# The Circular Behavior Toolkit

Guide

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# Introduction to the Circular Behavior Initiative

Welcome to the first publication of the **Circular Behavior Initiative** by DDC - Danish Design Center.

With this initiative, we have been aiming to combine two complex fields, circular economy and behavioral design, investigating how to apply this intersection to create better businesses, more sustainable users, consumers, and societies - and most importantly, to work towards a regenerative, circular, and just future.

We have done this by having a mission-oriented approach to looking into how to change current consumption patterns and increase the awareness of the power of the people and the human factor in a circular economy.

We firmly believe that we must seriously consider human aspects and find new ways to influence people positively to help stop overconsumption. The human activities and thereby current consumption patterns are directly linked to the **exceedance of the planetary boundaries**. To implement and succeed with circular initiatives, we must change our consumption patterns.

Behavioral design has been applied to manipulate humans for decades - mostly negatively. That tends to foster bad habits among people and has driven humans in a direction that makes us thrive less (**source**).

But we claim that when behavioral design has been applied to influence and manipulate, e.g., spending more time on screens, buying more, eating more, and generally making the wrong choices, we can also reverse this and apply it to understand the human brain, what drives us and based on this; help us make better choices.

With the Circular Behavior Initiative, we have developed our open-source toolkit for you, aiming to turn motivation and potential into tangible actions primarily focusing on businesses and organizations.

By combining circular economy with behavioral design, we believe that businesses are given a powerful tool to - at the same time - tackle climate issues as well as build a better and stronger relationship with their users and customers. Therefore, it is important to know the ethical aspects and direct and indirect rebound effects when working with humans and their behavior.

We believe this is an important muscle you need to continually train and challenge in dialogue with others to unleash the potential and tackle the ethical barriers you might find.

In our work with circularity and behavior, we have so far discovered that to succeed in implementing the (often missing) human factor in circular initiatives, we need to design for:

( 1 )

# Choice architecture

i.e., how we make choices. Our decisions are influenced by how they are presented to us. In fact, we make up to **35,000 decisions every day.**

Kahneman highlights our **two systems** that are constantly competing - i.e., system 1: the fast, subconscious, automatic, intuitive but also error-prone system and system 2: the slow, conscious, effortful, and reliable system enabling us to make complex decisions.

The thing is that people are being irrational 95 percent of the time. We act subconsciously a lot because we mainly apply system 1. The amount of time we can apply system 2 is limited - regardless of how smart you might be.

In this toolkit, we take a starting point in this irrationality and the fact that it plays a major role in everyone's lives. Because whether we talk about private lives or company contexts, we're all irrational human beings - whether we like it or not.

In the society we have created, we are confronted with many choices every day and often have to apply system 2 to a high degree. The brain loves shortcuts, and therefore, we often tend to make the easy choice - we do what we're used to to avoid thinking subconsciously.

One way to work with our irrational tendencies is to learn behavioral economics principles. Behavioral economics is a discipline that examines the often conflicting motivations behind deci-

sion-making to predict or influence the actions of individuals. It draws on both psychological, sociological, and political theories and has traditionally been applied in economic contexts. Several principles within behavioral economics exist and one can regard each principle as a field of study on their own.

We will reveal more about this topic, which will be applied in the toolkit later when you make it to step B3 in the toolkit journey.

( 2 )

## Emotional durability

This is how we can design for value that lasts and how we as people can link our emotions and memories, aiming to establish loving and caring relationships between people and resources.

> **"Waste is a symptom of a failed relationship"**
>
> Jonathan Chapman

We have never owned more, wanted more, and wasted more than we do today. But things quickly become meaningless when (over)consuming more and faster than ever before.

Designing actively for emotional durability aims to rethink this and help us find new ways of exploring how people, to a higher degree, can attach themselves to objects. In this way, people and their emotional attachments become the maintainers of our products and resources.

The point here is that durability is not (only) about robust materials that last but also about the relationships and care we put into keeping our materials and resources in use for as long as possible.

Some inspiration for creating an increased emotional attachment to our everyday objects can be found in several Japanese principles and techniques focusing on e.g., defining new aesthetics and circular strategies like repairing, caring, and maintaining. We wrote an article about this - read it **here.**

# Social incentives

We are heavily influenced by others. Regarding behavioral economic principles, social incentives are closely connected to the principles regarding Social Proof, Herding, Feedback, and Reward Substitution.

The last principle refers to the strategy of removing and replacing distant or abstract rewards with more immediate or even tangible incentives to create motivation and get people to engage or act in a desirable way and/or achieve long-term goals. That is quite interesting to unfold in the context of circular behavior.

To create new social (and even circular-oriented) norms, social incentives are a strong weapon to influence our behavior. By default, human beings are herd animals and use social contexts and interactions to create an understanding of the world around us. Furthermore, these interactions also function as a reward system, where the social incentives consist of a broad range of interpersonal rewards and motivations, which encourage people to behave in a socially valued and approved way.

These social structures also create a kind of **tribe reward**, influencing how branding and storytelling are used in product marketing. Unified tribe members tend to act in solidarity with each other.

