Gary “Chris” Christopherson [ThrivingFuture.org](http://www.thrivingfuture.org/)

Building, Achieving and Sustaining a Thriving Future Via Human Behavior

We, as human beings, want to build, achieve and sustain a thriving future in which all thrive forever.[[1]](#footnote-1) Achieving this future requires the necessary human motivation, ability and behavior now and for the future.[[2]](#footnote-2)

A major concern, unique to human beings as compared to all other species, is the human ability to 1) achieve a thriving future or 2) end itself as a species and end our world. This, combined with human beings need to survive and desire to thrive, is why human behavior is so important.

In fact, we are now at a “tipping point”. Our future is most endangered if we stay on the current path. On a much more positive path, our future could be thriving because we are most capable in history.[[3]](#footnote-3)

If we are to take a more positive path and behave so as to build, achieve and sustain a thriving future, we must understand the necessary behaviors and the necessary motivation and ability to achieve and sustain those behaviors.

First, all human behavior is rational. [[4]](#footnote-4) That is, if we knew all the determinants of behavior, it would be clear that behavior results from those determinants and is rational. It may not be understood by the person or by others. May not seem rational to the person or to others. May not seem “right” to the person or to others. But it is rational.

Second, human behavior is primarily, if not only, driven by the person maximizing for her/his self within her/his current and future environment.[[5]](#footnote-5) This is not the person in isolation but within and affected by her/his environment.

Third, environment is anything outside of the person that will or may affect the person. Environment or parts of it may be controllable or uncontrollable. Environment is the actual environment as well as the person’s perception of the environment. While near term behavior is driven more by perception, long term behavior is driven both by perception and by actual environment (real world).

Fourth, maximizing for our self is driven by human beings need to survive and desire to thrive forever. This does not change. Satisfying this need and desire, depends on the following. We, as a person and a people, need to survive and desire to thrive. We depend on other persons for survival and thriving, especially long term. Our need and desire applies to both current and future world. Our future survival and thriving depends on there being a sustained future world.

Fifth, the person’s behavior, ability and other motivators do change 1) by the person’s perceptions, decisions and actions, 2) over time and 3) as environment changes.

Sixth, growth can and should occur in the person’s knowledge of self, ability, motivators (positive and negative), environment and behavior. Same is true for knowledge of relationship between environment and self, relationship of effort (trying to behave) to behavior and to consequences, and relationship of behavior to consequences.

Seventh, the person can and should grow from only thinking of self to thinking of self and all others. From thinking only about today to thinking about today and the near and far future. From thinking only about getting by to thinking about getting by, surviving and thriving.

Eighth, if a thriving future is achieved, all of us we will be: performing well, well-off (financially), well nourished, well housed, well protected (exposures, crime), well educated, physically and mentally well (people), growing/developing well, living within good habitat, physically well (Earth, plants, animals, environment), not vulnerable, producing personal and public goods, living within a stable climate, and sustained.

When all this comes together negatively (current path), the person and people generally behave to put the future of human beings and our world in danger. When all this comes together positively (thriving path), the person and people generally behave to build, achieve and sustain a surviving and thriving future for all forever.

Gary “Chris” Christopherson [ThrivingFuture.org](http://www.thrivingfuture.org/)

Building, Achieving and Sustaining a Thriving Future Via Human Behavior

We human beings want to build, achieve and sustain a thriving future in which all thrive forever.[[6]](#footnote-6) Achieving this future requires the necessary human motivation, ability and behavior now and for the future.[[7]](#footnote-7)

A major concern, unique to human beings as compared to all other species, is the ability to 1) achieve a thriving future or 2) end itself as a species and end our world. This, combined with our need to survive and desire to thrive, is why human behavior is so important.

In fact, we are now at a “tipping point”. Our future is most endangered if we stay on our current path. On a much more positive path, our future could be thriving because we are the most capable in history.[[8]](#footnote-8)

If we are to take a more positive path and behave so as to build, achieve and sustain a thriving future, we must understand the necessary behaviors and the necessary motivation and ability to achieve and sustain those behaviors.

All human behavior is rational. [[9]](#footnote-9) That is, if we knew all the determinants of behavior, it would be clear that behavior results from those determinants and is rational. It may not be understood by us or by others. May not seem rational to us or to others. May not seem “right” to us or to others. But it is rational.

Human behavior is primarily, if not only, driven by our maximizing for ourselves within and affected by our current and future environment.

Environment is anything outside of us that will or may affect us. Environment or parts of it may be controllable or uncontrollable. Environment is the actual environment as well as our perception of the environment. While near term behavior is driven more by our perception, long term behavior is driven both by our perception and by our actual environment (real world).

Maximizing for ourselves is driven by our need to survive and desire to thrive forever. This does not change. Satisfying this need and desire, depends on the following. We, as a person and a people, need to survive and desire to thrive. We depend on others for survival and thriving, especially long term. Our need and desire applies to both current and future world. Our future survival and thriving depends on there being a sustained future world.

Our behavior, ability and other motivators do change 1) by our perceptions, decisions and actions, 2) over time and 3) as our environment changes.

Growth can and should occur in our knowledge of ourselves and our ability, motivators (positive and negative), environment and behavior.

We can and should grow from only thinking of ourselves to thinking of ourselves and all others. From thinking only about today to thinking about today and the near and far future. From thinking only about getting by to thinking about getting by, surviving and thriving.

If a thriving future is achieved, all of us we will be: performing well, well-off (financially), well nourished, well housed, well protected (exposures, crime), well educated, physically and mentally well (people), growing/developing well, living within good habitat, physically well (Earth, plants, animals, environment), not vulnerable, producing personal and public goods, living within a stable climate, and sustained.

On our current and negative path, we and people generally behave to put the future of human beings and our world in danger. On a positive, thriving path, we and people generally behave to build, achieve and sustain a surviving and thriving future for ourselves and for all forever.

1. To the maximum extent feasible. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Utilizes the Behavior Effectiveness Model (BEM) developed by Gary Christopherson. [ThrivingFuture.org](http://www.thrivingfuture.org/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Thrive! Next Generation Toolkit can help. [ThriveEndeavor.org](http://www.thriveendeavor.org/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Rational – “based on facts or reason and not on emotions or feelings” [Merriam-Webster] [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As used here, “person(s)” is synonymous with human being(s). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. To the maximum extent feasible. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Utilizes the Behavior Effectiveness Model (BEM) developed by Gary Christopherson. [ThrivingFuture.org](http://www.thrivingfuture.org/) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Thrive! Next Generation Toolkit can help. [ThriveEndeavor.org](http://www.thriveendeavor.org/) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Rational – “based on facts or reason and not on emotions or feelings” [Merriam-Webster] [↑](#footnote-ref-9)