

CASEBOOK OF IDG IMPLEMENTATION INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Implementing the Inner Development Goals in Higher Education: Examples from a Master's Programme in Psychology with a Focus on Future and Global Survival

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Abstract

There is an urgent need for new forms of pedagogical frameworks and competencies that can equip students of tomorrow to skilfully address the sustainability challenge. One such framework is the Inner Development Goals (IDG). The following paper presents how the IDG was used when creating and implementing a master's programme in psychology with a focus on future and global survival at Karlstad University in Sweden. The process is described in relation to the Quality Implementation Framework (The Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2023). The IDG is used as a generic framework for the programme, as part of working with professional development and reflective learning, and when designing learning content. The paper gives examples of a number of diverse learning experiences in which the IDGs were used as an inspiration. The IDG is also applied in relation to the main aims of the programme, psychological insight for sustainable behaviour changes, and transition to a sustainable future. The role of psychology as a driver for sustainable development is discussed. The implementation process was supported by the university, and from the point of the author and students, the framework of the programme, including the IDG, was deemed positive. Implications for using the IDGs are discussed.

Keywords/key phrases: psychology, master programme, Inner Development Goals (IDG), implementation, sustainable development, behaviour change

1. Introduction

The challenge of transforming society towards a more sustainable one is perhaps the greatest task of our times. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) were launched in 2015 as a way towards this aim (United Nations, 2015). Yet progress is slow and meets many obstacles. By 2023 (Malekpour et al., 2023) and 2024 (Sachs & Fuller, 2024), only a minority of SDGs were going in the right direction. The sustainability challenge has been described as a *wicked problem*, "a problem that is characterized by high levels of complexity and ambiguity and involves multiple stakeholders with strongly divergent values and perspectives" (Encyclopaedia of sustainability in higher education, 2018). Addressing and working towards

a sustainable future, therefore, demands more of humanity than perhaps ever before. Yet humanity may not be sufficiently equipped to deal with the issue at hand. Many organizations and researchers postulate that human beings need to develop competencies and abilities to understand and address the challenge in a constructive way (Bianchi et al., 2022; Rieckmann, 2011; Wiek et al., 2011).

Higher education is an important arena to equip students with competencies and abilities to address the challenges of society. Yet, traditional learning in higher education has been criticized for being too limited for the task at hand (Wolff et al., 2022). Putting, for example, too much focus on cognitive learning on behalf of affective learning (Grund et al., 2024; Shephard, 2007). If students of tomorrow are going to be able to meet the complex challenges of the future, such as wicked problems, higher education needs to develop its pedagogies. Pedagogical frameworks such as *Education for Sustainable Development Goals* (2017) and *GreenComp* (Bianchi et al., 2022) suggest that students need to develop multiple skills, like systems thinking, future thinking, awareness, and compassion, to name a few. For developing skills and competencies in higher education, see Crosta et al. (2023) as well as Estaiteyeh et al. (2023). Whether it's called *Holistic education* (2022), *Sustainable learning* (2022), or *Didactical commitment* (Öhman & Sund, 2021), “Sustainability education should connect students with real-world problems and immersive experiences. Appreciating the greater good for people and planet and contributing to values more than mere monetary benefits will further enthuse or inspire students.” (Hessen & Schmelkes, 2022, p. 11).

The Inner Development Goals (IDG) is a recent creation in a similar vein to those frameworks mentioned above. The IDG addresses the need for developing human competencies and abilities to more skilfully meet the sustainability challenge. The following question was posted to researchers, teachers, and businesspeople, “What abilities, qualities or skills do you believe are essential to develop, individually and collectively, in order to get competences are needed to us significantly closer to fulfilling the UN Sustainable Development Goals?” (Inner Development Goals Report, 2021, pp. 6–7). Answers to the question were gathered and coded into groups. The final number of SDGs ended up at 23. These IDGs were finally grouped into 5 areas (**Being** – relationship to self, **Thinking** – cognitive skills, **Relating** – caring for others and the world, **Collaborating** – social skills, and **Acting** – enabling change). According to the Inner Development organization, “inner development” should not be seen as individual development but “...inherently collective, systemic, multidimensional, nonlinear, complex, emergent, and messy.” (Inner Development Goals, 2025). It should be seen as a communication framework for “what inner development can look like and why it matters for catalysing outer change.” (Inner Development Goals, 2025).