Working with social incentives in the context of a circular economy, we have found that businesses hold a massive impact on the way they brand themselves and work with storytelling and marketing, and hereby indirectly affect their customers' way of acting. **Become part of the tribe** has been misused by brands to create and obtain overconsumption flows and hereby keep their customers loyal to the brand. What if we could reverse these social incentives and tribe mentality and use marketing for the greater good?
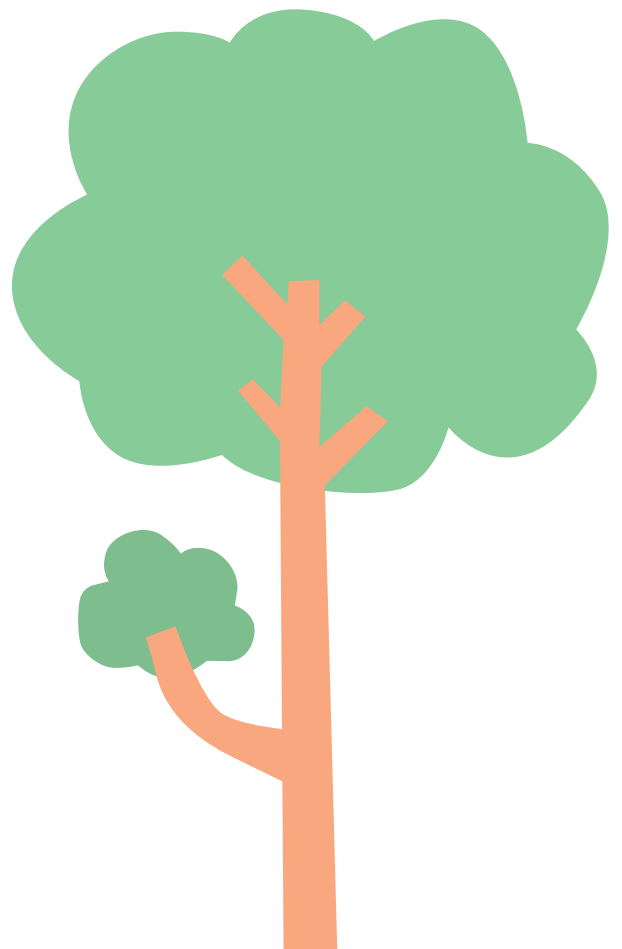
# Relational aspects between business and user

How businesses can establish (close) relationships between customers and themselves and use this power and loyalty for the better to offer their users circular strategies like caring, repairing, reusing, etc.

If we start presenting how we define consumption, we lean up against the following:

"Consumption provides an invaluable vehicle for processing and interacting with an evolving world, facilitating both learning and social interaction through the continual intake of new, fresh experiences"

Jonathan Chapman
Emotional Durable Design

The point is that we all consume - this is a prerequisite to staying alive. However, it is crucial to distinguish between consumption and overconsumption.

People are consumers. Consumers were not born wasteful; they have been trained for years to be so by sales-hungry industries competing to dominate the market [Chapman], taking advantage of our irrational sides and thereby making people hostage in never-ending overconsumption patterns.

We think people sometimes have a choice, but it might entail breaking habits, making (major) decisions, having more money, etc. At the same time, companies and organizations carry a huge responsibility to change habits and offer better alternatives - but it also requires users to be willing to do things differently.

It is not easy - we know! The arrows are pointing in all directions: on the individuals, on businesses, and the more systemic institutions.

Where there is a responsibility, there is opportunity. In most cases, it is possible to at least start doing the right thing and work in a more sustainable and just direction.

As previously mentioned, waste can be regarded as a symptom of a failed relationship. This counts between the users, the product, and the business model.

"Longer lasting products have the potential to present robust economic models for creating products, services, and brand-loyal customers - driving future sales, upgrade, service, and repair. [...] In an alternative future, users and products flourish within long-lasting empathic partnerships, blissfully oblivious to the relentless taunts of the capitalist machine."

Jonathan Chapman
Emotional Durable Design

The point is that there might even be good business hidden in such initiatives.

People, the consumers, the customers, the users - whatever you might call them, depending on the context, have the power to change things for the better. They can be part of extending the lifetime of products and materials. They can interact with natural systems and help increase biodiversity - you name it! But it requires a better and bigger understanding of human behavior and what drives us to create change.

This toolkit mainly focuses on aspects from 1. The choice architecture, and 4. The relational aspects between business and user. It provides you with hands-on approaches and guidelines on how to work actively within businesses and organizations.

## Why is this important?

There are several incentives to work with product life-expanding initiatives in your business. The main reasons are environmental concerns and protection. However, **research** suggests that other arguments and advantages of working with sustainable and circular initiatives in businesses can involve one or more of the following:

— Instead of focusing on broadening the product portfolio, you can focus on evolving the existing products in the portfolio.
— To maintain customer engagement, it can be advantageous to be locally present and, e.g., deliver after-sale services.
— To promote product details and increase the attachment to the product, involving the users/customers in the assembly process can be an advantage.
— To increase customers' aesthetic familiarity with the brand, focus on long-lasting aesthetics.
— Being open about how the company's products are produced and aiming to create a transparent production.
— Limitation of seasonal trends to product details.

Keeping one or more of the above points in mind can help you in your work with behavioral design and circular economy.

Based on these perspectives, we have developed and prototyped a circular behavior toolkit.

