



Co-operative Lifestyle

Invitation to come back to Rochdale

Ryszard Stocki

Saint Mary's University, Halifax
MIK, University of Mondragon
University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Katowice

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Rochdale

New (ICA) version of Rochdale Values and Principles

- Values: self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, solidarity, honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

- Principles:

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Member economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education, training and information
6. Co-operation among co-operatives
7. Concern for community

Are Rochdale times gone?

Our main question is...

...why co-operatives have more and more difficulties to live up to their values and principles and, stay competitive and attractive workplaces at the same time.

There are many ways to answer the question.

Motivation	Generation	Income
Interests	Life experience	Social Roles
Education	Family issues	Career path
Habits	Market change	Policy
Management skills	Investment	Participation
Ownership	Expertise	Values

Expertise

Values

seem good to start with, but they are very difficult to operationalize and measure. Much easier to measure seems to be...

Lifestyle

What is more, it is closely related to what co-operatives do.

Lifestyle has been the subject of many disciplines but four most distinctive are:



1. Marketing research investigates and utilizes the concept to make us consume and spend more and more.



2. Lifestyle medicine shows cruel evidence of what is happening to us due to thoughtless consumption.

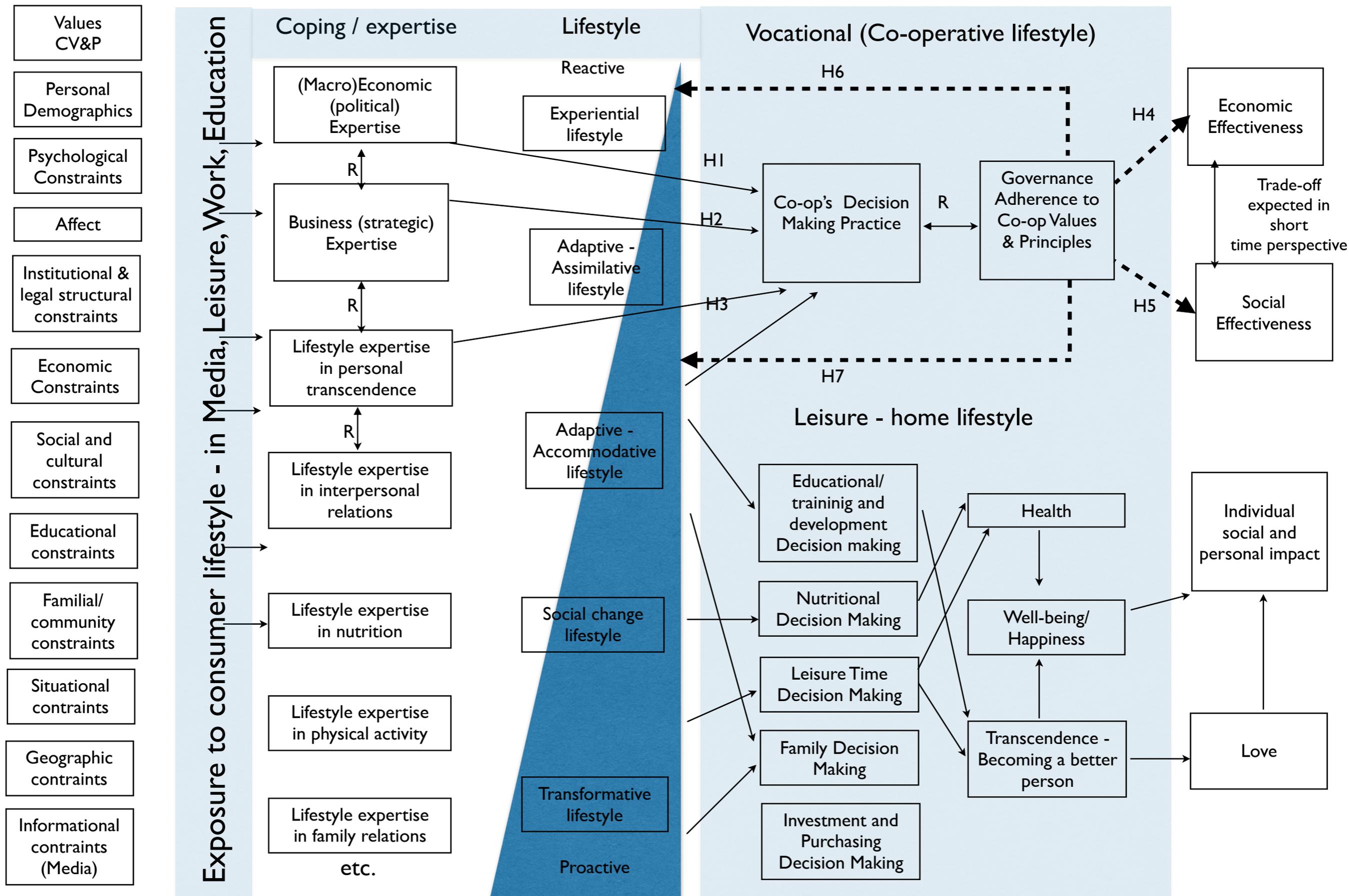
3. Lifestyle exposure to victimization shows how our lifestyles make us victims of crimes.