Since 2021 the Inner Development Goals has grown as a framework and organization. It has also gained interest in higher education. As a pedagogical framework for teaching and learning (Nordén, 2024), in redefining education (Shtaltovna, 2024), empowering students (Shtaltovna, et al., 2024), and transforming higher education (Wamsler, 2018). Conceptualizing higher education on a meso-level, it may serve as a link between the UN Sustainable Development Goals on a macro level and the Inner Development Goals on a micro-level and provide students with support for individual growth to support sustainability (Wood, 2025).

Psychology as a discipline has both possibilities and limitations in how to approach and work with sustainable development. Psychology is the study of the mind and human behaviour (American Psychological Association, 2023). Sustainability can sometimes put too much focus on outer sustainability factors. Yet, the sustainability challenge is created by human beings. It's how we think, feel, and interact with other people and the world. Humans have limitations in their thinking, *cognitive biases* that may limit the capacity to meet the sustainability challenge (Scott et al., 2021). By becoming more aware of how people think and of emotional processes, individuals may be more able to direct their attention to constructive behaviours in relation to other people and the rest of the world. It is said that the world needs to change on a systemic level, yet all behaviour starts at the level of the individual (Scott et al., 2021). A proposed root cause of the climate crisis is the Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP; Scott et al., 2021). According to this paradigm, humans are separate from and superior to nature, nature can and should be controlled, individuals have a right to maximum economic gain, and progress equals growth. These are examples of attitudes, values, and worldviews.

Psychology studies these constructs and how they may change. A further limitation in psychology, and especially Western psychology, is the narrow perspective on the self. By expanding the sense of self to include the whole world, wellbeing may not only be seen as something of the individual but as being part of a larger system, including environmental, social, and political aspects of sustaining a good life (Steger 2024). Further, psychology could be used to work directly with sustainability goals related to poverty, healthy lives and wellbeing, inclusive and equitable education, gender equality, making cities more sustainable, and decent work, to name a few (APA, 2023). But also, indirectly, clear and constructive communication, conflict resolution, leadership, changing worldviews, attitudes, and behaviour, are competencies needed in working with sustainable development issues (Scott et al., 2021). To conclude, psychology has an important role to play in sustainable development.

Due to the multiple crises affecting the future of our world, there is an urgent need for new forms of pedagogy in higher education. Students need to be equipped with tools and competencies that make them resourceful in addressing the sustainability challenge in a skilful way. The aim of the following case was to describe the process of using the Inner Development Goals (IDG) as a framework when creating, designing, and implementing a new master's program in psychology with a focus on future and global survival at Karlstad University, Sweden.

2. The Programme

For a good starting point, there will first be a description of how the master programme came into being in relation to the four phases of the Quality Implementation Framework (The Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2023). *The first phase is an assessment of needs and methods.* At our psychology department, one of the professors was appointed to reflect on and present a new idea for a master's programme. A preliminary version of the master's programme was positively received by the department (August 2023). *The second phase entails creating a structure for the implementation.* Interested teachers were assigned to a working group and were given responsibility for the implementation. At this time, the IDG framework was discovered, and after discussions in the group, it was decided to be used as a framework for the programme (August 2023 – December 2024). *The third phase is the actual implementation.* This phase began at the start of the programme (January 2024). *The final, fourth phase, consists*

of analysing lessons learned in order to improve future implementation processes. This is a continuous process that entails meetings in the working group, discussing evaluations, and correcting the courses for the best of the program.

The main focus of the program is on the point of intersection between psychology and sustainability but also related fields in behavioural and social sciences. Examples of prioritized applied areas of study can be understanding how people are affected by global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, catastrophes, social turmoil, promoting resilience, wellbeing, and health, and how to use psychological knowledge in working for a sustainable world for people living today and in the future. Another important aim is presenting the students with a practical, real case studies approach for engagement and employability (O'Neill & Short, 2025).