( 5 )

## Introduction to the toolkit

The Circular Behavior Toolkit should be regarded as an introductory toolkit to the intersecting field of circular economy and behavioral design. The purpose is to get you started on actively working with the human factor in a circular context.

Our aim is to provide professionals with an overview and an introductory common language around the intersecting topic. It should, therefore, not be regarded as a comprehensive guide in behavioral design and circular economy as both fields are complex and require a lot of time and work to get familiar with. But this is our attempt to connect some of the dots between these fields.

The toolkit has been created in a design-driven manner, meaning that it has been tested on an ongoing basis and has gone through several iterations to look like it does today. This also means that this is the first official iteration launched as an open-source tool

# Toolkit journey

In the following, you see an overview of the suggested journey to get started with the toolkit. The toolkit journey consists of three sections (A, B, and C) and their respective steps:

**A. Foundation**

Step A1 · *Select product*

*Step A2 · Define persona*

**B. Canvas**

Step B1 · *Select CE strategy*

Step B2 · *Assumed frictions*

Step B3 · *Behavioral economics principles*

Step B4 · *Desired behavior*

**C. Idea generation & actions**

Step C1 · *Brainstorm cloud*

Step C2 · *Action card/prototyping/testing*

Please note that each step contains most of the following elements:

1. **Background** - some of the theory and background knowledge behind the subject(s) the step encompasses.
2. **Material(s)** - all materials to be printed are named according to the 'material codes' mentioned in the guide.
3. **Description** - a brief guide describing the steps you will go through and how to carry out the exercises.
4. **Example(s)** - We have provided examples to make it easier for you to relate.
5. **OBS** - a special thing to pay attention to or keep in mind. This element is marked with a: 🌿
6. **Disclaimer** - What we think you should know. We need certain disclaimers due to our choices and the complexity of the topics. This element is marked with a: 🚦

# The Circular Behavior Toolkit

## Let the journey begin

# Foundation

A

**Introduction to Section A - The Foundation**
In the following, we will guide you on laying the foundation of the circular behavior journey. You must choose the right product/service touch-point and define your persona (i.e., a specific end-user). This foundation will function as an ongoing reference point throughout the toolkit journey.

A1

## Select product
15 min.

—

**Materials**
One of the following check-lists depending on your context:

Checklists for phyical -, digital products, and systemic/service/place
Material code: 'A1-checklists'
**Link**

**Description**
Step A1 is about identifying the right starting point for you for the whole journey. It is crucial to choose a starting point that is not too narrow or too broad to work with.

If you selected wrongly, you'll quickly discover this in the next steps. To help you define your product, we have provided you with a checklist that aims to help guide you toward choosing an optimal starting point. You can find a checklist for each of the following categories:

1. Physical product
2. Digital product
3. Systemic/service/place

# Example

## Physical product

✔️   A pair of shoes · a white T-shirt · a specific function on a washing machine

✖️   Clothes · a washing machine · a bicycle

## Digital product

✔️   Specific function in an app · interaction point with a user

✖️   An entire app

## Systemic/service/place

✔️   Rollercoaster · bench

✖️   Playground · parc

If you find it hard to define your product or if you simply don't have a business/organization to take a starting point in, you can try to select one of the 'Do's' from the examples mentioned above and try to run the session with one of these - or use your imagination!

**OBS**
We strongly encourage you to find something to represent the product - whether you carry out the workshop physically or digitally - and regardless of the chosen product category. If you work digitally, find a picture that represents the chosen product. Or if you sit physically but have a digital product, try to print a picture or draw the product. This is an important aspect as it can be a big advantage to have a common reference point that is tactile and physically manifested to the greatest extent possible. Hopefully, you will get to experience this first hand.

**Disclaimer**
No case is the same, and every journey will be different. Remember that the steps and approaches in the following might need to be adjusted a bit depending on the chosen product and context - this is not always easy, but do your best. It requires practice to make these small adjustments - the point is that you're more than allowed to hack our guide.

**A2**
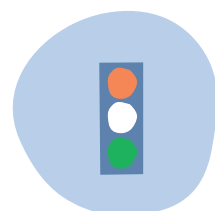
# Define persona
15 min.

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**Background**

At the heart of our methodical design approach lies the essence of personas — tangible manifestations sculpted through careful research, offering a tangible connection to the real world. Besides defining the product/service you would like to work with, you'll need to consider what kind of person sits on the other side of your product/service to get the foundation right from the beginning. In the design methodology and as a tool, this is a persona. When working with a persona, it's essential to be as precise as possible in defining your persona. You should understand the persona as a potential user of your product/service.

Personas play a crucial role in the behavioral design process for several reasons. First and foremost, it brings a human touch to design, ensuring that the end product resonates with real users. They help us understand the target audience's motivations, preferences, and behaviors.

In addition, personas as a tool also have the incredible function of fostering empathy by providing a concrete representation of users. In this way, we can better relate to the intended audience's needs, desires, and challenges, leading to more empathetic and user-centric solutions and interventions.

In this setting, the personas act as guiding principles or filters during the work with the circular behavioral wheel. They help make informed decisions by keeping the focus on what matters most to the users, and in this way, put the potential user in the driver's seat for the development of circular behavior interventions, thereby making it easier to step into the shoes of the user and design with their perspective in mind.

