



University of St.Gallen



6th St. Gallen Diversity & Inclusion Week

Actually, I'm not like that - a critical view on authenticity and roles
12 – 16 September 2022

Our Speaker



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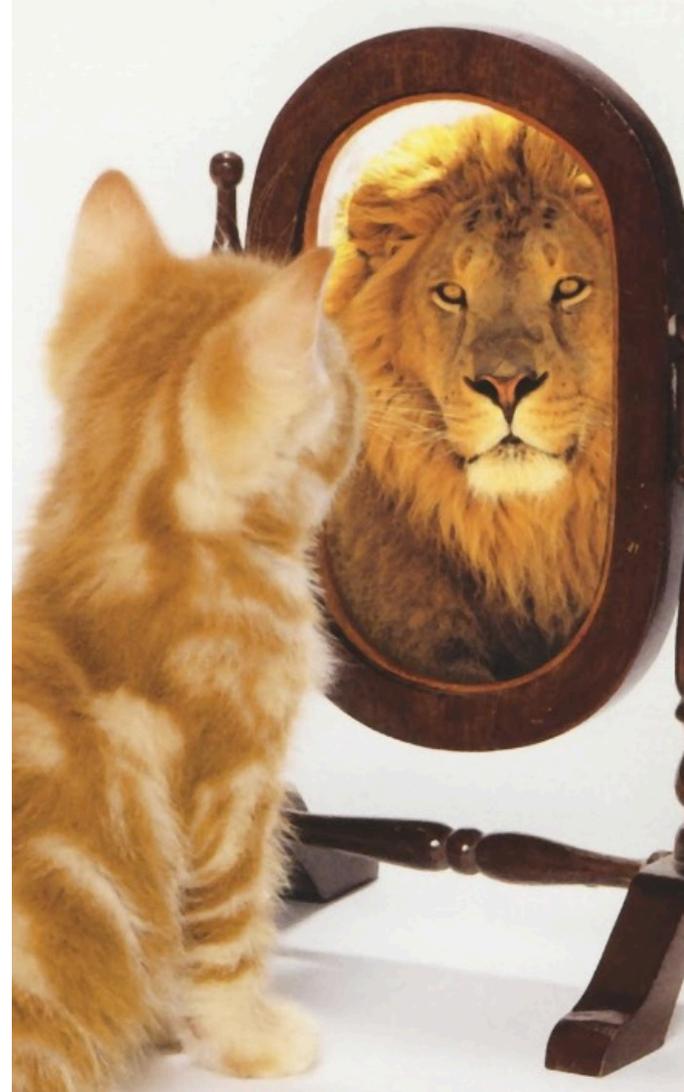
University of St.Gallen

Institute for Business Ethics

Actually, I'm not like that

a critical view on
authenticity and roles

From insight to impact.



Language is not an exact representation
of the world.

At its best, it adequately represents
how we see the world.

Authenticity is great....

- In general, authenticity describes the quality of being real or true
- «To be authentic» is perceived as something good for the individual
 - being at peace with oneself
 - being true to oneself
 - saying what one feels
 - living one's own values
- «**Become, who you are**» (Nietzsche)
in other words: (essence precedes existence)
- An imperative of being true to oneself and living against expectations («living your own truth») unquestionably contributed a to overcoming entrenched social norms (artefacts) as well as.

Authenticity is great....



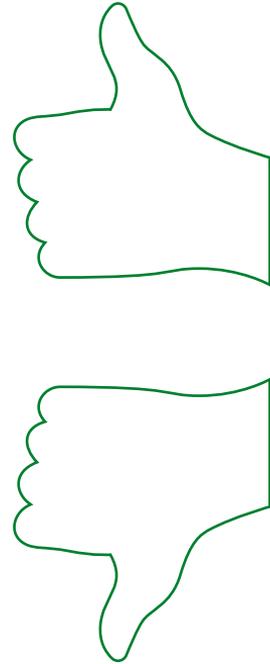
Little excursion: Thinking Queer

- **Commonality of queer approaches: societal categories and expectations are to be**
 - Revealed and/or demonstrated,
 - disturbed,
 - questioned,
 - as well as the power structured connected with them.
- **What is normal/expected?**
And why?
Why is „not normal/expected“ bad here?
- **Where does a difference really make a difference?**

Authenticity is great.... right?

