



# Ethics and Practice to Being a “Trusted Expert” in Health Impact Assessment

Ryngan Pyper

19 MAY 15:00-16:30

# Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

**HIA involves  
a series of  
professional  
judgements  
that draw on  
information  
sources.**

- ... is a process**
- ... which systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects**
- ... of a project, program, plan, policy or strategy**
- ... on the health of a population**
- ... and the distribution of those effects within the population.**

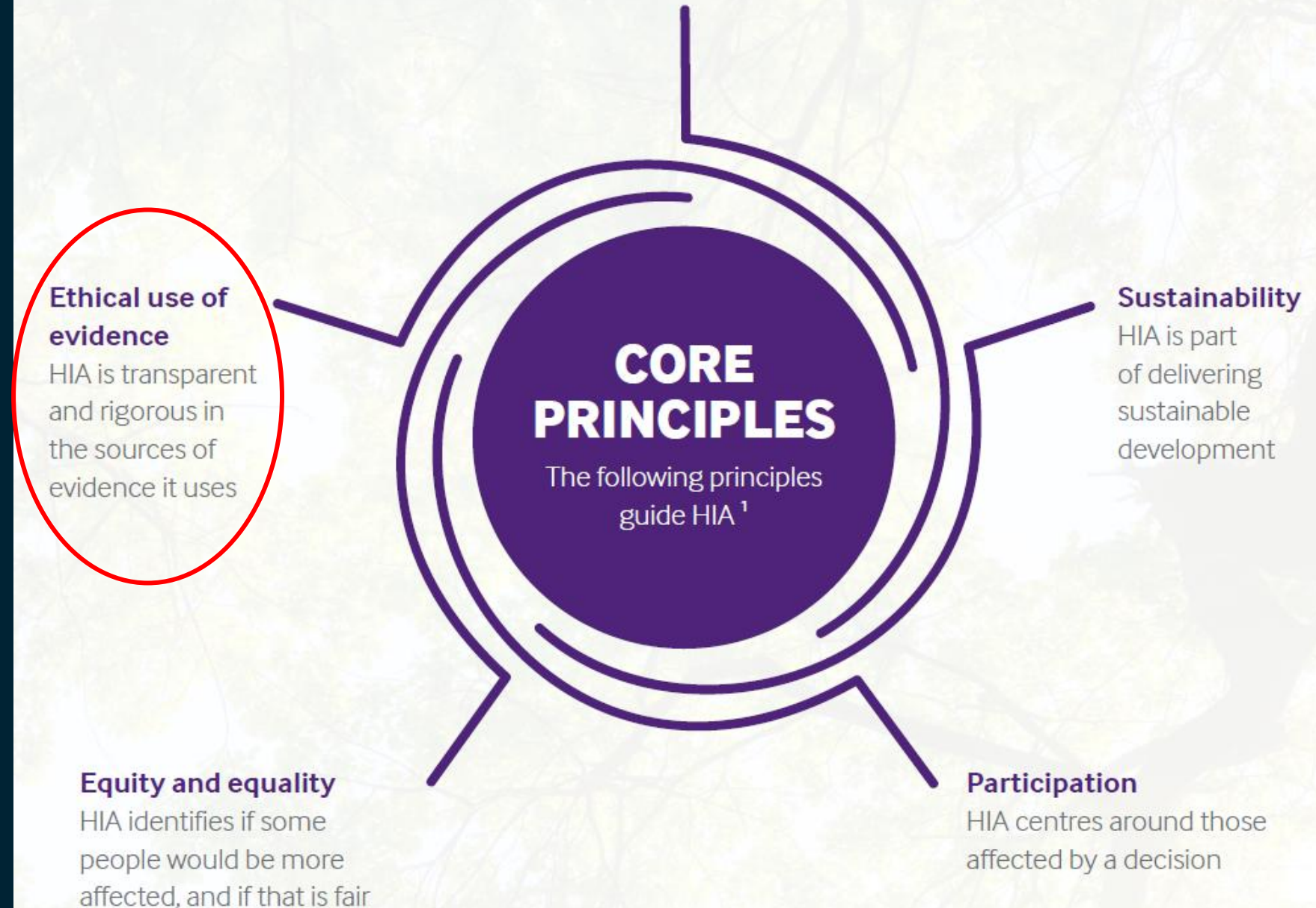
# Session Agenda

1. Principles of HIA
2. Practitioner competency standards
3. Ethical considerations
4. Proposed virtue ethics framework
5. Practical tips on the journey to being a Trusted Expert

# 1. Principles of HIA

Each professional judgement has risks of misinformation and disinformation, introducing additional bias.

**Comprehensive approach to health** HIA considers a broad range of influences on population health



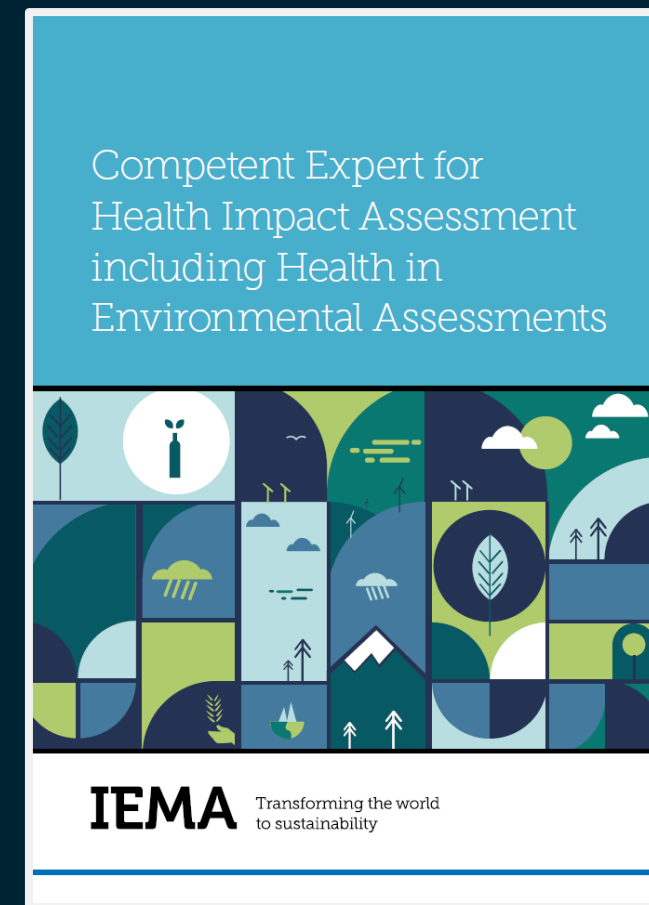
## 2. Practitioner competency standards

Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), formally IEMA.

Sets out frameworks that can be used internationally.



But is that it....? What else guides professional judgements?



### 3. Ethical considerations

- A. **Utilitarianism** (outcome-based) [Bentham/Mill] "the greatest good for the greatest number"  
"Maximize expected aggregate utility"  
BUT... "The ends can justify the means."