In summary, personas enhance the behavioral design process by keeping it user-focused, empathetic, and aligned with real-world user experiences, ultimately leading to more effective and meaningful design outcomes and creating a reference link to the real world. Please remember, the more concrete and specific you can be when designing your persona, the better results you will achieve. Targeting everyone means targeting no one.

## Materials

Persona card
Material code: 'A2-Persona_card'
**Link**

## Description
In step A2, you fill out a pre-made persona card. Only fill out one persona per product.

Once the persona is filled out, place the persona card next to the canvas you will work with in section B.

**Your persona should consist of the following parameters**

- Name
- Age
- Occupation/Education
- Status
- Location
- Lifestyle
- Free time (hobbies and interests)
- Dreams/fears
- Quote

—

**Selection on a barometer/scale**

- Awareness about sustainability
- Willingness to act on sustainability
- Community oriented

—

**Prioritization/compromising category**

- Quality driven
- Prize driven
- Functionality driven
- Aesthetically driven
- Environmentally driven

# Example



**Persona card**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name + pron | Harold Davis |
| Age | 76 years old |
| Hobby | Loves gardening, woodworking and give lectures on sustainable technology at the local senior center. |

Quote
"Sustainability is not just for the young; it's a gift we can leave for future generations. We all have a big responsibility and the possibility to take action."

| | |
|---|---|
| Location | Scotland |
| Education | Aerospace engineer |
| Dreams | Passing on knowledge |
| Fears | Health issues |
| Life status | Widowed with 2 adult children |

Rank from 1 to 5
*where 1 is the highest priority and 5 is the lowest*

- 4 Price driven
- 1 Functionality driven
- 3 Quality driven
- 2 Environmentally driven
- 5 Aesthetically driven

Place an 'X' on the lines
- Sustainability awareness
- Willingness to act
- Community oriented

Danish Design Center

## OBS
— Be more specific about the persona rather than being broad and unspecific.
— Regard the persona as a randomly selected reference point.
— You can always try again with another persona if you stumble upon difficulties with the one you have defined.
— If you have data in your business/organization that could be useful to help define the persona, feel free to use this in the creation of your persona.
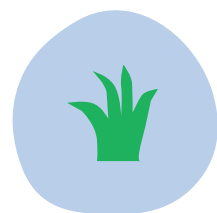
## Disclaimer
Your defined persona will most likely differ from the real-life users, but this is fine. Use it as a method and reference point - not a fact.
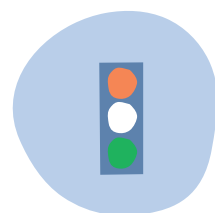
# Canvas

**Introduction to Section B - The Circular Behavior Canvas**
With the foundation in place, you can now take a starting point in your product and defined persona and start the circular behavior journey by applying the canvas - go find the canvas with the material code 'C-Canvas' - **link**. You will use the canvas throughout the next 4 steps (B1-B4).

## B1

## Select a circular economy strategy
15-25 min.

—

**Background**
Circular strategies represent concrete strategic directions and priorities that can be considered when implementing circularity on systemic, organizational, and individual levels.

**Materials**
    Circular Economy strategy card deck
    Material code: 'B1-CE_card-deck'
    **Link**

**Description**
In step B1, we encourage you to browse through the different strategies in the card deck provided and familiarize yourself with them. In the end, you should choose one strategy to proceed with and place it on the canvas.

To help you select among the strategies, you can consider the following questions:

— Which of the strategies are the most interesting? – For the organization? For the business strategy that we have? For the persona?
— Which of the strategies could potentially have the biggest positive environmental impact?
— Which of the strategies could potentially contribute to increased well-being among humans? I.e., social sustainability aspects?

# Example

→

**Product**
A pair of male leather shoes

→

**Chosen Circular Strategy card**
Care

The 'care' strategy was chosen because the company thought it could be interesting to investigate opportunities to integrate care aspects into their business strategy. They know the shoes they sell have the potential to have an even longer life if the users start to take better care of them on an ongoing basis, as leather can last for many years if cared for properly. The team has an assumption that this is an overlooked business opportunity they should start diving into. However, they also know this would require more knowledge and active work with human behavior. As soon as they begin incorporating service elements into their business offering, they will inevitably work with behavior and mindset changes amongst their users.

**OBS**
Try to balance your thoughts and make sure not to go in 'solution mode'. With this we mean that you should stay on a more general level when reflecting upon the above questions and wanting to choose a circular strategy card.
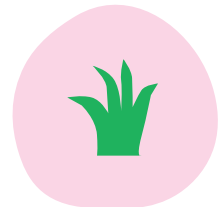
**Disclaimer**
In reality, the circular strategies should not necessarily be regarded as isolated from one another. They can easily be combined in a business model as several steps to prolong the lifetime of products and resources as a part of a strategy and business model. However, in this case, we encourage you to zoom in and focus on one strategy for the sake of the exercise and to decrease potential complexity.
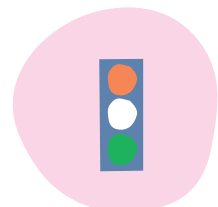
# Map assumed frictions
15 min.