Being (perceived as) authentic

- Sympathy and antipathy traditionally play minor roles in everyday consumption – however, with online shopping, online evaluation and other digitally mediated services (AIRBnB, UBER etc.) trust in established platforms has been supplemented by sympathy and antipathy (via ratings)
- An imperative for authenticity can be observed here as well – however, the „good“ host seems to be mediocre: reserved, friendly, reliable, clean, open, but not too chatty. People with rough edges stand much of a chance on these platforms.
- So, people act upon norms that being authentic. «Be authentic» is now a performative contradiction.



Authenticity is great.... right?

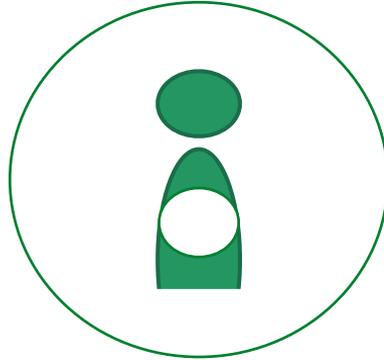
An obsession with authenticity

«The fetish of authenticity» (Diderichsen)

- The market offers a lot of different products and services to «find you true self»
- Marketing (bringing something to the market)
 - Advertising in the mass media
 - Staging, whitewashing, persuasion tactics, "artificial".
 - Answer:Authenticity!
 - Staging of non-staging: natural, genuine, undisguised
 - Answer: Exposure!
 - Staging of the staging of non-staging: exaggerated, ironic, honest
 - Answer: ?

Authenticity is great.... right?

A criterion of «good»



- Actors and authors are evaluated on the basis if they *are* what they are performing or write about
- From an artistic point of view, a performance or a book can be great, but the evaluation is negative
- (Perceived) authenticity becomes a standard for evaluation
- Being authentic is seen as being credible – is not being authentic lying?
 - Perceived Authenticity (e.g. Turunen 2017)

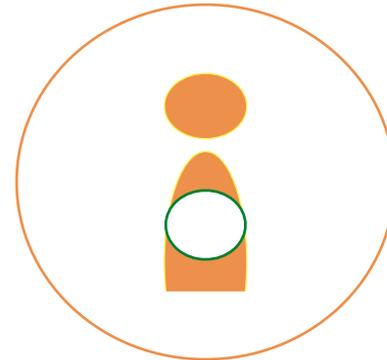
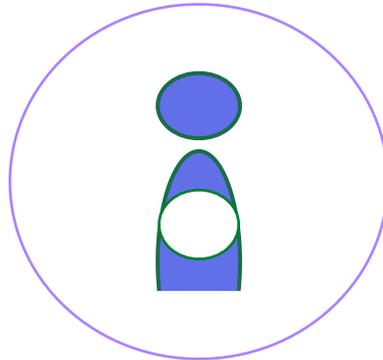
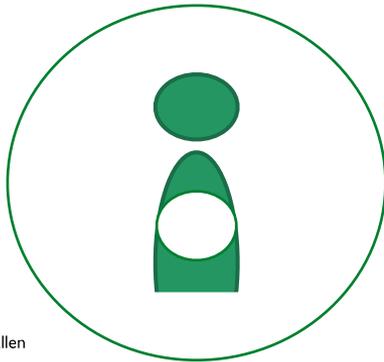
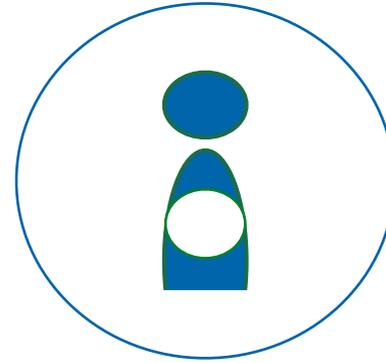
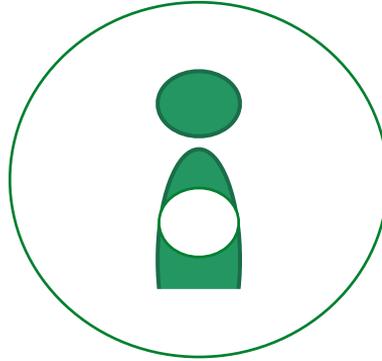
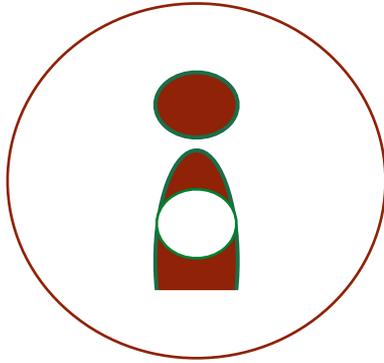
**You aren't
doing it wrong**