The master's programme, which uses a remote study format, consists of four semesters of full-time study. The programme is in Swedish and students are spread out mostly through the southern and central parts of Sweden. Remote study programmes have challenges not found in campus-based studies (Zainal Badri et al., 2022), such as balancing studying and private life, and mental health. In order for the students to get to know each other, create a sense of community, and promote motivation for the entire programme, each semester there is a three-day campus-based meeting (*närträff*).

The programme has its base in psychology (a bachelor's degree in psychology is required to attend the program). In addition to the generic mandatory learning objectives, we created two additional local ones to highlight the uniqueness of the programme and distinguish it from similar programmes. The first one, "show an understanding of the complex issues of human decision making and behaviour in relation to other disciplines in society's transition towards sustainability," and the second, "show knowledge and understanding of the importance of inner psychological insight for the implementation of lasting behaviour change." (Karlstad University, 2023). The courses in each semester can be seen below in Table 1.

TABLE 1. OVERVIEW OF COURSES IN THE MASTER PROGRAMME IN PSYCHOLOGY

Semester	Courses
1	Introduction to psychology, sustainability, and global challenges The psychology of decision making and critical evaluation Crisis and disaster psychology Outlook on life and global trends
2	Positive behavioural change Sustainable leadership Positive psychology and salutogenic perspective Conflict management
3	Scientific methods in Psychology – advanced level Scientific projects about the future and global survival The role of nature and ecopsychology
4	Master thesis in psychology

Source: own compilation

3. Implementing the IDG Framework in the Programme

Early in the process of creating the programme, we discovered the IDG framework. Although some initial hesitation because of the IDG's not entirely evidence-based grounding, the main attractions were its availability, recognition, and growth, both in the academic world and as a social movement. We also thought that the five areas of the IDGs could nicely bring together the local learning objectives of inner psychological insight for behaviour change and understanding the complex issues related to transitioning to a more sustainable society. By adding the IDGs to the programme, the essence of the programme started to become clearer. We have applied the IDGs on three levels in the master's programme. (1) As a generic framework for the programme, (2) as personal and professional development, and (3) as a tool for designing courses.

3.1. IDG as a Generic Framework

What is required of a student wanting to work with psychological/social aspects of sustainable development? Of course, we cannot predict the future, but there are suggestions. According to the Future of Jobs Survey of 2024 of the World Economic Forum, some of the most important skills of the 2025 working-life, are resilience, flexibility and agility, creative thinking, leadership and social influence, curiosity and lifelong learning, motivation and self-awareness, analytical thinking, systems thinking, empathy and active listening (World economic forum, 2024). It can be concluded that the students of the future need a broad and diverse set of skills.

As was stated above, applying the IDGs to the master's programme made it easier to see the essence of the programme. Although the basic structure of the courses of the programme was set, the next step was to decide the contents. The aim was to create learning content for the students that covered most of the IDGs throughout the two years of study. The IDG framework was introduced and presented in the following way in the programme.

The Inner Development Goals were presented in the first course. In the end of each course, using reflective learning for the course content/curriculum (see the IDG in professional development and reflective learning for further discussions). At the end of each semester, there is a seminar in which the students contemplate on the 10 most important examples of learning experiences. Thereafter, presenting the memorable learning experiences in pairs. Finally, in small group discussions are made in relation to the IDGs. What has been learned and what is missing? In the end of the programme the students take stock on what they have learned in all of the courses in relation to IDG and create a portfolio.