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## Materials
Post-its + pens or a computer with access to the Miro board

## Description
Spend time emptying your head for the assumed frictions you can think of related to working with the selected circular strategy in step B1. you should still have the product and persona from section A in mind. Ask yourself:

*What are the main barriers/frictions you can think of when wanting to work with the chosen circular strategy in the chosen product context and with the persona in mind?*

Some common friction-related topics are, e.g.:
— Time
— Money
— Education/Skills/Knowledge
— Biases
— What else can you think of?

Empty your head for all the assumed frictions you can think of and place them on the canvas. Remember that you need at least 10-15 assumed frictions mapped out before proceeding to the next step. If you need more time for this step than indicated
- go ahead!

If you work in a team, we encourage you to take at least two rounds. Set a timer for 5 minutes, brainstorm the frictions individually, then have a sharing session in plenum where you share what you have noted and spend another 5 minutes emptying your head for the frictions you can think of. Then, share your thoughts from the second round with the team. It is more than okay to be inspired by what your team members have mentioned in the sharing sessions.

If you feel like doing a third round, go ahead!
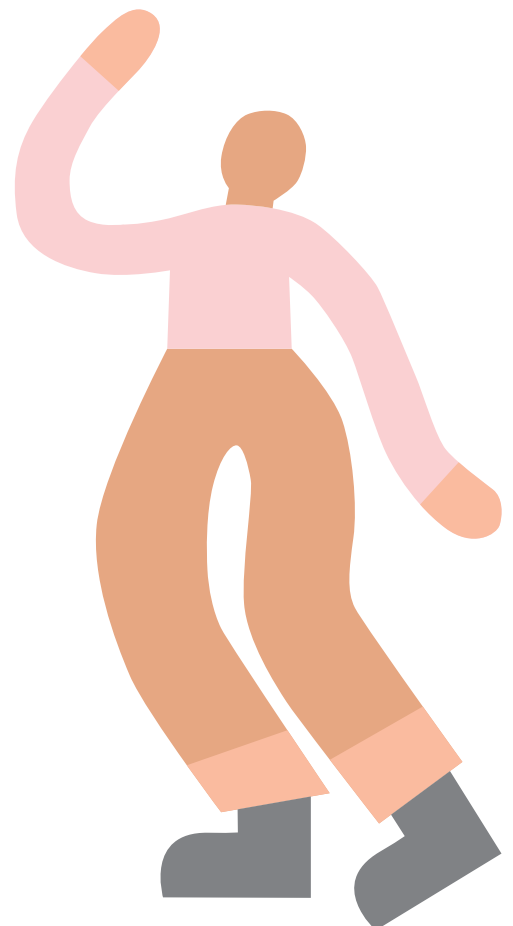
# Example

→

**Product**
A pair of male leather shoes

→

**Persona**
Harold

→

**Circular strategy**
Care

→

**Assumed friction(s)**
1. Harold doesn't know where to start when wanting to take better care of his shoes continuously.
2. Harold already has a lot of care products for shoes in his home and does not know what to do with them.
3. Harold is afraid of ruining his shoes or doing something wrong.

**OBS**
Only write one assumed friction per sticky note
Remember to try to balance your thoughts and make sure not to go into solution mode. You should still stay on a more general level when reflecting upon the above questions.

**Disclaimer**
When working with behavioral design, usually, a (relatively comprehensive) friction analysis is carried out. This step is a way to acknowledge the importance of keeping frictions and barriers in mind in a behavioral design context but simplifying it by allowing it to be assumed and not proved.

What could be done is to go out and test, observe, and analyze the real frictions to collect data on the problem and base decisions on the data instead of the assumptions you come up with - that would be the optimal way of doing it. At least try to keep in mind and consider frictions instead of skipping them just because it's too complex and/or time-consuming. There could also be ways of lightly testing some of the frictions.

**B2.1**

**Clustering of assumed frictions**

When having mapped as many assumed frictions as you can, we encourage you to try and do a clustering with these frictions. This means that you try to group the frictions and look for what some of the frictions might have in common - what patterns and/or themes among the frictions can you see? Remember to make new post-it notes where you note down the names of the identified clusters.

Some of the assumed frictions can be related to each other across the clustering you are doing, and for that reason, it's okay to add the same assumed frictions in the different cluster groups.

This exercise can be difficult but can help you greatly with the next steps.

**B3**

# Behavioral economics pinciples

15 min.

—

**Background**

In our work with behavioral design and circular economy, we have preselected 14 behavioral economic principles that we think are relevant for you to get to know when working with environmental potentials as well as barriers. Along with each principle, you also find both good and bad examples of how these have been applied to either foster or prohibit environmental initiatives.