**if no one knows
what you are doing.**

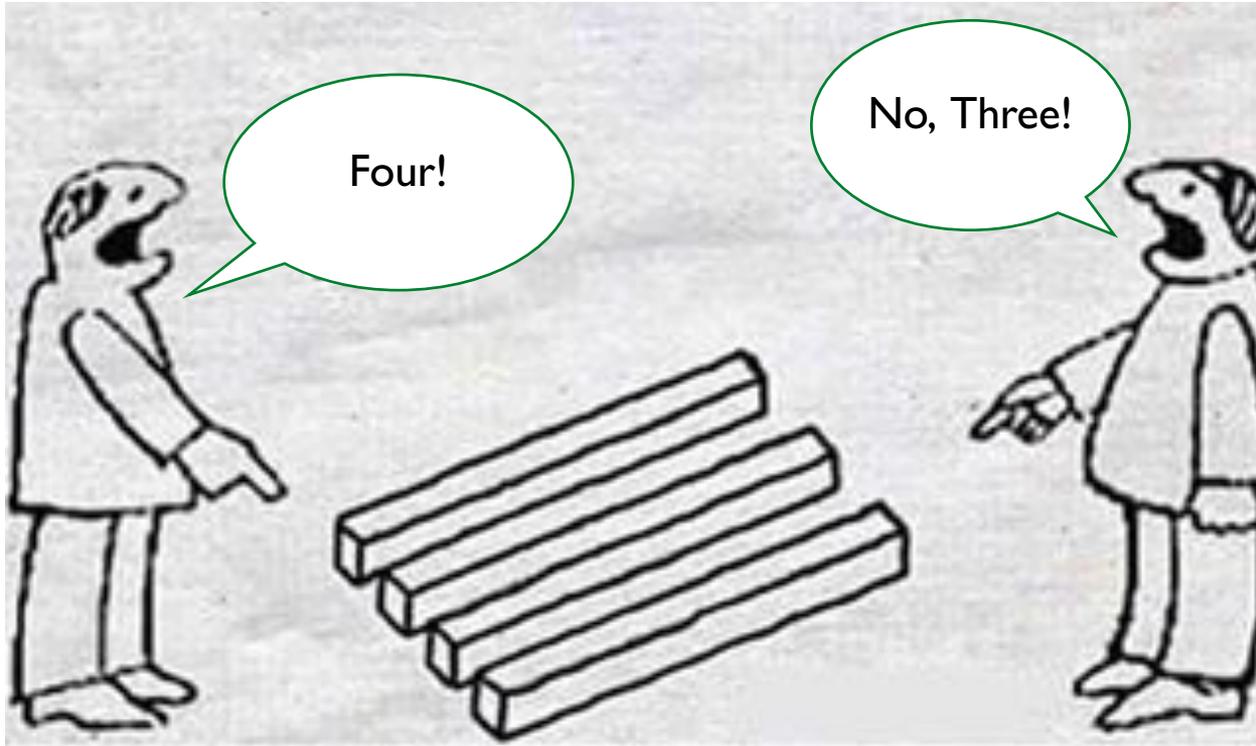
Authenticity is great.... right?