3.2. IDG in professional development and reflective learning

We have chosen to include a focus on professional development and reflective learning throughout the programme. Holistic education in which the whole human being is approached in learning as recommended by the Education for Sustainable Development Goals (2017), GreenComp (Bianchi et al., 2022) and the IDG also require creating safe spaces for a transformative learning to take space (Freude, 2021; Singer-Brodowski, 2022). By utilizing reflective practices students may challenge assumptions taken for granted (Ralph, 2015) and provide benefits for understanding multiple perspectives and creating self-directed learners (Ayers et al., 2020; Hart et al., 2025). In the beginning course, students are introduced to reflective practices such as reflecting on why they chose to apply for the programme. They also

have to reflect on their strengths and limitations and create a mental plan of how to successfully complete the programme. During courses they reflect on their learning and their development and at the end of each semester summarize what they have learned and how to move forward. All reflections will be gathered in a portfolio at the end of the programme. Through these reflective practices the IDGs are applied and reflected on. Students have been informed about the IDGs, they are continuously discussed, used for inspiration and as a guide for further learning.

In the end of each course the students reflect on four questions influenced by Gibbs reflective cycle (Gibbs, 1988):

- **What happened** – Give a short description of the chosen course content/course experience.
- **My reactions** – Describe how you have reflected on the course content and how you have worked with it.
- **My learning** – What do you bring with you from this learning experience?
- **My reflections** – how could these learning experiences be useful for you in the future?

By reflecting on these four questions the student may start to get a deeper understanding of their own way of learning, metacognitive awareness and several other IDG related competencies.

3.3. IDG as a Tool for Designing Course Content

The IDGs were also applied in the construction of course content. Having the IDGs as a blueprint for choosing course content and related learning goals that may develop specific IDGs was a help in creating diverse and interesting learning experiences. Specifically, when working on creating learning experiences I deliberately consulted the IDG framework to see how the content of the course could be informed by specific IDGs. Thereby, covering most parts of the IDG framework throughout the entire programme. Below are some examples of learning experiences and possible corresponding IDGs in Table 2. Note that more IDGs than the ones mentioned may also be developed.

3.3.1. Personal Sustainability

In the first course of the programme, there is a focus on personal sustainability. By personal sustainability we mean how to take care of oneself. The subject is first introduced in a lecture about stress and coping, psychological safety, self-compassion, Ikigai and mental performance planning. In a following seminar the students present a plan for how to live sustainably during the programme and after. Firstly, the issue of personal sustainability relates to inspiring students having a healthy lifestyle during the programme (Donald & Healy, 2025). Secondly, many people working in the area of climate change and sustainability are highly environmentally engaged people and there is positive relationship with psychological distress and climate anxiety (Lukacs, et al., 2023). Lastly, we also want to show that sustainability is not only about something “out there”, but something inherent in everything we do. It’s the relationship with ourselves, with other people, and with nature. See Parodi et al. (2023) for further discussions. It also displays the psychological essence of the programme on inner psychological insight and behaviour change. By engaging in personal sustainability, the student may develop the

following IDGs: Inner compass, Integrity & authenticity, Self-awareness, Empathy & compassion, Trust, and Perseverance.

3.3.2. Deep Time Walk

The Deep Time Walk was created by Stephan Harding (Harding & Woodford, 2024). It is a transforming learning framework with the aim of giving the students an experience of the age of the earth and how short time human beings have lived on the planet and during that time have changed the planet to the Anthropocene era. The earth is approximately 4,6 billion years old. The Deep Time Walk is created so that each metre is one million years totalling the length of the walk to 4,6 kilometres. The students can either use the Deep Time Walk app or the teacher can use a manual to read from what is happening in earth history while taking the walk. Engaging in the Deep Time Walk may develop IDGs such as Sense-making, Long-time orientation and visioning, Humility, Trust, and Connectedness.