In the card deck, you will find the following principles:
— Here and now
— Default bias
— Reward substitution
— Pre-commitment
— Consistency
— Friction costs
— Goal gradient
— Herding
— Ostrich effect
— Loss aversion
— Social proof
— IKEA effect
— Scarcity mindset
— Identifiable victim effect (neutral: human relatability)
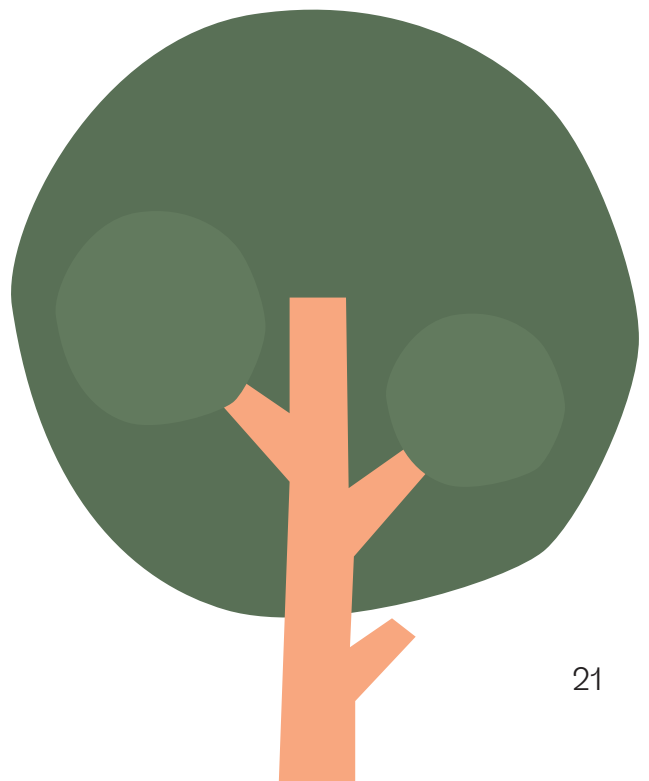
**Materials**
— Behavioral economics (BE) principle card deck
  Material code: 'B3-BE_card-deck')
  **Link**

**Description**

**B3.1**

**Reflection exercise - Get to know the BE principles**
15 min.

—

Individually, browse and select one card from the behavioral economics card deck. When each team member has chosen a card, we encourage you to reflect upon the chosen card.

To help you reflect, we have formulated the following to keep in mind:

— In what way could this principle be interesting to work with in our business?
— In what way do I relate to this principle in my private life?
— Could this principle be applied negatively and potentially be a barrier to (positive) change? In your business? In society?
— When you have reflected upon one or more of the questions above, share your main takeaways with the team. It can also help to take a look at the good and bad examples provided with each example to get a better understanding of the different contexts the principles previously have been applied to.
— We encourage you to repeat this process until you, ideally, have been through all the cards in the card deck.

**B3.2**

**Select a behavioral economics principle card for the next step**

Now, you should be familiar with quite a few behavioral economics principles. We hope these have given you an introduction to the field and sparked new thoughts - professionally and personally.

Select one of the principles that you find (the most) interesting and relevant for your context and that you would like to proceed with and place it on the canvas on step 3.

You should regard this chosen card as a "filter" or inspiration for the next step. This also means that you can easily go a step back and replace the chosen card with another one.

# Example

→

**Product**
A pair of male leather shoes

→

**Persona**
Harold

→

**Circular strategy**
Care

→

**Assumed friction(s)**
Harold doesn't know where to start when wanting to take better care of his shoes on an ongoing basis.
Harold already has a lot of care products for shoes in his home and does not know what to do with them.
Harold is afraid of ruining his shoes or doing something wrong.
BE principle: Default bias: People tend to pick the easiest option available, which is what is set to be the default.

**OBS**
— You can always go back and select another BE principle if you would like to try another one.
— For this step, we have chosen to preselect the BE cards we find the most interesting and/or relevant in a circular economy context. If you know other principles you'd like to bring into play, feel free to do so.
— As you might have noticed by going through the BE card deck, the examples showcase that all the principles can be applied for good and more doubtful purposes. Our point is that there is nothing wrong with the approaches, but the (positive or negative) impact created highly depends on which context they are applied in and for what purpose.

**Disclaimer**
Many of the examples provided on the cards are far from perfect. Still, we have chosen to provide these examples as it tends to help to see possible ways of applying the principles in specific contexts. The examples are chosen based on their specific contexts. The good examples are not perfect, but they are doing something which is more than nothing.

**B4**
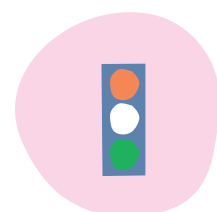
## Desired behavior
15 min.

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**Background**
A desired behavior is something specific you want the persona to do at a certain time. Make sure to not see this as a solution but more like a frame-setting for the solution. The desired behavior should be seen as the achieved action, whereas there are plenty of means to achieve the action.

To help you define the desired behavior, you should have the following question in mind:

*Who should do what, when?*

Keep the video test in mind. A desired behavior should be abled to be filmed so that the viewer of the video would understand the action without explanation.

**Materials**
Post-its + pens or a computer with access to the Miro board

**Description**
20 min.

Map out as many desired behaviors you can think of and place them on the canvas. Remember to answer:
'Who should do what, when?'

— For this, you should keep the following in mind:
— The product
— The persona
— The CE strategy
— A certain cluster of assumed frictions
— One behavioral economics principle

We encourage you to start with a silent brainstorm and set a timer for 5-10 minutes. Subsequently, you can share your ideas for desired behaviors and discuss them. Write it down if something more comes to mind. Take another round if necessary.

Use the BE-principle(s) as a filter for your brainstorming. If you get stuck, add a new BE-principle to the canvas. You can also change the cluster of assumed frictions to spark new ideas for the desired behaviors.

## Example

✗

**Harold should take better care of his shoes**
This is not precise enough and therefore not regarded as a desired behavior. Also; how would you film this?