From Community to Isolated Individuals

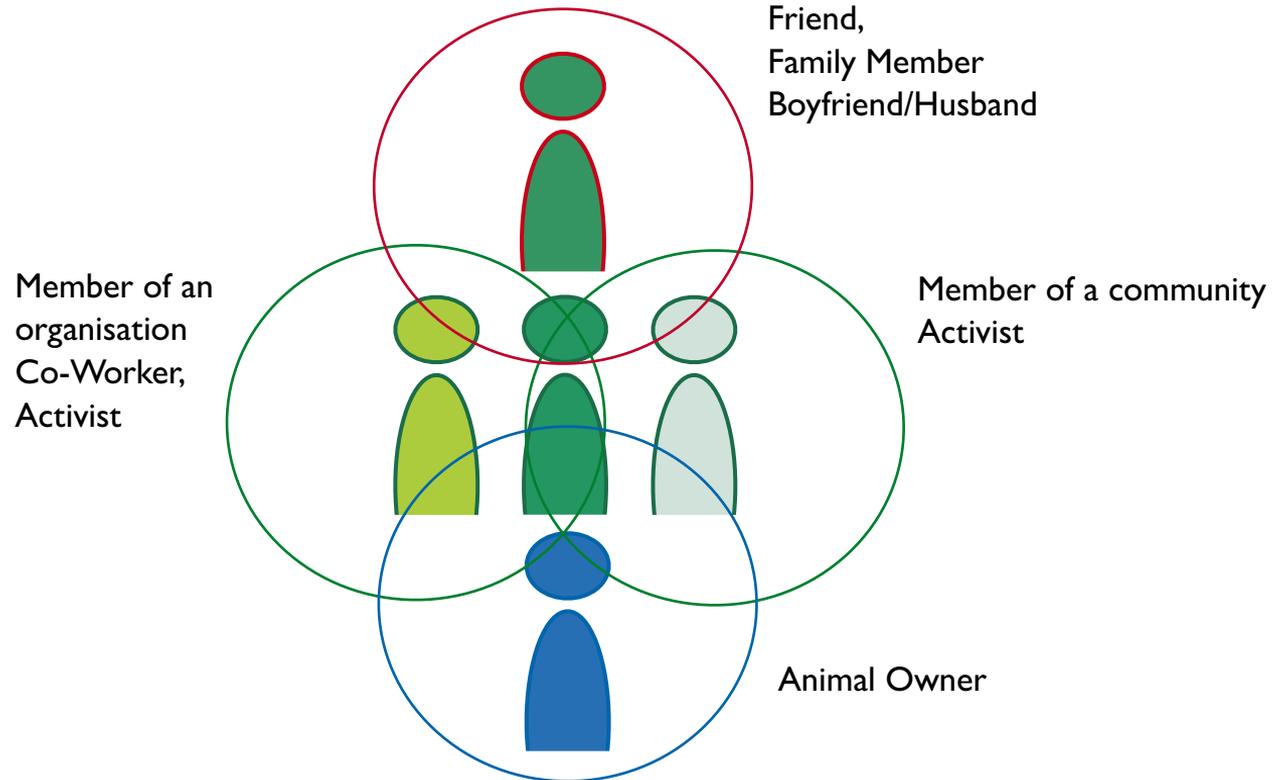


«Do you know or do you only believe that your name is L.W.?»