- B. **Deontology** (duty-based) [Kant] certain actions are inherently right or wrong, often based on principles (e.g. emphasising rules of universal application).  
"The ends can never justify the means."  
BUT... "Better the whole people should perish, than that injustice be done."

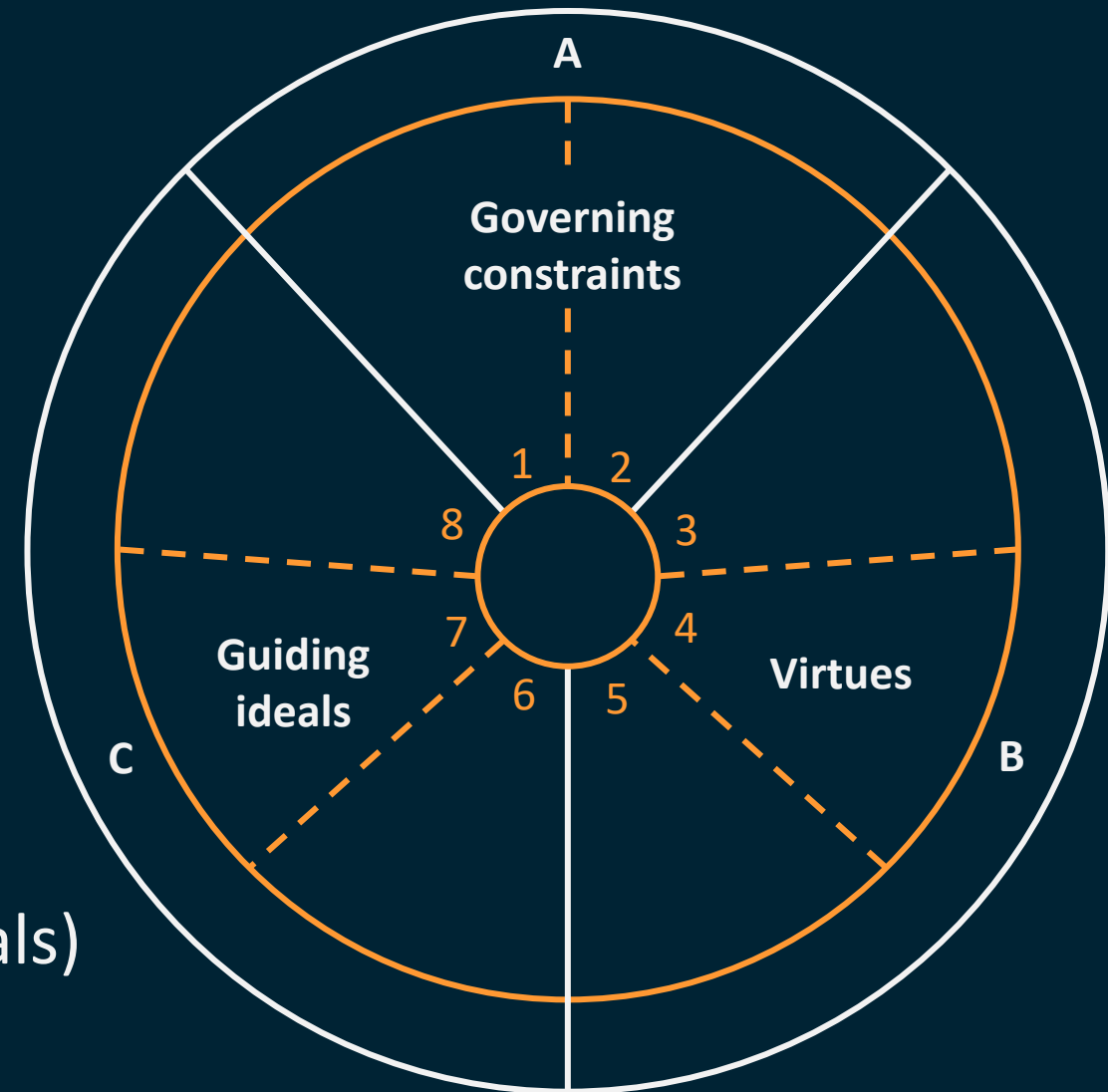
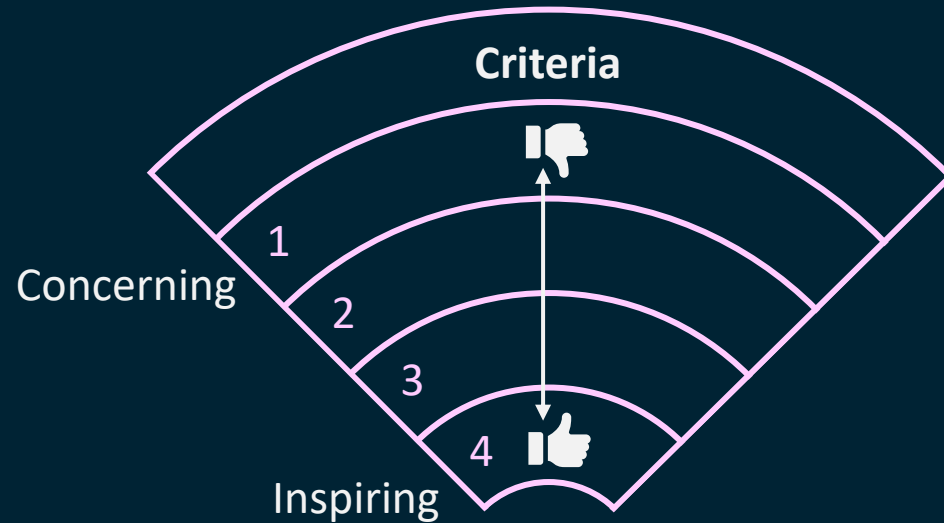


- C. **Virtue ethics** (character-based) [Aristotle/Socrates/Plato] "What would a virtuous person do?"  
Guided by practical wisdom (phronesis) in pursuit of human flourishing (eudaimonia).  
Using virtuous exemplars to find a balance between excess and deficiency.






There is no right answer – but let's see what virtue ethics can do; not forgetting public health is often utilitarian, with tension between paternalism and personal autonomy.