✓

**Harold should polish his leather shoes once every third month.**
This is precise and can be regarded as a desired behavior since both person, action, and time are defined. Also, we could actually film this!

**OBS**
Only write one desired behavior down per sticky note. Remember to try to balance your thoughts and make sure not to go in a solution mode. You should still stay on a more general level when reflecting upon the above questions.

**Disclaimer**
This step tends to be quite hard and for most people, this is a new way of thinking. Allow yourself to understand that thinking this way takes time to practice and eventually learn. The key is to dare to be specific - but not come up with exact solutions just yet. In general, you should rather focus on zooming in and try to change something small instead of wanting to change everything at the same time - this is where most initiatives go wrong.

Remember: We have to love what seems banal.

# Idea generation & action

**C**

## Introduction to section C
Congratulations! You have reached the final part of the toolkit journey and are allowed to think in solutions and specific actions to test.

**C1**

## Brainstorm cloud
15 min.

—

### Materials
Brainstorm cloud
Material code: 'C1-Brainstorm_cloud'
**Link**

OBS: one cloud sheet per team member
Dot votes (small stickers in different colors)

### Description

**C1.1**

**Select desired behaviors**
Consider which of the desired behaviors from the previous step that you would like to generate ideas on.

For each of the desired behaviors you wish to explore further, you place the sticky note in the center of a brainstorm cloud - one sticky note per brainstorm sheet.

You might have between 1 and 5 sheets depending on the size of your team and the amount of ideas for desired behaviors generated.

## C1.2

### Brain walking

Having selected the desired behaviors you want to brainstorm, you can do a brain walking in a team by circulating the different brainstorm clouds in the team. Spend 2 minutes on each of the clouds and make sure to visit a new one every time you take a new round.

It is totally allowed to become inspired by team members' thoughts and ideas and build on top of them as you brainstorm.

## C1.3

### Dot voting

After finishing the brain walking and everyone in the team had the opportunity to brainstorm on each of the desired behaviors, spend 3-5 minutes on dot voting.

Everyone has three votes and can vote on their top three favorite ideas. The one(s) with the most votes, is/are encouraged to bring along to the final step.

## C2

## Action card
25 min.

—

### Background

The process of testing should be seen as iterative - as the rest of the design approach - and not just the end station of conceptualizing and making your idea live. When it comes to different forms of tests, you can divide the tests into two different categories in behavioral design: formative and summative tests.

The first type of test is like a pilottest, where you typically have different kinds of iterations you want to test to see which way you should go in the further development. The last is based on measuring the impact a specific prototype can have in the context of

the intervention. It is often more quantitative than the formative, and the purpose of using this summative testing is to sum-up the impact of the assessment of the design's usability.

Based on the framing of the circular behavior toolkit, and the foundation you stand on after having done the Brainstorm cloud (step C1), we have chosen to focus on the formative type of testing and how you can plan and execute your ideas.

—

So why test and why use the formative test in behavioral design? Formative testing in behavioral design is crucial for several reasons. Here are five good reasons for why you should test your ideas before implementing them on a bigger scale:

1. Firstly, it allows us to identify potential user experience issues early in the development process, enabling timely adjustments and improvements.
2. Secondly, by collecting feedback during formative tests, we can gain valuable insights into user preferences, behavior, and expectations, guiding them in refining the design to better meet user needs.
3. Thirdly, formative testing helps validating design hypotheses and ensuring that the intended behavioral outcomes align with the project goals and preferred impact.
4. Additionally, it fosters a user-centered approach, promoting empathy and understanding of the target audience, ultimately leading to more effective and engaging behavioral design.
5. Lastly, the iterative nature of formative testing supports continuous refinement, enhancing the overall quality and success of the final behavioral design product.

**Materials**
    Action sprint
    Material code: 'C2-Action_sprint'
    **Link**

OBS: one per initiative/selected idea from step C1

**Description**
We have developed a simple and easy-going action card (see step C2) to create the best conditions for you to actually plan and structure your next steps when testing your ideas and turning the desired behaviors you have mapped out into tangible, impact-oriented, and simple interventions. Sometimes it feels like running a marathon, but by dividing your test process into smaller achievable goals or actions you make it easier for yourself and others to turn the steps into action. This is also what is called the goal gradient bias in behavioral economics. Sometimes you will experience that you ran in the wrong direction, and now need to

go back to find the right track. This is part of being in an iterative process, but with a backpack filled with explorative design tools, hands-on methods and actionable ideas you are moving in the right direction. And it all starts with defining your own test hypothesis.

**C2.1**

### Summarize and warm-up
The first step on the action card consists of wrapping up your work and insights so far in the circular behavior process.

**C2.2**

### Sprint I – Plan and prep your prototype and test
This is the part of the test and action process where you should define a test hypothesis and start scoping and coordinating the actual steps towards prototyping and testing your idea. To keep you on the right track, we have added three kinds of indicators: Sustainable awareness, Willingness to act, and Ethical awareness.

**C2.3** **+** **C2.5**

### Pitstop I + II
It's time for an (active) break. And what better way to restore your energy, motivation, and ressources than to get a mental snack. In the frame of the toolkit we have created a setting for both sum-marizing, taking the ethical temperature on the idea, but also setting the new testing goals and actions for further developing the idea.