4. Sociology and ethnography try to make sense of social changes related to lifestyles and propose a research agenda.

**If you try to put all this
research together...**

...the picture becomes very complicated. So let us extract some key elements.

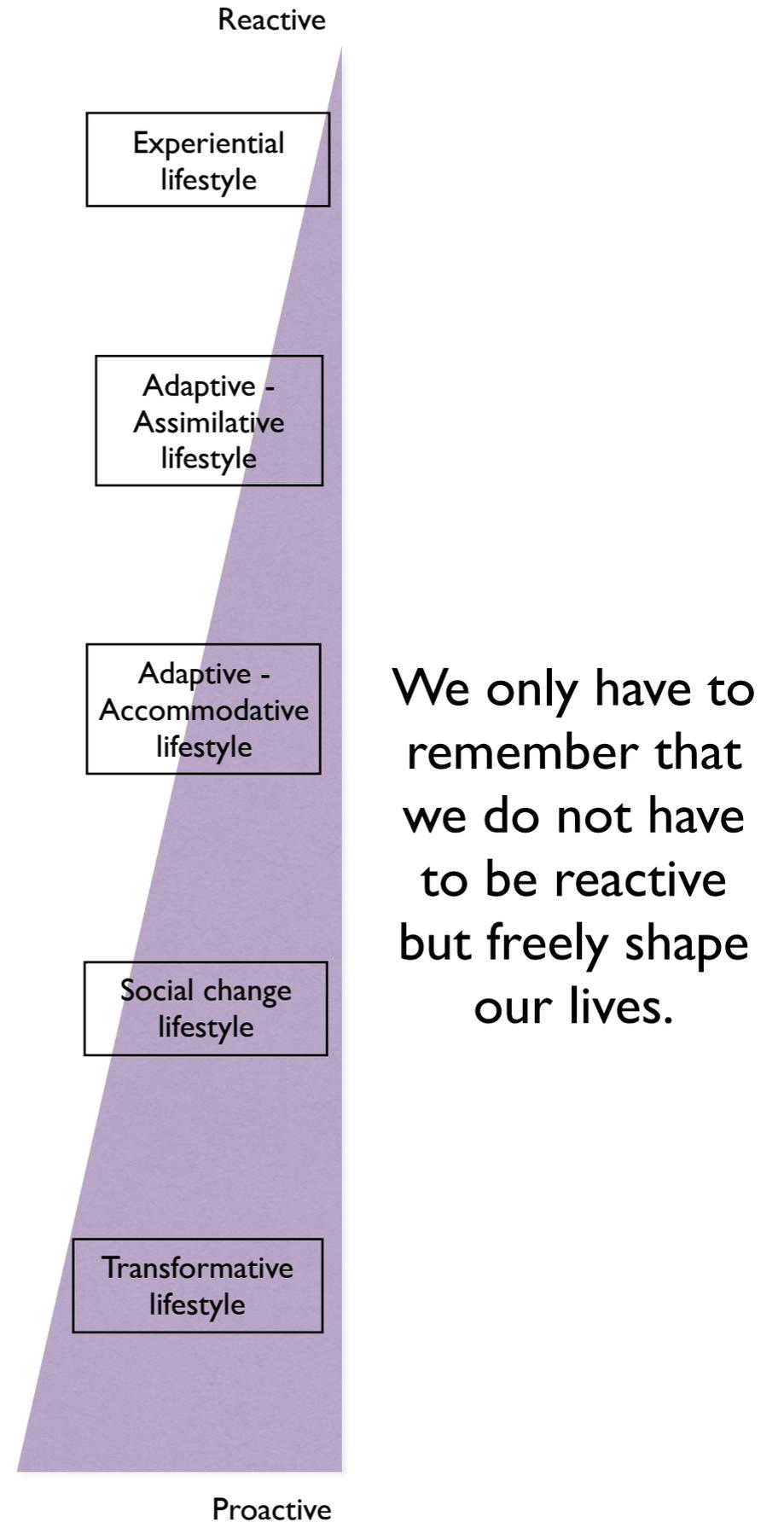




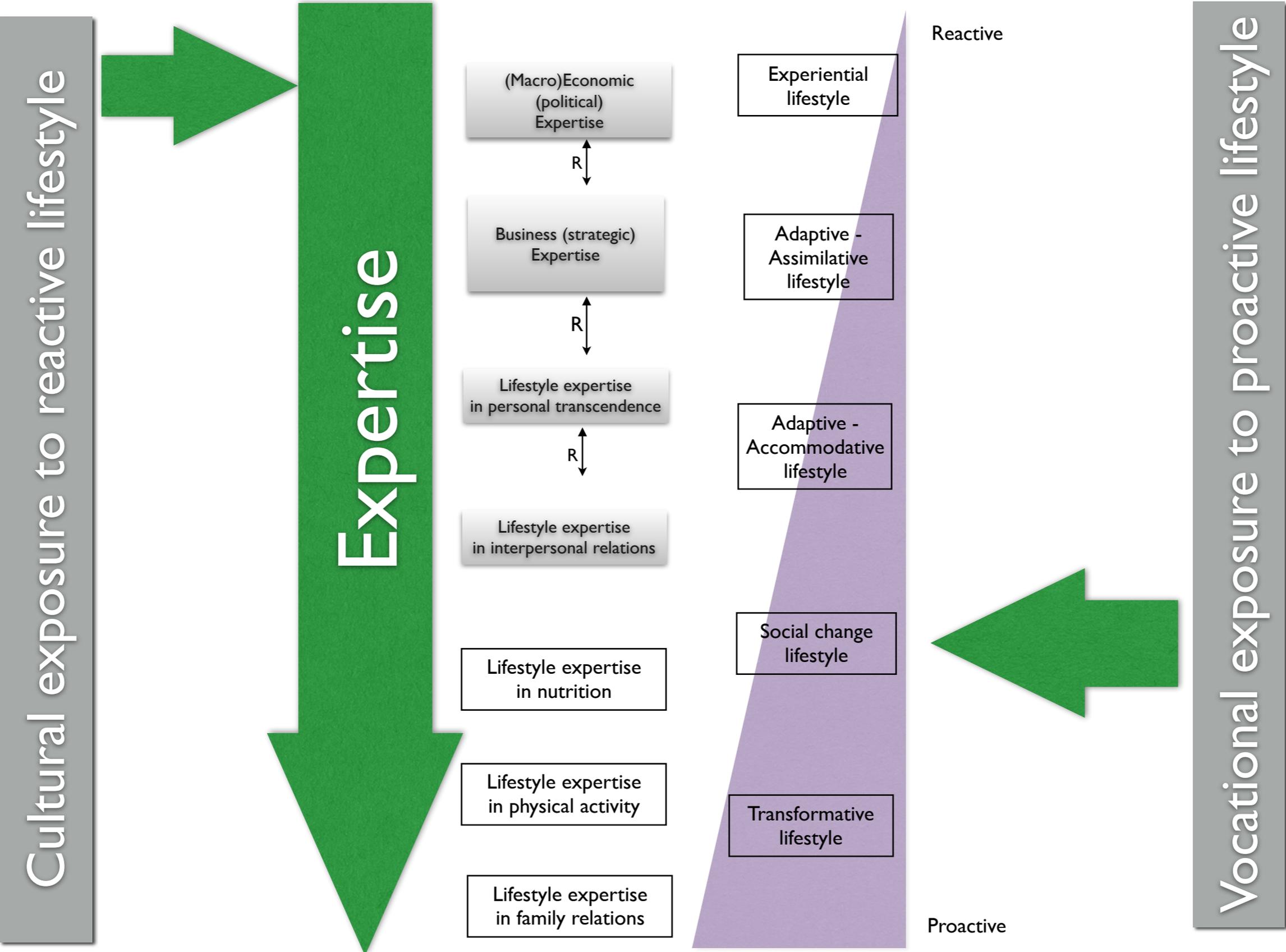
Although there are many factors that influence our lifestyle that are independent of us. Many others depend on us.