3.3.3. The Work That Reconnects

The Work That Reconnects (a.k.a. Active Hope) was created by Joanna Macy (Macy & Johnstone, 2022). It is a framework for working with and experiencing difficult emotions related to climate change and empowering individuals to act. The workshop consists of four phases. (1) In the first phase, *Coming from gratitude*, the students are invited to focus on gratefulness by writing down an answer to “What do you love about living on planet earth?” or “Describe a place that was magical when you were a child!”. (2) In the second phase, *Honouring the pain for the world*, the students are invited to reflect on the question “When I think about the state of the world this is how I think about the future”, (3) In the third phase, *Seeing with new eyes*, the students write down a response to “If the world could speak what would it tell us?” or “Experience a world in which we have solved the global challenges we are facing, where we are living sustainably”. (4) In the last phase, *Going forth*, the student is to ponder the following statement “If you knew that you couldn’t fail, what would you do to contribute to the healing of the Earth? What specific project or goal would you want to reach in a year? What resources do you need and what do you have to create? How do you proceed? Next week, next month, next year?”. In the end the students can reflect on the experience. As a teacher, it’s important to inform that the workshop can affect the students emotionally and for the workshop to end in a safe way it’s important to make sure that the students are ok before leaving. Yet, in order for real change to take place a combination of mind, emotions, imagination, and body may be needed (Hathaway, 2017). The Work That Reconnects may especially develop IDGs such as Integrity & authenticity, Openness & learning mindset, Mobilization skills, Appreciation, and Courage.

3.3.4. Nature Connection Exercise

One of the courses in the programme is devoted the human relationship to nature for wellbeing and sustainable development. Exploring nature connections can be made in different ways. Here we use the work of Richardson and colleagues at the University of Derby (Lumber et al., 2017; Richardson, 2023), in which ways to increased nature connections are made through five different pathways; *senses* (actively engaging with nature through the senses), *emotions* (engaging emotionally with nature), *beauty* (finding beauty in the natural world), *meaning* (exploring and expressing how nature brings meaning to life) and *compassion* (caring for nature) (Richardson, 2023, p. 136–137). The students learn the framework and are instructed to

experience nature connections by themselves and guiding a group of students. IDGs that may be developed in a Nature connection exercise are Appreciation, Connectedness, Self-awareness, Creativity, Perseverance and Perspective skills.

3.3.5. Writing an Essay about a Utopian Future

In this examination, the students' task is to write an essay about a utopian future in which people are living sustainably, and the sustainability challenges have been solved. The students write a future scenario including different areas of society, characters/persons living in a society characterized by sustainability and healthy citizens applying a lens of Positive psychology and salutogenic (health affirming) perspectives. In this essay, the students have the possibility to engage in creative writing, long-term visioning, and backcasting from the future. Thus, IDGs that may be developed in this examination may be Long-term orientation & visioning, Communication skills, Courage, Creativity, and Optimism.

3.3.6. Exploring Worldviews

In this seminar, the students have to fill out a Worldviews test (de Witt et al., 2016). Depending on the results students are categorized into one out of four worldviews (Traditional, Modern, Postmodern, & Integrative). In the first session, they discuss their own worldview. The second session is a role play. The students are given a different worldview to play and in a group format they discuss a sustainability issue from the perspective of the new worldview. Exploring worldviews in this fashion may develop IDGs such as Openness & learning mindset, Complexity awareness, Perspective skills, Humility and Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence.

TABLE 2. IDGS RELATED TO SPECIFIC LEARNING EXPERIENCES

	Persona l sustain- ability	Deep Time Walk	The work that re- connect s	Nature connect ion exercis e	Writing a utopian essay	Explori ng world- views	Student mindful - ness inter- vention	System thinkin g group exercis e
Inner compass	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Integrity & authenticity	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Openness & learning mindset	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓
Self-awareness				✓			✓	
Presence							✓	
Critical thinking						✓		✓
Complexity awareness						✓		✓
Perspective skills						✓		✓
Sense-making	✓	✓						✓
Long-term orientation & visioning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Appreciation	✓	✓	✓					

Connectedness	✓	✓						
Humility			✓			✓		
Empathy & compassion	✓		✓					
Communication skills			✓	✓	✓			✓
Co-creation skills						✓		✓
Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence	✓					✓		✓
Trust		✓					✓	
Mobilization skills			✓					✓
Courage		✓		✓	✓			
Creativity			✓	✓	✓			
Optimism				✓	✓			
Perseverance	✓						✓	