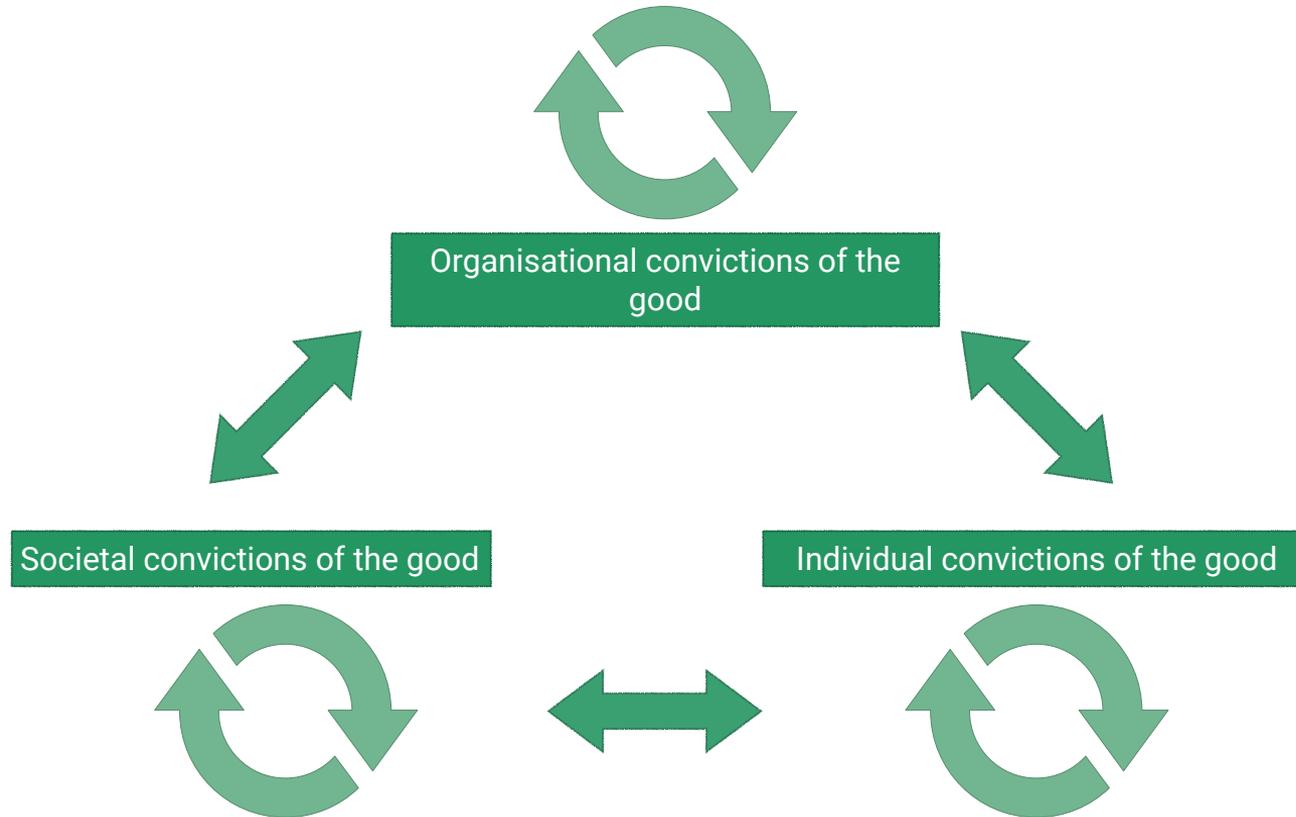
Wittgenstein, On Certainty



Evaluation based on roles



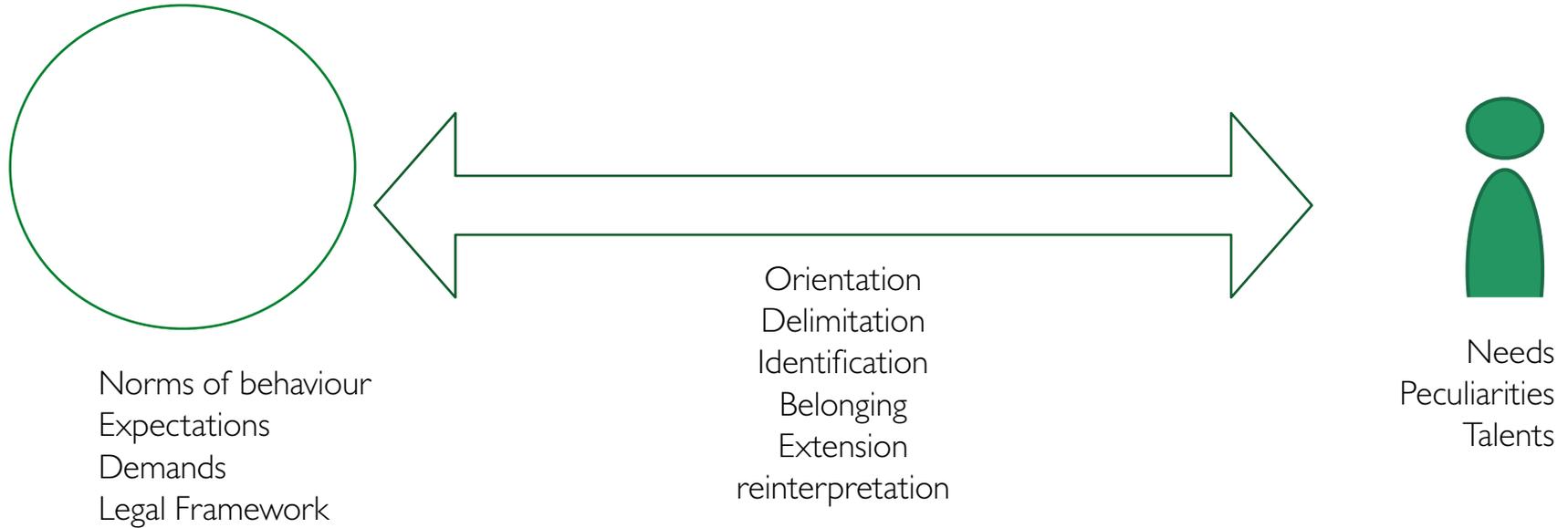
Convictions of the good



Existentialism

- **«One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman»**
(Simone de Beauvoir: The Second Sex)
- **„Human beings are what they make themselves to be. [...] Existence precedes essence.“**
(Jean-Paul Sartre: Existentialism is a Humanism)

The individual and its role(s)



«Because I'm actually quite different, but I so rarely get to do it.»
(Ödön von Horváth: Zur schönen Aussicht)

My takeaways

- Feelings are important, but not necessarily «right» with regard to a situation or an issue.
They might also change with knowledge or experience.
- An essentialist perception of identity appears problematic
- An imperative of authenticity is not a good excuse for bad behaviour
- The problems with the concept of authenticity should not distract from constantly question and re-justify social norms

Maybe it's not a burnout
after all



Maybe the job is shit

meta bene

Upcoming events CCDI

- **Logib Workshops**, Language: FR, [register here](#)
20 September, 27 September
- **Infoevents «Aiming Higher – Karriereentwicklung für Assistenzärztinnen»**
Dates and soon also registration [here](#)
- **Swiss Leadership, Inclusion, & Diversity Summit**
Save the date: 1 – 3 June 2023



All our offers can also be found at www.ccdi-unisg.ch and updates on upcoming events on our [LinkedIn page](#).

SAVE THE DATE: D&I Week 2023



The 7. St. Gallen Diversity & Inclusion Week
will take place from **11 - 15 September 2023!**

You will find the slides and further information on our website www.inclusion-tagung.ch in a few weeks.

Note: The sponsors of the D&I Week are in no way responsible for the content presented by the University of St. Gallen.

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