Lifestyle medicine and criminology give ample examples that we can change our lifestyles.



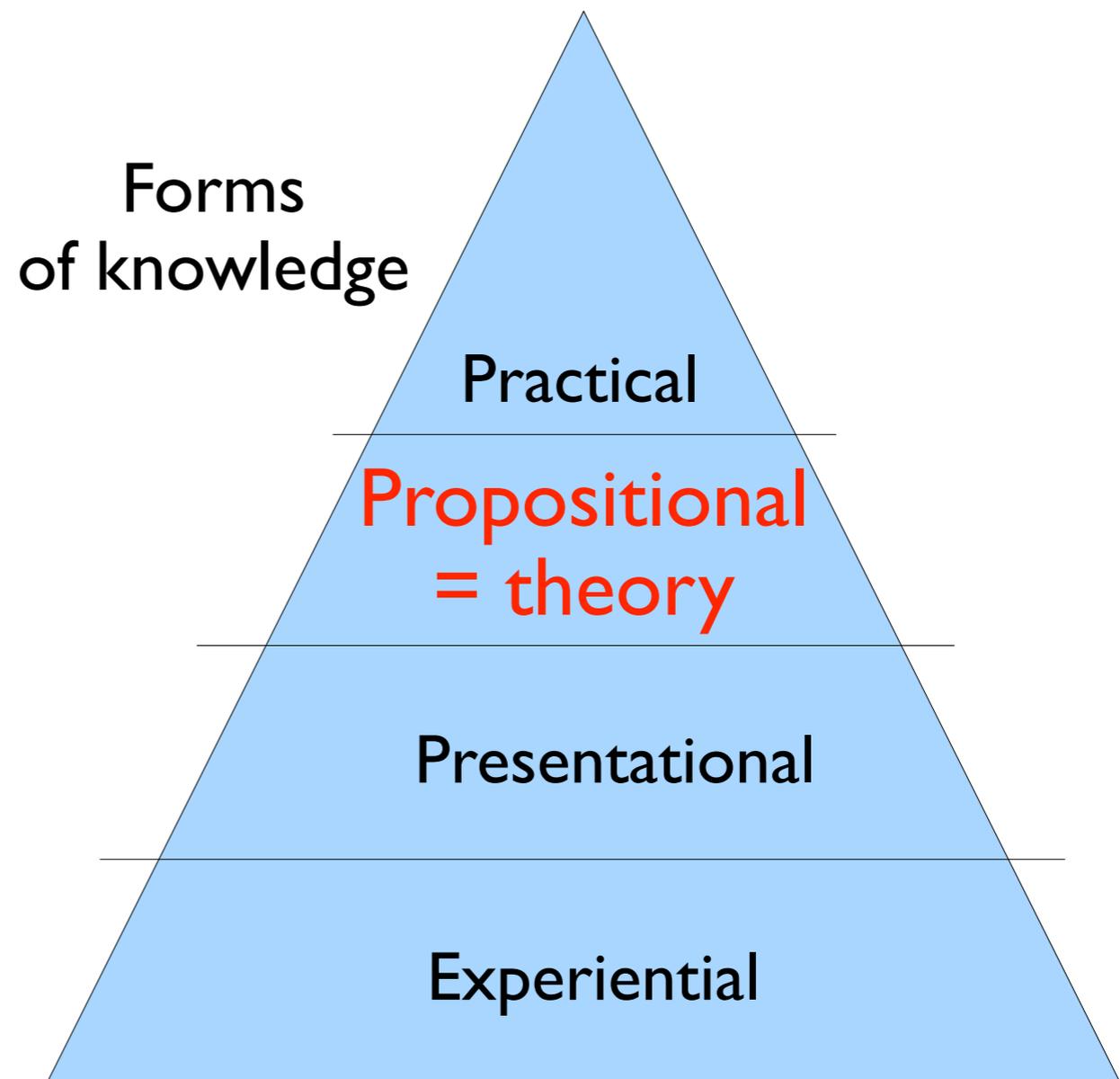
We can do it if we increase our expertise and redesign our workplaces to show how proactive lifestyle can counter the reactive, consumer lifestyle of mass culture.