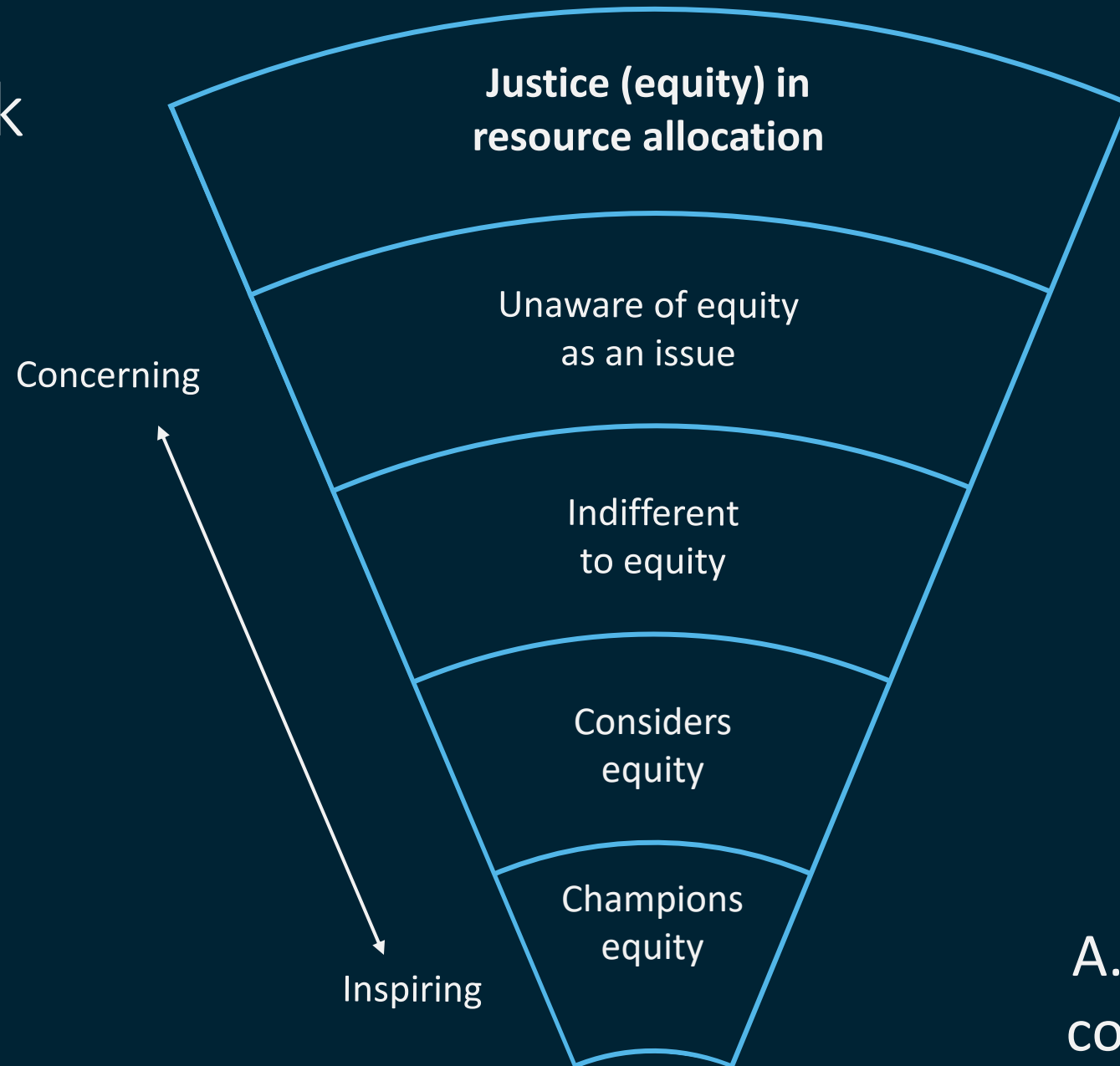
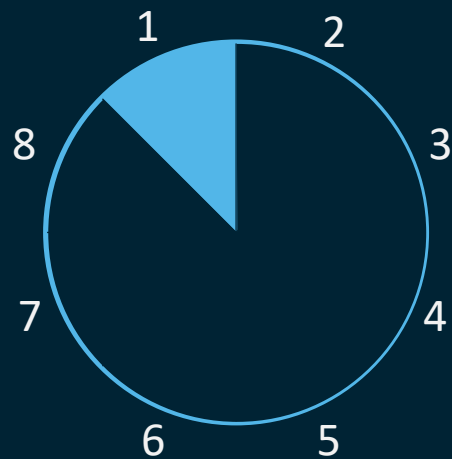
# 4. Proposed virtue ethics framework



Mechanics of the model:

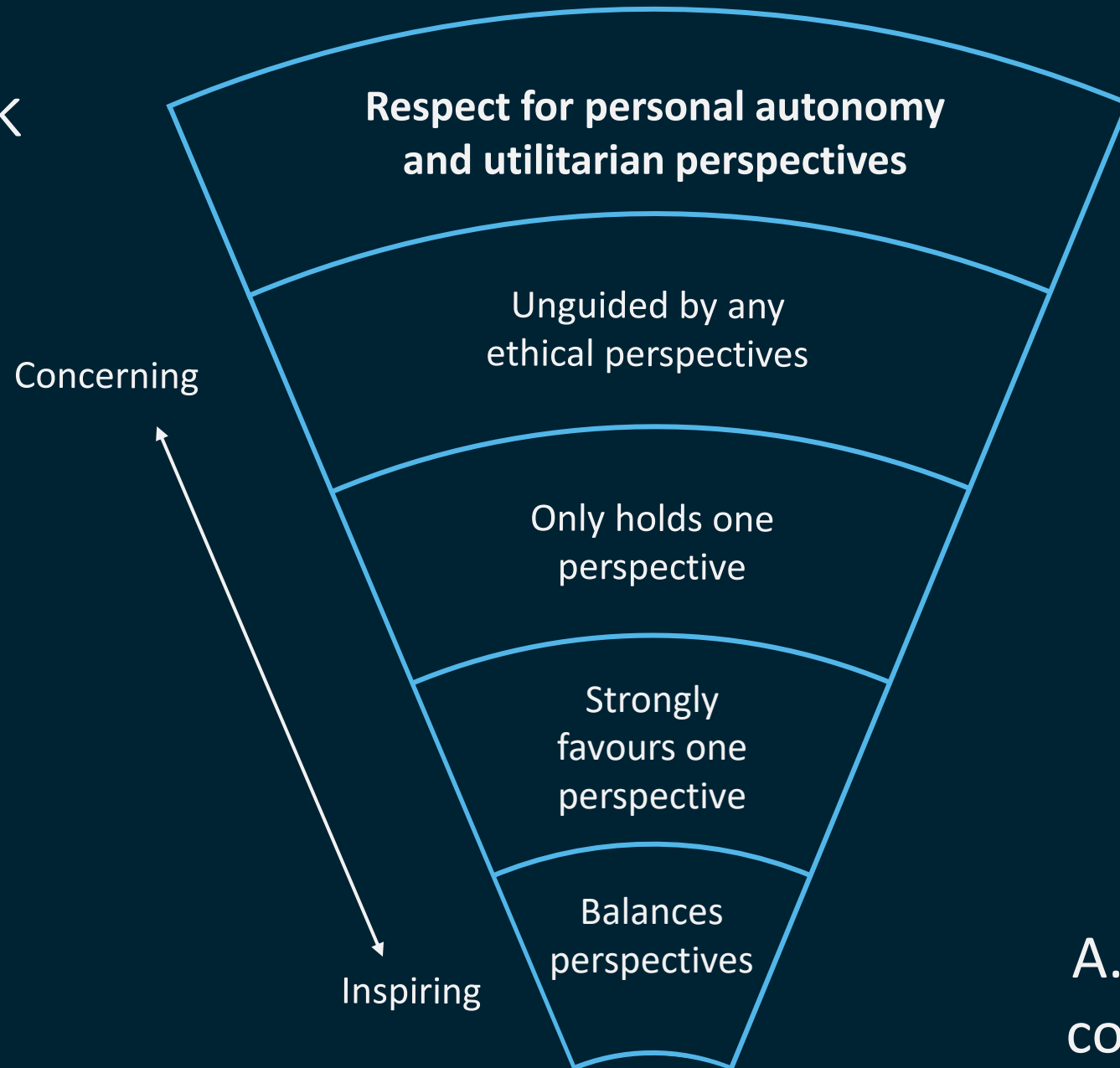
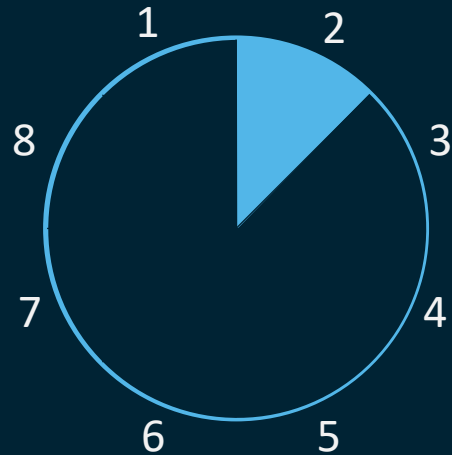
-  3 groups (constrains, virtues & ideals)
-  8 segments (criteria) and
-  4 layers (levels, closer to the centre better)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework (1/8)



