier behoeften, de zogenaamde 4 V's.

Veiligheid

Veiligheid verwijst naar de behoefte om verzekerd te zijn van minimale bestaansmiddelen als inkomen, eten en drinken, een dak boven het hoofd en een zekere voorspelbaarheid in de directe omgeving. Ook gaat het hier om de behoefte aan structuur, regelmaat en hygiëne.

Verbinding

Verbinding verwijst naar de behoefte om erbij te horen, deel van een gemeenschap uit te maken en geïnspireerd te zijn door een 'samen'- gevoel. Verbinding gaat ook over liefde en respect, over het idee dat de ander wenst dat je aanwezig bent.

Vrijheid

Vrijheid verwijst naar de behoefte aan een minimale mate van autonomie. Elk individu heeft behoefte aan een eigen identiteit en de ruimte om naar die identiteit te handelen.

Verwezenlijking

Verwezenlijking verwijst naar de behoefte om aan zingeving te doen, om een product te verwezenlijken of een ervenis achter te laten. Ook de mogelijkheid om te groeien, ieder binnen hun eigen tempo of niveau behoort tot verwezenlijking.

De vraag hierbij is; vindt u deze vier behoeften allen even belangrijk?

- Ja
- Nee

Wanneer ja wordt aangeklikt → einde onderzoek, dankwoord.

Indien nee;

Geef aan in welke volgorde deze behoeften voor u als persoon belangrijk zijn.

Hierbij kan er 1 belangrijker zijn de rest bijv.: Eerst verwezenlijking, dan de overige.

Maar er kunnen er ook 2 of 3 belangrijker zijn voor u bijv.: Verbinding en vrijheid belangrijker dan veiligheid en verwezenlijking. Of veiligheid, vrijheid en verbinding belangrijker dan verwezenlijking.

U bent vrij te antwoorden zoals u wilt. Geef hieronder aan welke volgorde voor u als persoon geldt;

Dankwoord

Bedankt voor uw deelname aan dit onderzoek.

Wij stellen het zeer op prijs dat u de tijd heeft genomen de vragen in te vullen.

Appendix b: Vragenlijsten meetmoment 2

Beste deelnemer,

Alvast bedankt voor het invullen van de vragenlijst!

Deze vragenlijst maakt onderdeel uit van een onderzoek naar zorgen in het kader van mijn afstudeerscriptie psychologie aan de Universiteit Leiden.

Het onderzoek is een samenwerking tussen Universiteit Leiden en organisatie adviesbureau Reset Capacity Building.

Voor het invullen van de vragenlijst kunt u de volgende link gebruiken:

Deze koppeling is uitsluitend bedoeld voor de combinatie van deze enquête en uw e-mailadres.
Stuur dit bericht dus niet aan derden

Het invullen van de vragenlijst neemt hooguit 5 minuten in beslag.

De deadline voor het invullen van de vragenlijst is maandag 16 mei 2011 om 17:00.

Voor vragen en of opmerkingen, kunt u per email contact met mij opnemen via nora@reset.nl.
Uw deelname wordt zeer op prijs gesteld!

Bij voorbaat hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!

Met vriendelijke groet,

Nora El Maanni

Zorgvragenlijst



Algemene instructie

In deze vragenlijst wordt u informatie gegeven over onderzoek naar zorgen. Na een korte introductie wordt naar uw mening gevraagd.

Wilt u bij elke uitspraak het antwoord aanvinken dat het beste uw mening weergeeft. De van toepassing zijnde beoordelingsschaal treft u bij elke vraag aan; let op deze kan variëren per vraag.

U kunt hierbij niet goed of fout antwoorden: we zijn geïnteresseerd in uw persoonlijke mening. Denk niet al te lang na over de vragen; het gaat om uw eerste indruk. Probeer wel bij elke vraag een antwoord te geven en sla geen vragen over.

Met het beantwoorden van deze vragen geeft u toestemming dat deze gegevens gebruikt worden voor wetenschappelijke doeleinden. Vanzelfsprekend worden alle gegevens anoniem verwerkt.

Hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!

Waar maak ik me zorgen over?

Het onderzoek waar u aan deelneemt is op zoek naar wat voor zorgen er bij mensen spelen. Wij gaan er vanuit dat er vijf zogenaamde basiszorgen zijn.

Hieronder vind u een korte beschrijving van deze vijf zorgen:

- Zorg voor de dood: gebaseerd op de angst om zelf ziek te worden of dood te gaan.
- Zorg voor identiteit: gebaseerd op de angst om niet geaccepteerd, gewaardeerd te worden voor wie u bent.
- Zorg voor eenzaamheid: gebaseerd op de angst om geïsoleerd te zijn van anderen.
- Zorg voor controleverlies: gebaseerd op de angst om autonomie, vrijheid en levensruimte te verliezen.
- Zorg voor zinledigheid: gebaseerd op de angst dat het leven zinloos is.

1-De vraag hierbij is; vindt u deze vijf zorgen allen even belangrijk?

- Ja
- Nee

Heeft u nee geantwoord bij vraag 1, vul dan vraag 2 in.

Heeft u ja geantwoord? ga dan door naar vraag 3.

Geef aan in welke volgorde deze zorgen voor u als persoon belangrijk zijn. U bent vrij te antwoorden zoals u wilt.

2- Geef hieronder aan welke volgorde voor u als persoon geldt:

De volgende 5 uitspraken gaan over in hoeverre deze zorgen bij u een rol spelen.

Lees elke uitspraak zorgvuldig en geef aan welke uitspraak uw mening het beste weergeeft.

Vink slechts één keuze aan per uitspraak.

(1: helemaal oneens, 5: helemaal eens)

3- Als ik naar mijn leven kijk, dan maak ik me zorgen als:

- Ik vind dat mijn leven doelloos is
- Ik vaak aan de dood denk
- Ik me niet geliefd voel
- Ik niet mijn eigen keuzes kan maken
- Ik het gevoel heb dat mijn identiteit bedreigd wordt

Bedankt!

Bedankt voor uw deelname aan dit onderzoek.