Contemporary empirical
research on lifestyles
does not seem
satisfactory enough. We
need to implement two
rules.



Nicolaus Copernicus lived from 1473 to 1543 but parallaxes, an empirical proof of his theory was first observed as late as 1838.



Rule 1. We need a general lifestyle theory. From the times of Copernicus, we know that sometimes we have to deduce a theory that cannot be empirically proven.



Forms
of knowledge

Practical

Propositional

Presentational

Experiential

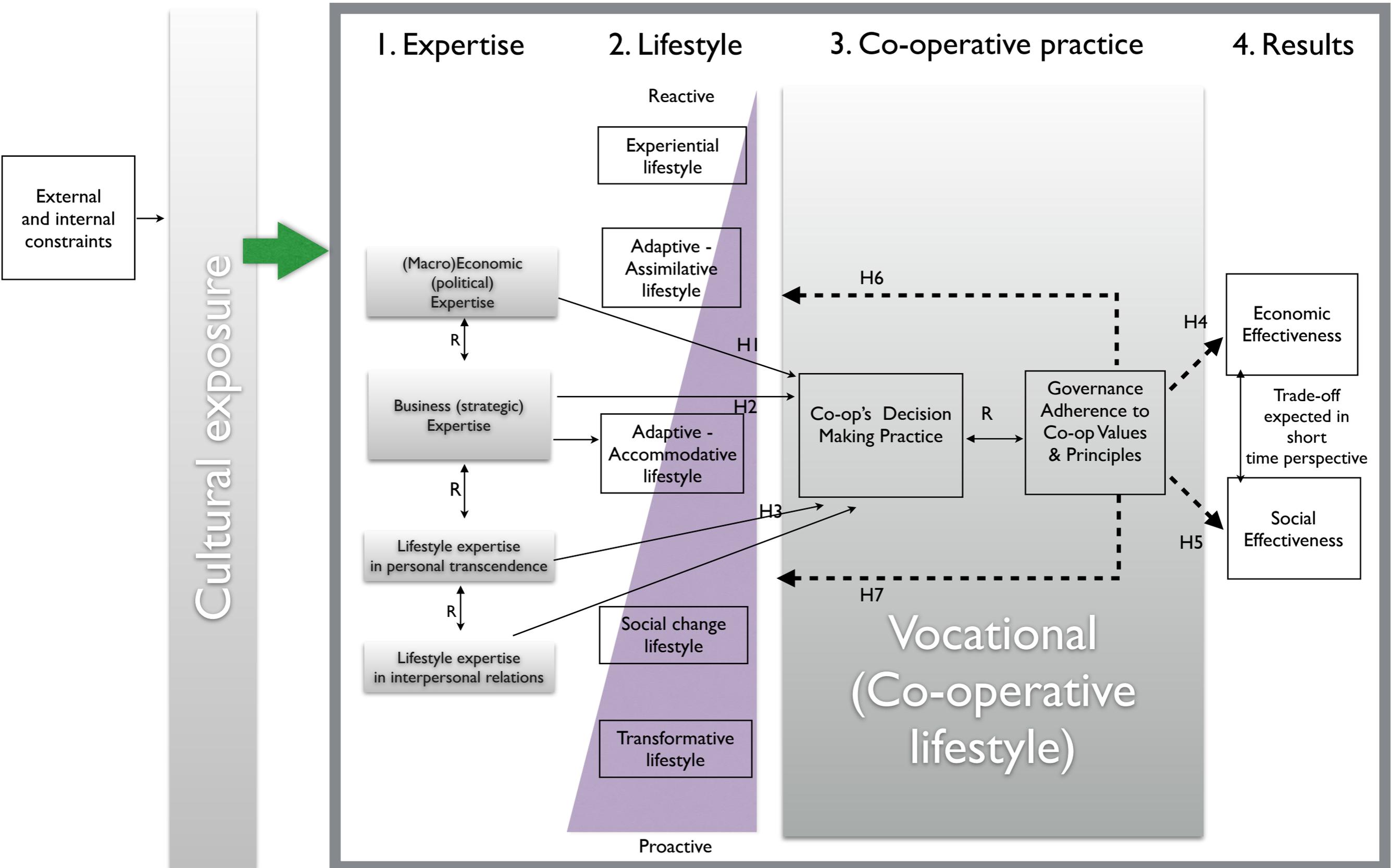
John Heron (1928 - now) claims “We get deeper information about the nature of our realities when our prime concern is to develop practical skills which change these realities.”