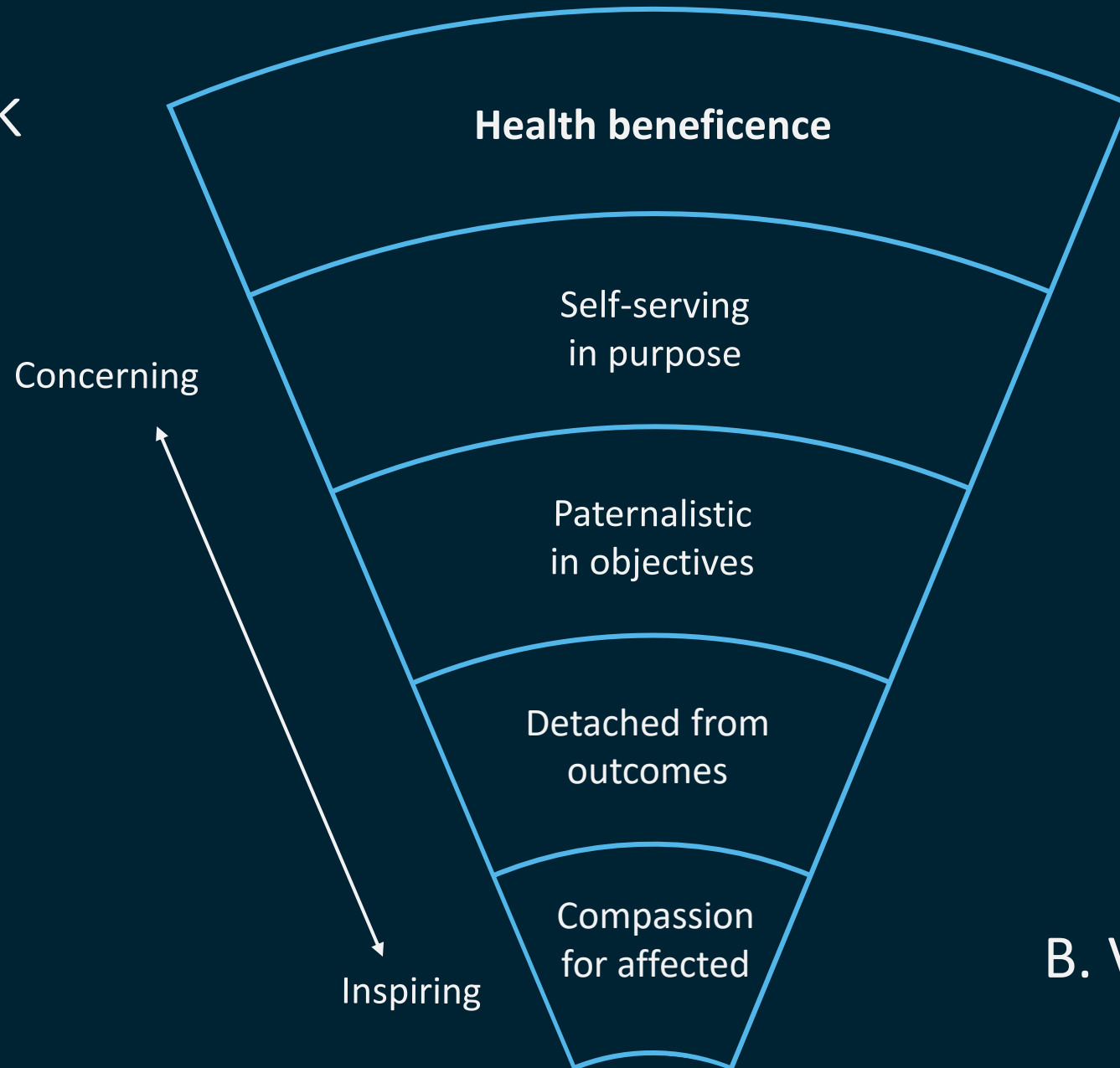
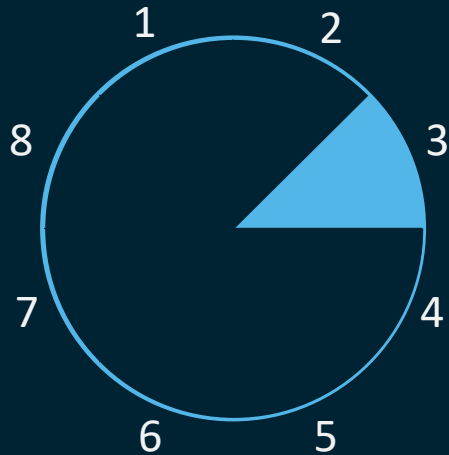
A. Governing constraints (1/2)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework (2/8)



