

A unified model of autonomy:

Integrating self-determination, self-control, and well-being

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Autonomy = Self-governance

Why so topical? Tech!

Incompleteness of SDT's approach¹

- **Phenomenology:** Invisible forces may not impact experienced autonomy
- Fun is autonomous, yet self-control² is a form of self-governance

Building on philosophy's ontological approach^{3,4}

Distinguish between **autonomous choice**, = a state, and **autonomous personhood**, = a trait

Desires can be:

- **higher-order** (what you want to want), vs **lower-order**⁵ (cf. self-control literature)
- **authentic** (self-shaped), vs. unduly influenced by outside forces⁶
 - either perceived as such (cf. SDT), or not

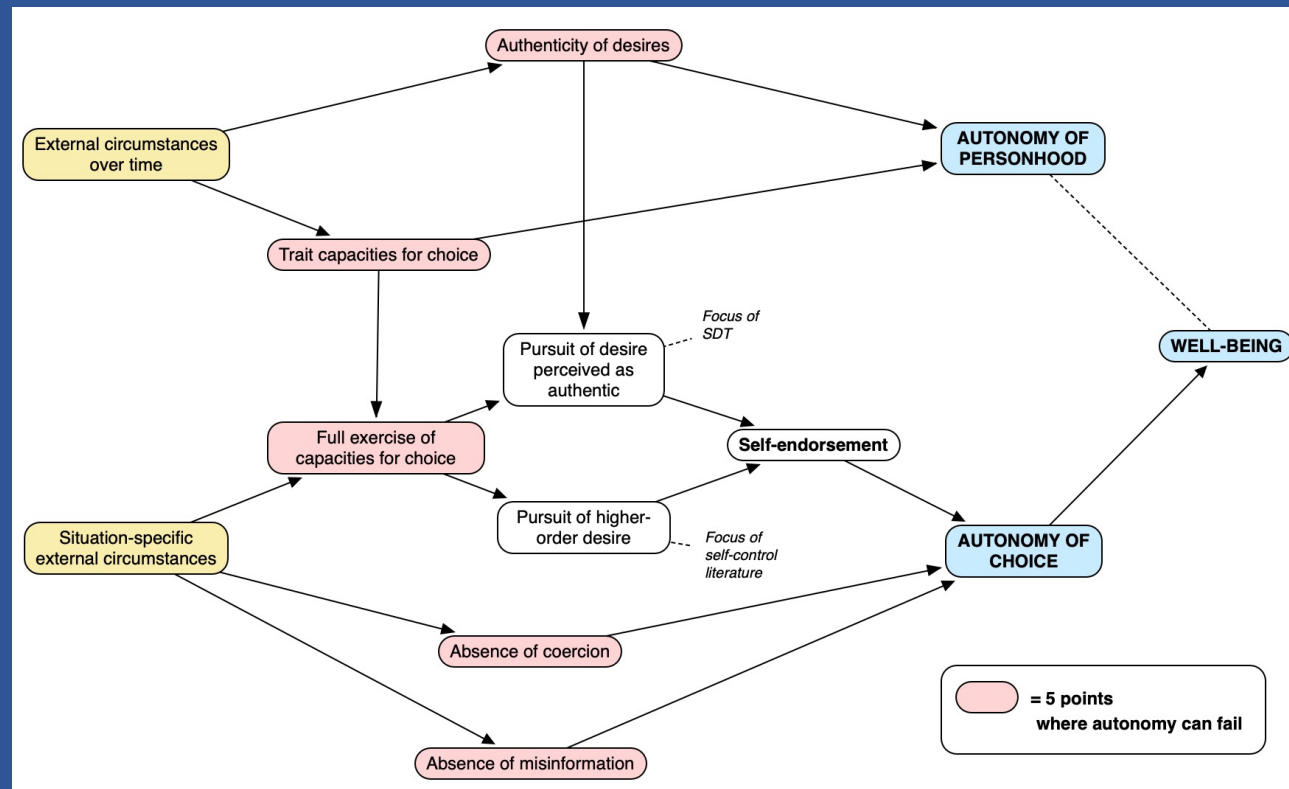
Capacities for choice = capacities for (i) evaluation of options against desires and (ii) implementation
 Proposal: **Self-endorsement** – a condition for autonomous choice – involves seeking to maximize (individual conception of) **well-being**⁷

New/important constructs

- “Genuine” (ontological) **self-endorsement**, cf experienced self-endorsement: Less choice, more instrumentality.
- “Genuine” (ontological) **authenticity**, cf. perceived authenticity. Can we develop operative measures? (cf. *self-infiltration*⁸)
- Map out comprehensively the **capacities for choice** and how they are affected by circumstances.

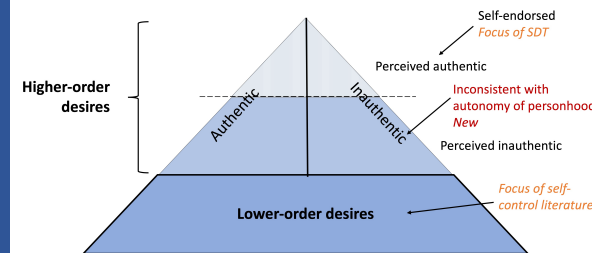
We build a theoretical model that can be used to analyze the impact of **external circumstances** on **autonomy*** and thereby on **well-being**.