Source: own compilation

3.3.7. Student Mindfulness Intervention

During the last couple of years, the relationship between inner transitions in relation to sustainability has gathered interest among researchers (Bristow et al., 2022; Wamsler, 2022; Wamsler, et al., 2021) and has been provided for students in higher education in Sweden (Libertson, 2023). In this vein the practice of mindfulness shows many possibilities for sustainable development (Bristow et al., 2022). In the following exercise, the students use a mindfulness app and are invited to use it every day for two weeks. They use the Healthy Minds App created by Richard Davidson at the centre for Healthy Minds, University of Madison. In addition to exploring mindfulness and reflect on their experience, the students read scientific articles that explore the association between mindfulness and sustainability. IDGs that may be developed when practicing mindfulness and studying the scientific literature and research are Inner Compass, Self-awareness, Presence, Empathy & compassion, Critical thinking, Trust, and Perseverance.

3.3.8. Systems Thinking Group Exercise

Systems thinking is a method and approach to understanding and working with a system and an important competence when working with sustainability and wicked problems. It is a skill proposed by the Education for Sustainable Development Goals (2017) and GreenComp (Bianchi et al., 2022) for working with sustainable development. In this exercise the student's task is to learn about systems thinking (Stroh, 2015) and create a workshop with a practical example for their students. They later practice their skills in analysing a real-world sustainability case. Several IDG skills and competencies may be developed when studying and creating a systems thinking workshop; Openness & Learning Mindset, Critical Thinking, Complexity Awareness, Perspective Skills, Sense-making, Communication-skills, Co-creation Skills, Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence, and Mobilization skills.

4. Reflections on Using the IDG Framework in a Master's Programme in Psychology

Recapitulating after three of four semesters, one may reflect on the pedagogical merits of implementing the IDG in the programme. Was it successful? This question can perhaps only be completely answered at the end of the programme and perhaps when the students have been working for some time in the sustainability area. In the meantime, some preliminary reflections can be made based on student evaluations and reflections of the author of this paper. But let's start with reflecting on the process of implementing the programme in relation to important factors that may hinder successful implementation of the SDG in higher education (Leal Filho et al., 2019).

- (1) *Limited awareness and understanding about sustainability and low importance afforded to SD matters.* To the contrary, the faculty and the institutional leaders showed a positive view on the framework of the programme including the IDG. The SDG and IDG have already been implemented at several universities in Sweden, so the framework may have some credibility.
- (2) *Lack of an official body responsible for SD implementation.* A group of four people (including the author) were given responsibility to implement the programme. Course leaders were assigned to share responsibilities. Regular meetings with the group took place before programme start and thereafter. Programme coordinators were appointed to lead the implementation.
- (3) *Not all universities have a planning framework supporting the SD implementation.* There is a continuous process of evaluating what works and not, order of courses could change places for the best of the program, new teachers became part of the working group and institutional leaders showed flexibility when there were some students drop out and created possibilities to have some courses open for application without signing up for the entire programme.
- (4) *Resources for implementation of SD are not enough.* The institutional leaders allocated resources to the four teachers responsible for implementation during the first part of implementation. During the second-year fewer resources were provided for course design.
- (5) *More effective communication.* During semester three a programme council (*programråd*; group consisting of students and programme director) was formed creating room for two-way communication. During the first year the programme director and a student in the programme were interviewed for the programme webpage. Extra effort has been given to advertising in social media, psychology magazines in Sweden and Norway and taking part in student conferences.