Co-operative Inquiry, p. 114

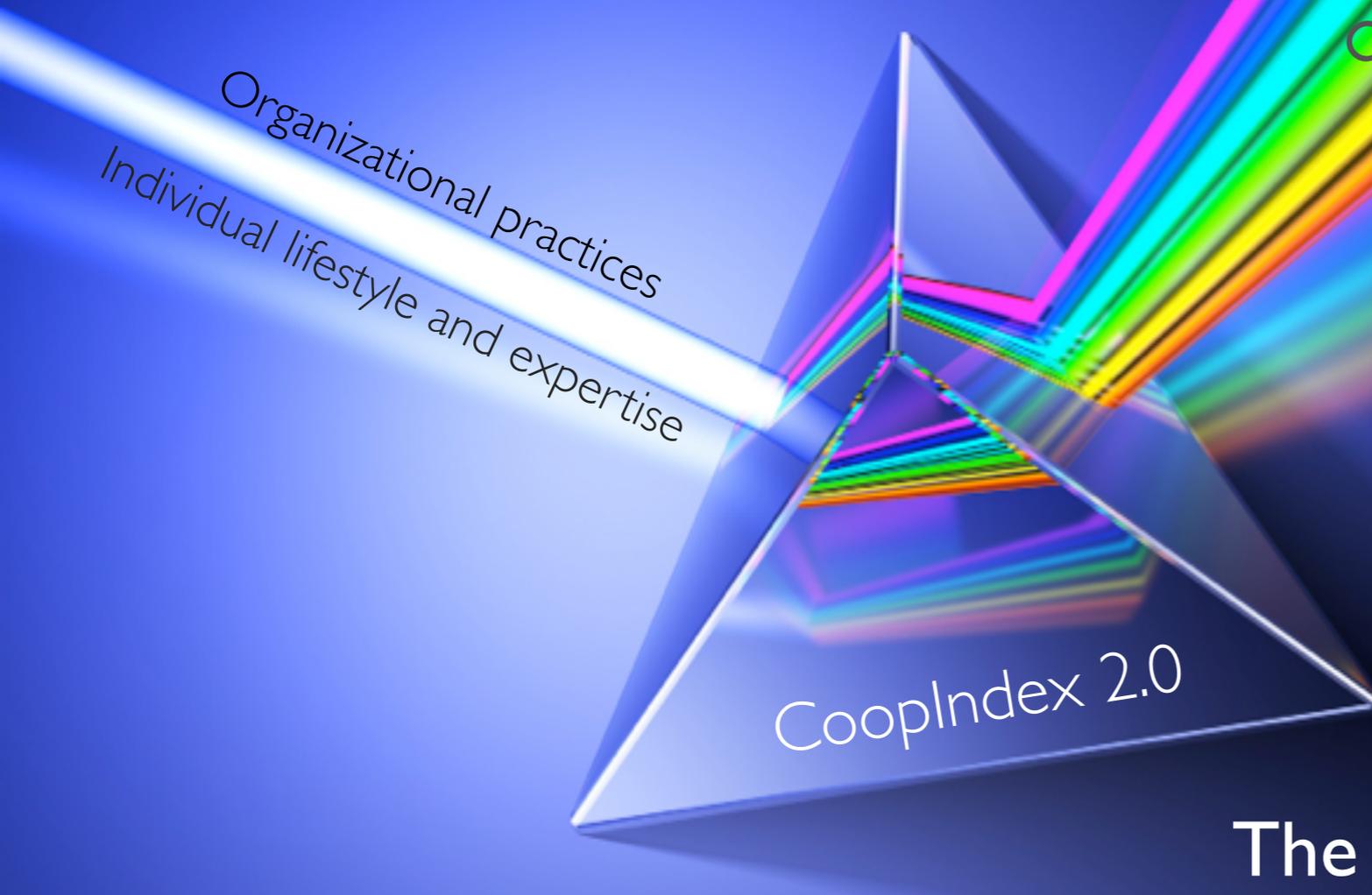
Rule 2. A sound lifestyle theory has to be practically relevant for co-operatives. The only way to develop such a theory is co-operation with co-operatives.

I would like to do research not “on” co-operatives, but “with” co-operatives so we could test the following model:

We will focus on four groups of variables in the large grey square.



This research shall result in the development of a new tool for co-operative diagnosis.



Personalized confidential reports for willing members and employees

The tool will assist not only co-operatives but also individual members in their personal development.

What are participating co-ops's

gains

- Thorough diagnosis of a co-op including individuals' position on the lifestyle line and their expertise.
- Individual and organizational development.
- Improving teamwork.
- Time and a facilitator to reflect on co-operative values and principles and possible directions in the contemporary world.
- Making the co-op a more attractive workplace.

risks

- Risk of wasting time if no action is performed on the basis of the results.
- Possible resignations of persons who find themselves unfit for co-operative values.
- Emotional stress related to going out of comfort zone.
- Cost related to organizing workshops and meetings.
- Necessity to cover future costs to continue the project.

What's next? Deadlines

- **December:** Individual interviews
- **January:** Development of a draft of all diagnostic methods.
- **February:** Two-hour online webinar about the methods and consulting/research.
- **February:** Draft versions of all the tools and documents ready for inspection.
- **March:** Declarations to participate in the Isomorphism project and selection of participants
- **April 2015 - March 2016:** The consulting/research project.

If you are interested in this research
and its results write to
ryszard@stocki.org
Thank you!



Research in several co-ops in Canada and the Basque
Country is sponsored by the European Union