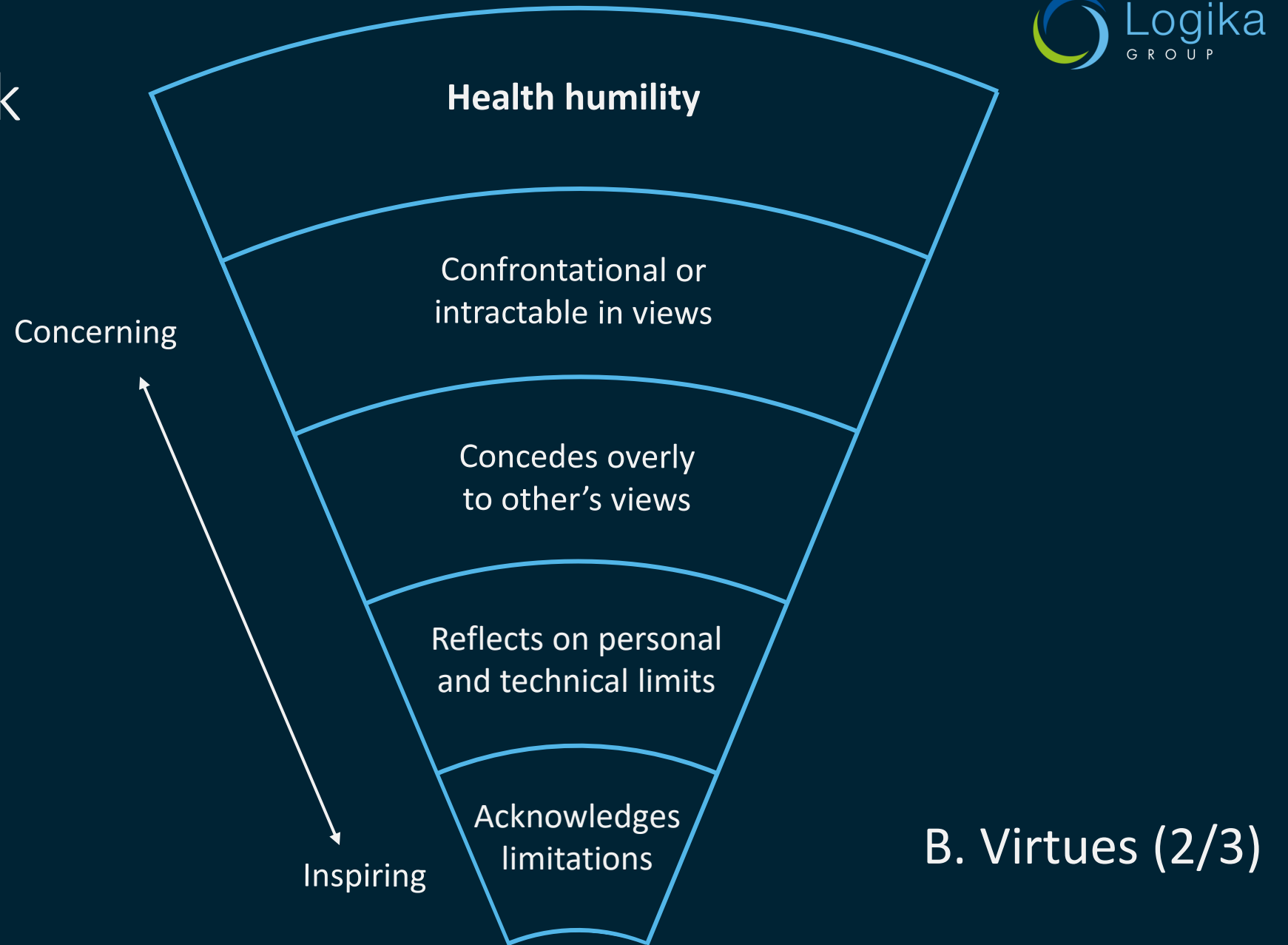
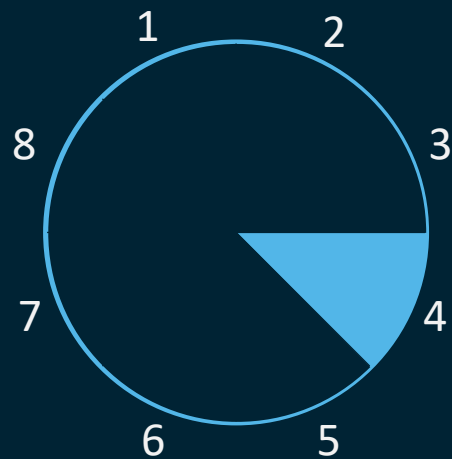
A. Governing constraints (2/2)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework (3/8)