**C2.4**

### Sprint II – Test your prototype
You have now developed, planned, and prepared your formative testframe. You are about to step out from the engine room and into the real world to test your prototype. This step is all about getting and capturing learnings and insights on the prototype's feasibility, viability, and desirability. It is also in this part of the pro-cess you get some indications on whether you should go back to the start and redesign your prototype, then do the test again, or if you should try to test the prototype on a large scale and with more users.

**C2.6**

### Finish line: Wrap-up and next steps

Congratulations! You're almost there! Only a few more steps to reach the finish line. This step is all about wrapping up your formative test to see if you should take a second round, or go straight to the summative part of testing to see if your prototype can be implemented on a larger scale.

### OBS

Most often harder to implement than you might think immediately.

### Disclaimer

The test phase of the behavioral design process is something people often forget. We know that people have good intentions, but planning, coordinating, and testing your ideas and prototypes can seem overwhelming. What if you find something that does not match your preferred perception of the concept? Then it forces you to go back - and you don't have the time or resources. Finding the right people involved in the testing process is also too complicated. Our experience is that when you don't implement the test phase in your development process, it can cost you even more time and resources and not create the positive impact you wanted in the first place.
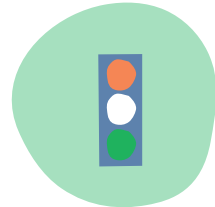
# Epilogue

We hope this toolkit has helped you get started in the intersecting field of circular economy and behavioral design and generate new ideas and actions that will positively impact people and the planet.
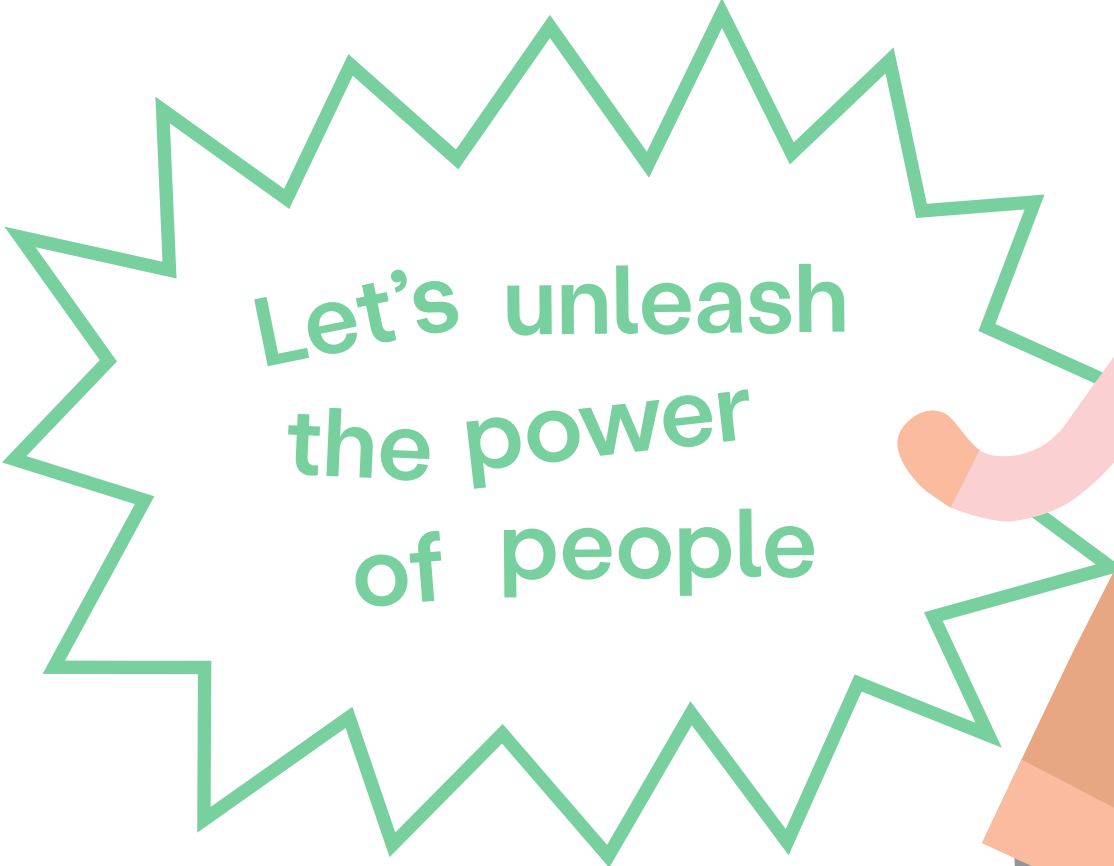
The toolkit is built as a circular design process. Suppose you find any obstacles or frictions regarding the persona, CE strategy, or even your chosen idea. In that case, we highly recommend you go back some steps and try again. Because what…

— Will happen if you change the persona?
— Will happen if you change your product focus?

Furthermore, please remember that the toolkit is developed under the frame of being open-source, which means you are more than welcome to download, iterate, and use it in other settings. We hope that you will use it for the greater good.

Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any feedback, inputs, or something you want to discuss within the circular economy and behavioral design framework. We would love to be part of your journey and hear your insights.

Kind regards,
Therese Balslev & Mia Mysling Steentoft

Let's unleash the power of people