What do the students think about the IDG? Some preliminary evaluations show that the majority of students are positive to the IDG framework. They find the way of bridging inner and outer forms of sustainability, in which inner sustainability is as important as outer and inner development may be a prerequisite for and understanding of outer sustainable change, as beneficial for learning and preparation for the future. The students are positive to the teaching and learning in the programme including professional development, reflective learning,

personal sustainability and holistic pedagogics like the head, hands, and heart pedagogy (Sipos, Battisti, & Grimm, 2008) in addition to the IDG. One student state that higher education leans too much on cognitive and critical thinking and thinks that other forms of learning is welcome. *“I think that the five areas in IDG (being, thinking, relating, cooperation and acting) constitutes a good ground when acquiring new knowledge, where we not only use our thinking skills but where we can use other human competencies”.*

Another student points to the benefits of holistic learning and inner transformation for outer change. *“... I have come to understand that competences like awareness, relatedness, co-creation and courage is, for me, as important when applying knowledge in real world settings.”*

Yet the IDG framework is a new way of learning and therefore one need some time to get used to it. It is a transformative journey. *“It can be challenging because it’s about a new way of thinking about change; to work with values and inner motivation to create real change”.*

As with all forms of teamwork, there will be points of agreement and disagreement and so it has been the core faculty of the master’s programme. Some teachers have applied the IDG more than others in their separate courses, and autonomy and freedom for the teachers in designing courses and creating learning experiences is important. Yet the IDG, professional development and reflective learning have accompanied the students continuously throughout the programme with some recaps to reflect together with fellow students at the campus-based meetings. Yet all ideas inspired by the IDG were not workable. Some ideas that had to be discarded were students reflecting on group dynamics of their working groups in their reflective learning. E-portfolios were initially thought of but had to be let go of because of the technical limitations of the software. Finally, even though emotional learning is important for developing empathy/compassion and are part of many sustainable learning frameworks in addition to the IDG, it’s important to prepare students for potential triggering experiences. One may prepare student for upcoming emotionally laden material so that they have the capacity to prepare and in so creating a conducive learning environment.

Having had the IDG framework in the back of my mind while we created the structure of the programme, its generic perspectives and specific course content, it has also influenced and sometimes changed my own view of teaching and my own role as a teacher in higher education. I think the IDG framework has widened my view of how learning can happen. When reflecting on how to approach teaching and creating new learning experiences I now have a larger repertoire of pedagogies, perspectives and tools on how to approach it.

5. Conclusion

The aim of the present chapter was to describe the process of using the IDG as a framework when creating and implementing a master programme in psychology with a focus on future and global survival. Because of the complexity of the sustainability challenge new forms of pedagogical tools and competencies are needed to skilfully address the problem. One such framework is the IDG. We used the IDG framework as a pedagogical tool for reaching the local learning goals of the programme; the complex issue of human decision making in relation to other disciplines and psychological inner insight for lasting behaviour change in society’s transition towards sustainability. Specifically, the IDG framework may have the potential for the students in becoming aware of human assumptions and psychological limitations such as cognitive biases and the Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP) needed for a transformation for

sustainable development. In addition, the IDG framework may also expand students' self-construal, from egocentric self to eco-centric self, providing pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours (Danon, 2019). Finally, having a focus on Awareness, Co-creation and Long-term visioning, the IDG can provide for an understanding that the sustainability challenge is created by humans. It is how people think, feel, and interact with each other, and the rest of the world. This knowledge may provide the students with agency and motivation for working towards a sustainable future (Wood, 2025).

The IDG was used generically for the program, as personal and professional development and as designing course content. The IDG framework has generally been positively received by the teachers of the programme and may have helped to find the programme's uniqueness and its essence. The students of the programme are generally positive about the IDG framework, but as the first cohort of students has not finished the programme yet, more evaluations are needed at the time of graduation.

Based on the results of this paper, some implications can be made. The use of theoretical frameworks for implementation is recommended. Implementing a new programme takes time and hard work. It is important to get financial and organizational support from the department and the university. Using the IDG as an inspiration/framework can have many benefits, such as presenting new forms of teaching and learning for teachers and students. Although as it is a different kind of pedagogical approach compared to traditional teaching in higher education, implementation may take time. It may take time for some teachers and students to learn and there may be some initial resistance. In that case, it is important that IDG share many pedagogical approaches with important publications such as Education for Sustainable Development Goals (2017) and GreenComp (Bianchi et al., 2022). The author (also programme director) of this paper has tried to describe the implementation process in a balanced way. Yet, as the author is generally positive towards the IDG framework, this may have influenced the writing article.

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