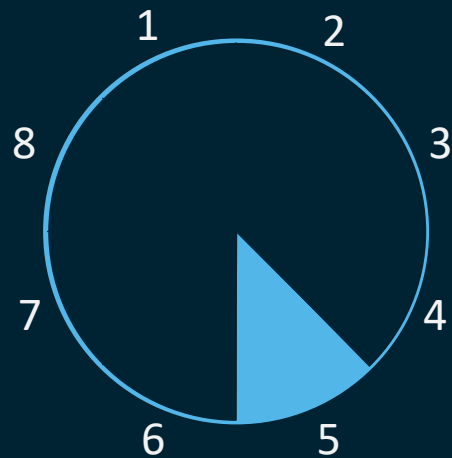


B. Virtues (1/3)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework (4/8)



# Proposed virtue ethics framework (5/8)



Concerning

Inspiring

Health Courage

Avoids difficulty or complexity

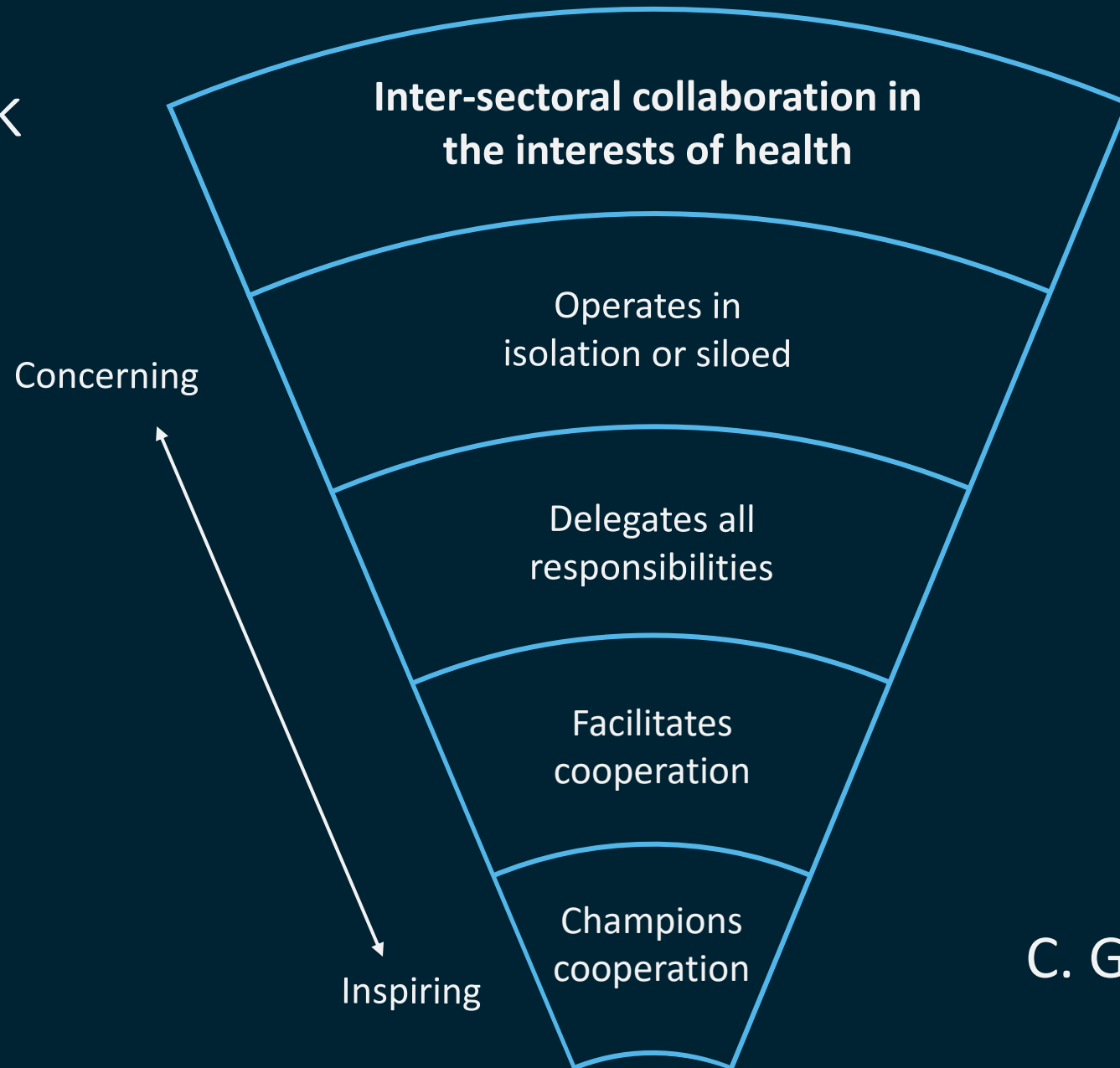
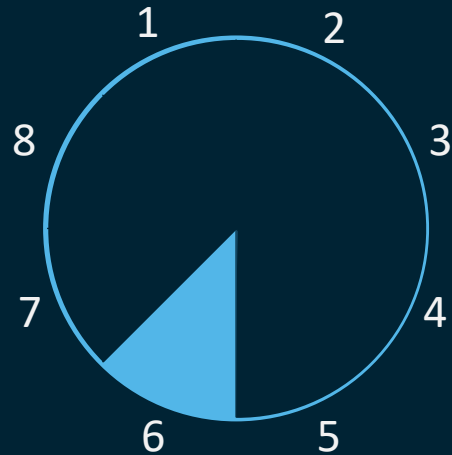
Operates outside of abilities

Questions assumptions

Engages difficulty

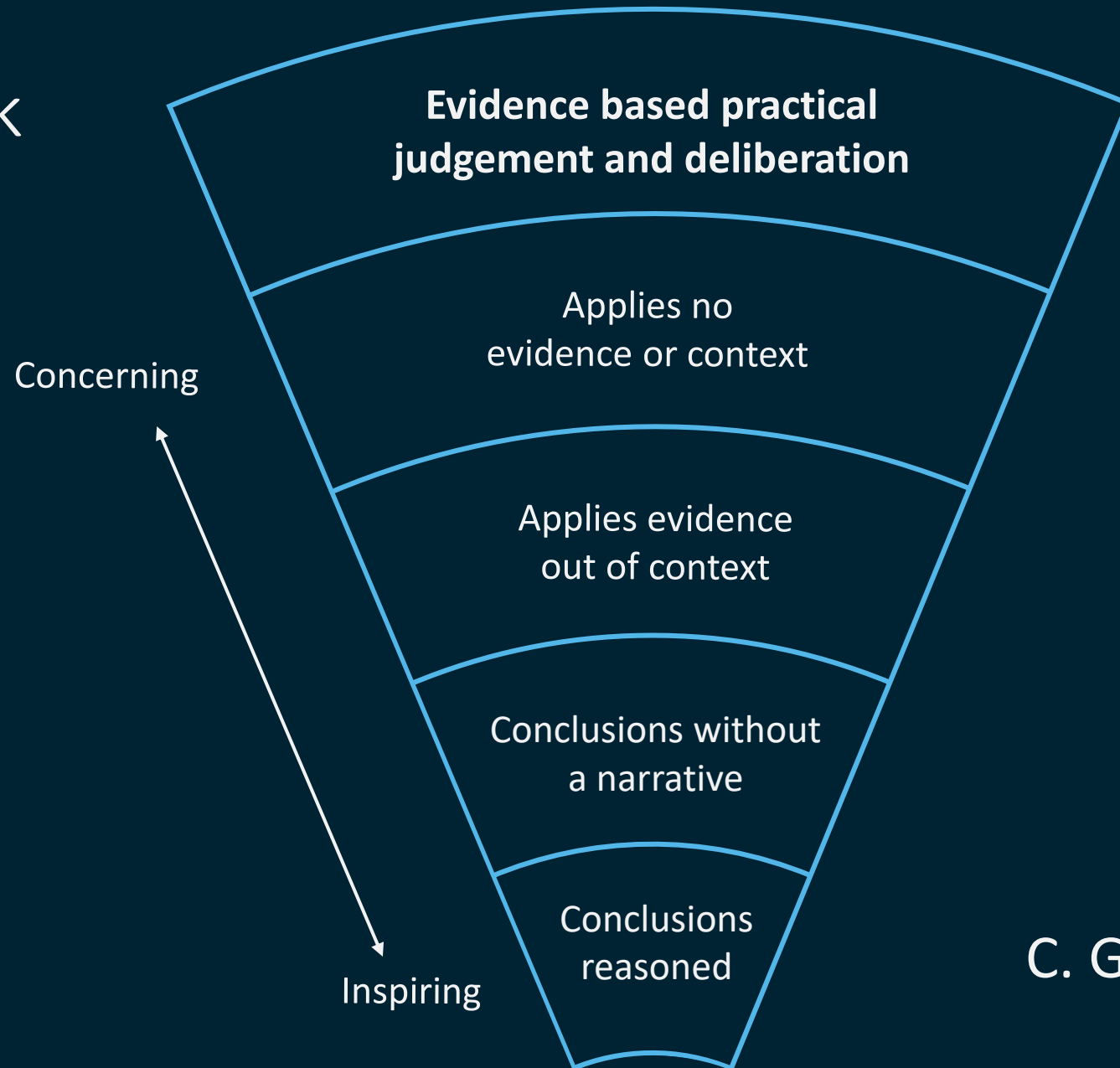
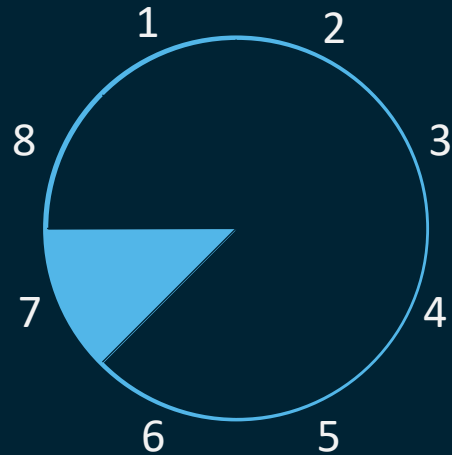
B. Virtues (3/3)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework (6/8)



