

A VALUATION FRAMEWORK GROUNDED IN LOVE

The Dimensions of Love Valuation tool helps us to evaluate the impact of our work in a way that is rooted in kindness, solidarity, and resistance. It considers four dimensions of actions and impacts:

- **Self-Love** – Impact on self
- **Love for Others** – Impact on team or organization
- **Love as a Community Practice** – Impact on community
- **Love fused with Power** – Impact on systems

This framing helps us to think beyond outputs and consider the value of the progress being made on multiple levels with an equity lens.

Tool Summary

Purpose: Reflect on the value and impact of work with an equity lens

Time needed: 30 minutes

Who: All people who have been involved in the work



Why A Valuation Framework Grounded in Love?

The word love may not be an intuitive or preferred choice of word in work settings. Based on our learning from philosophers such as Cornel West, bell hooks, and Erich Fromm, we use the word love as an intentional choice. Cornel West writes, “Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public.” When we build love into the way we measure progress, we can ensure that our goals – and how we achieve them – reflect the values of Equity, Anti-Racism and Reconciliation.

Read more about the reasons for [A Valuation Framework Grounded in Love](#) on pages 29-32 in *Seeds of Transformation*.

Why Valuation vs Evaluation

This tool combines Western, Eurocentric, and decolonial perspectives.

- Evaluation is a structured way to assess an initiative’s design, implementation, or results for the purpose of learning and decision-making.¹
- Valuation is the understanding of the purpose, worth, and meaning of the work by considering and integrating different ways of knowing that are inclusive of one’s thoughts, emotions, and experiences.²

The framing of Valuation vs Evaluation, and the focus on activities as acts of love, helps us to understand how valuing our work can be rooted in kindness, solidarity, and resistance.³

1. Canadian Evaluation Society. (No date). What Is Evaluation? <https://evaluationcanada.ca/career/what-is-evaluation.html>

2. Audrey Jordan’s definition in Nuñez, S., & Teng, S. (2019). *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*

3. Nuñez, S., & Teng, S. (2019). *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*

How to Use the Valuation Framework

Step 1 – **Identify the initiative you are wishing to give value to or evaluate.** This tool is most helpful for specific initiatives (e.g. a new policy, process, project) rather than broad or abstract categories.

Step 2 – **Invite people involved to reflect on the activities they engaged in throughout the initiative** using the Dimensions of Love Valuation Worksheet (see page 4). Suggested time: 30 minutes.

This can be done individually, or as small group conversations. If doing small group conversations, start with at least 5 minutes of individual reflection time first.

Step 3 – **Synthesize responses to see the impact holistically.** Some methods of synthesis that may be helpful:

- Thematic analysis – Identify recurring themes to highlight patterns in the impact. Include quotes from the reflection to illustrate the data.
- Affinity mapping – Group similar responses into clusters to illustrate key areas of impact.
- Most significant change stories – Identify a few particularly powerful responses or invite each person to share one impact.
- Data Walks – Engage stakeholders in a shared sense-making process around data, in a step-by-step method.

Adaptations

- 1 If you are looking to give value to/evaluate several initiatives, adapt the worksheet to add additional columns, one for each initiative.
- 2 This tool can be used at a mid-way point, by adding another set of prompting questions for each dimension of love:

Self-Love – How could we better centre self-love in this initiative?

Love for Others – How could we better centre love for others in this initiative?

Love as a Community Practice – How might we leverage our knowledge and relationships to ground our work in community with compassion and understanding?

Love Fused with Power – What roles and contributions can we make to rebalance power and make our systems more equitable and responsive?

Readiness for Using the Tool

Using this tool requires self-awareness of who you are as an individual and understanding how interactions impact the collective. It should be used by individuals and teams who are able to:

- Articulate who you are as an individual and what brings you to this work
- Articulate who you are as a team and the strengths and weaknesses you bring to this work
- Name who you are as an organisation and your role in community
- Identify key initiatives you have, or wish to, develop that have been intentionally designed with an equity lens

Dimensions of Love: Valuation Worksheet

Reflect on and populate ways that you and your work embodies and actions each of the four Dimensions of Love.

Activities describe acts of love rooted in kindness, solidarity, and resistance.

Impacts describe the measure of what has been transformed and offers a measure of long-term, large-scale change resulting from an activity or intervention.

Dimension of Love	Activities	Impacts
Self-Love – The personal How has engaging in this work been beneficial to you/to your life/to your professional development?	<i>le. Tending to personal capacity as a way of understanding your own needs & limitations</i>	<i>le. Enabling clearer decision-making, a stronger presence, and reducing the risk of burnout</i>
Love Others – The team How has engaging in this work been beneficial for your team as a whole? Think about interpersonal relationships, team culture, workplace atmosphere, recruiting and retention, etc.	<i>le. Concrete organizational or team practices that translate values into action</i>	<i>le. Inclusive learning spaces and decision-making processes are developed with the team in mind</i>
Love as a Community Practice – The community How has engaging in this work been beneficial to the people within your community that you are serving or in relationship with? Think also about the impact of the work that your community members go on to do with your influence.	<i>le. Identifying and removing structural barriers, designing spaces for dialogue rather than transaction</i>	<i>le. Relational approaches are foundational to meaningful engagement. Trust and accessibility are improved.</i>
Loved Fused with Power – The system How has our engagement in this work contributed to greater equity within existing systems? Think about your influences on policies, practices, and resource flows. Consider power dynamics and how you are using your positionality, making decisions that are founded in relationships, honouring equity-denied communities, and contributing to closing equity gaps. Are you openly sharing successes, challenges, and learnings to influence systems change?	<i>le. Practices to ensure accountability, systems-level efforts, or advocacy for policy change</i>	<i>le. Decision-making structures better support equity-denied communities</i>

Deepen your Understanding

- Read Tamarack's living framework and action plan - [Seeds of Transformation: A Loving Framework for Equity, Reconciliation and Belonging](#)
- Read [Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A brown paper](#)

Take it to the Next Level

- Want to build your own valuation framework grounded in love?
Connect with us
(tamarack@tamarackcommunity.ca)
for coaching or guidance through
the process.