* “**Ontological**” autonomy: Not just whether you feel autonomous, but whether you are autonomous.

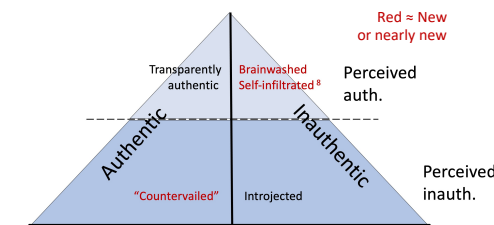


ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The pyramid of desires



... and at the top:



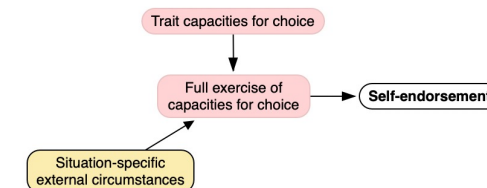
Christman's (1991) test of (ontological) authenticity

(summary)

A desire is *authentic* if, at the time of its formation, the agent approved of the influence on their desires, or would have approved of it had they given it careful thought.

Defining the “full exercise” of capacities

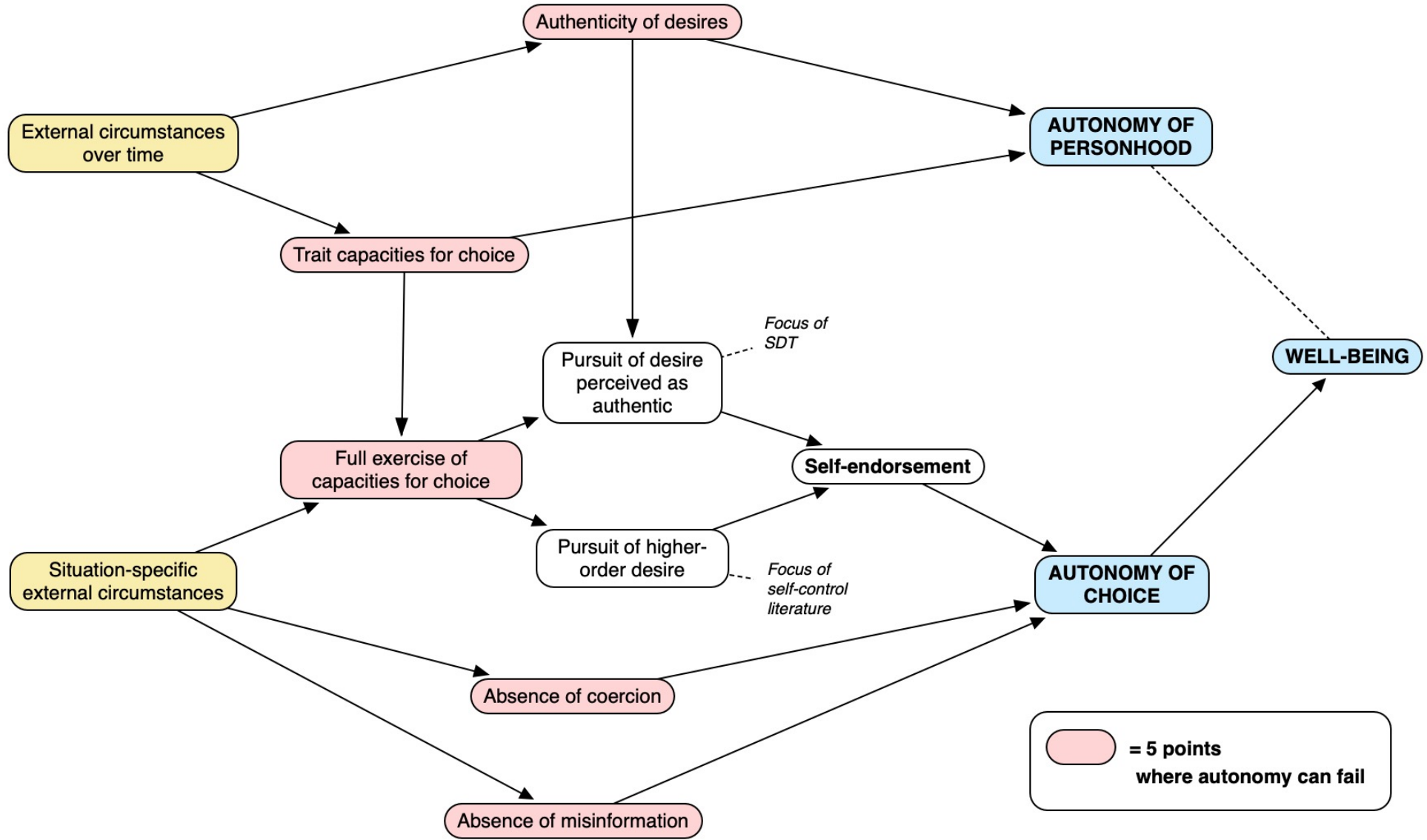
= “Perfect” exercise, because trait capacities interact with external circumstances



=> Autonomy of choice is a matter of degree!

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Ryan & Deci (2017) | 5 Frankfurt (1971) |
| 2 Inzlicht et al. (2021) | 6 Christman (1991) |
| 3 Christman (2020) | 7 Bratman (2004) |
| 4 Sneddon (2013) | 8 Kuhl & Kazen (1994) |





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