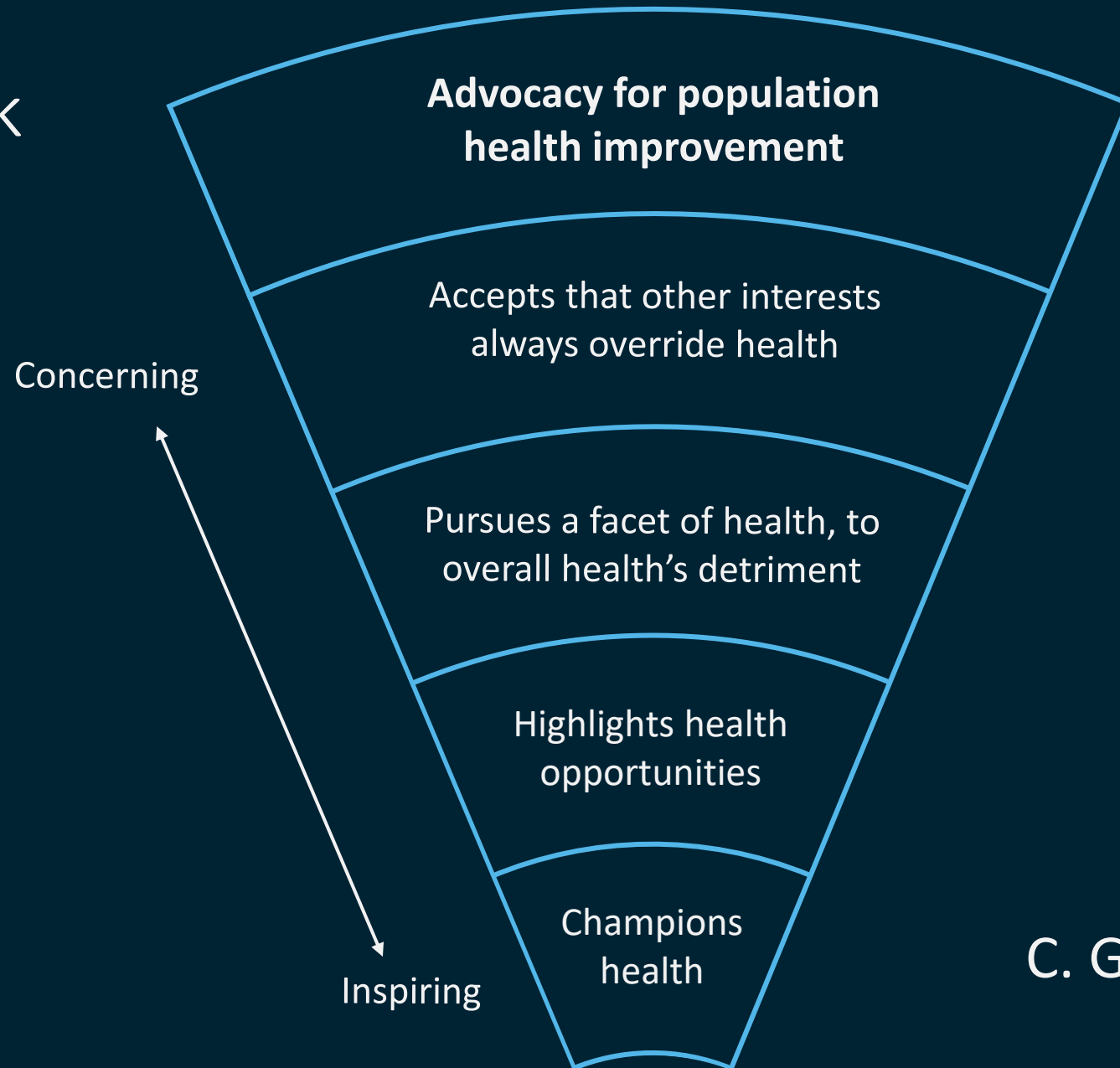
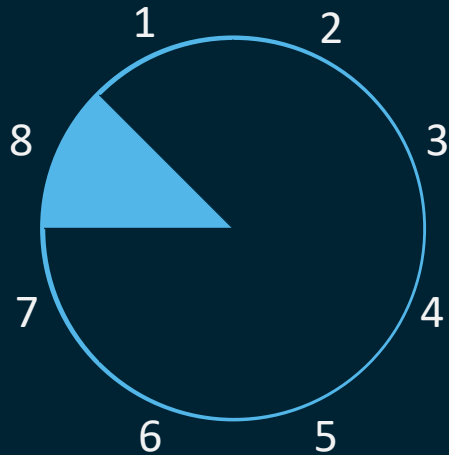
C. Guiding ideals (1/3)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework (7/8)



C. Guiding ideals (2/3)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework (8/8)

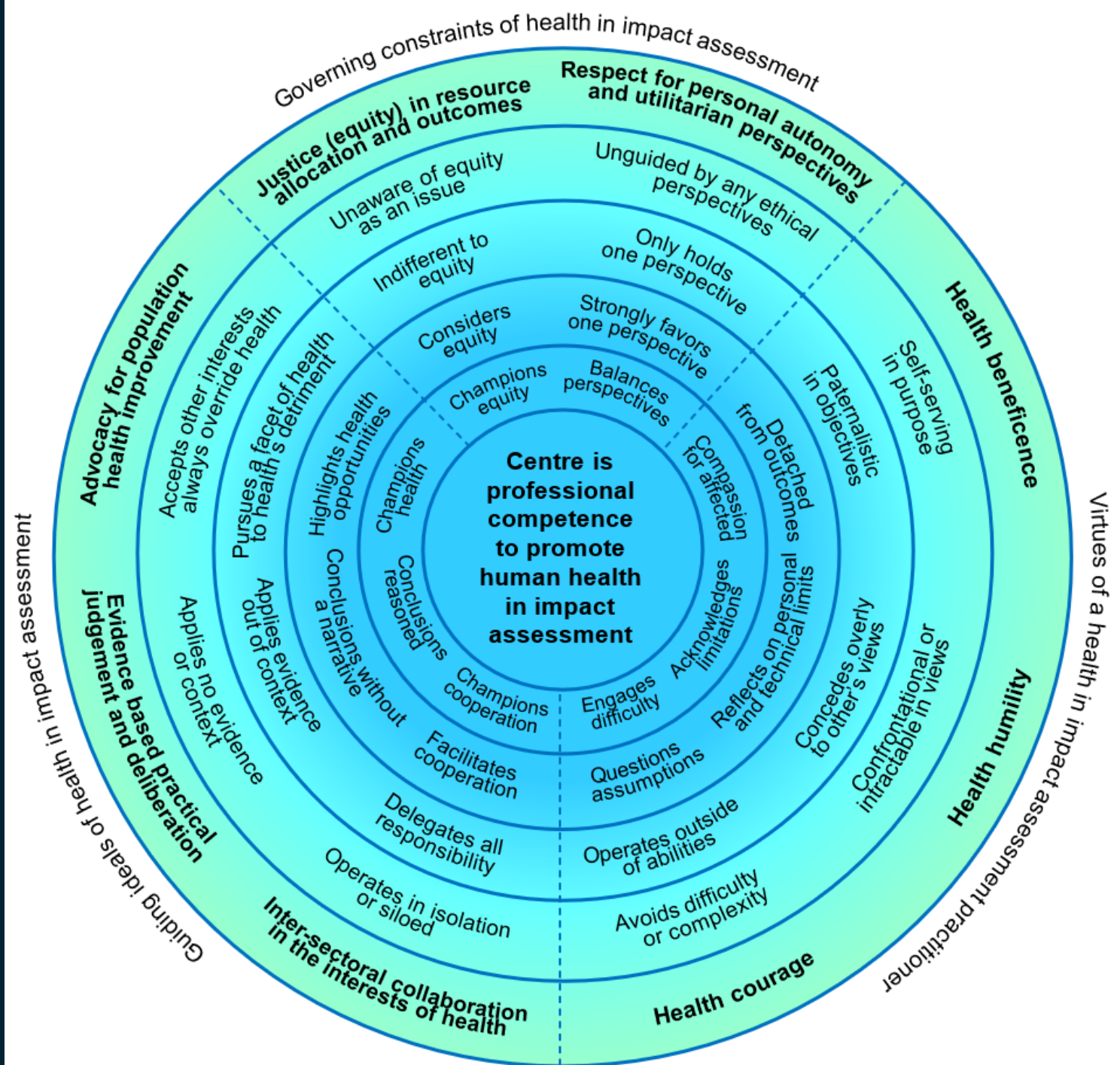


C. Guiding ideals (3/3)

# Proposed virtue ethics framework

Bringing it all together

Do you agree, are there other key virtues of an 'ideal' health impact assessor?



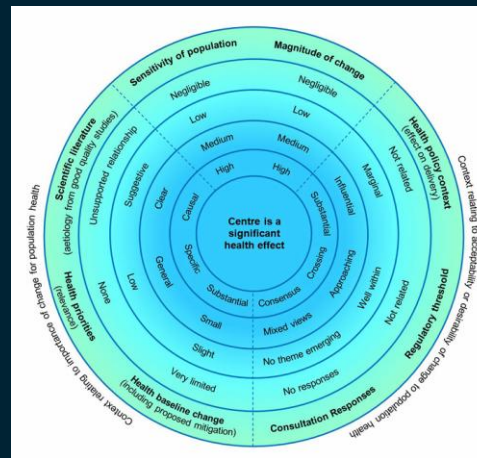
# Proposed virtue ethics framework

Adds to existing models

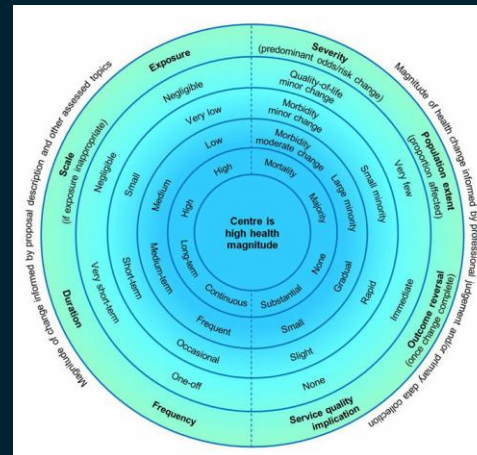


**Institute of Public Health Guidance:**  
[https://www.publichealth.ie/sites/default/files/resources/HIA%20Guidance%20A%20Manual\\_0.pdf](https://www.publichealth.ie/sites/default/files/resources/HIA%20Guidance%20A%20Manual_0.pdf)

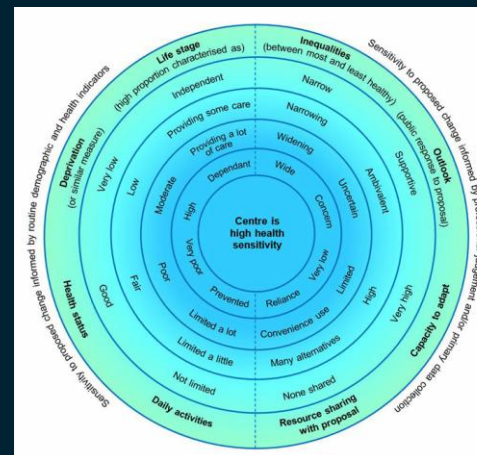
**EUPHA & IAIA Reference Paper:**  
<https://db.eupha.org/repository/sections/HIA/Human%20Health%20Ensuring%20Protection%20Main%20and%20Appendices.pdf>



Population sensitivity



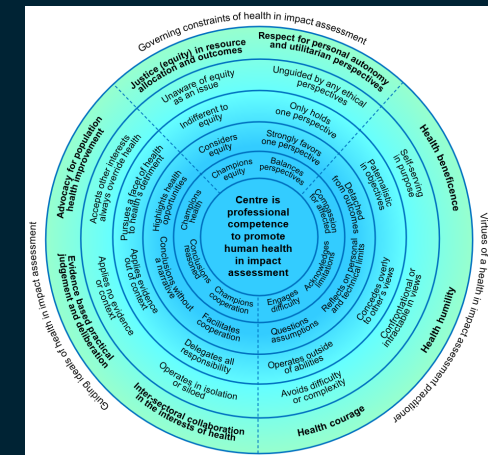
Impact magnitude



Effect significance



NEW: Ethics



Values of a health in impact assessment

## 5. Practical tips on the journey to being a Trusted Expert



### Ethically

- ❖ Champion equity
- ❖ Balance perspectives
- ❖ Compassion for affected
- ❖ Acknowledge limitations
- ❖ Engage difficulty
- ❖ Champion cooperation
- ❖ Conclusion are reasoned
- ❖ Champion health



### Practically

- ❖ Discerning selection of evidence sources
- ❖ Critical review of evidence for context
- ❖ Consistent approach and advice
- ❖ Self reflection / team reflection on biases
- ❖ Competency standards used
- ❖ Quality review standards used
- ❖ Reference sources and report limitations
- ❖ Speak to and involve communities/stakeholders





Thank you

[www.logika.group](http://www.logika.group)

[rynganpyper@logikagroup.com](mailto:rynganpyper@logikagroup.com)