

SRV MATTERS 10

Roles - earned and given

Quick Reminder: Roles, whether earned or given, can be helpful to one's access to the good things in life. Have a think about the roles that you have in your life. Also think about the roles of someone with a devalued status.

Roles can be earned. Or to use Wolf's terminology, they are 'function-contingent'. That is to say, they require that the holder be able to do something competently – think of people's work roles. Such roles generally demand significant effort and deliberate work to achieve the desired status or position.

Roles can also be given; the proper term is 'ascribed', meaning that roles are attributed to the person without them having to do anything to get the role. This is the case for many relationship roles, for example, aunt. While relational roles do not rely on the significant effort and deliberate work seen in, say, work roles, relational roles are certainly enhanced when the role is done well.

SRV of course is based on social roles. Roles are highly effective ways for people to get the good things of life. *But can we get the good things of life from ascribed as well as function-contingent roles?* Contrast what people get from a function-contingent role like 'employee' with an ascribed role like 'daughter'. What are the unique benefits and what benefits are there in common?

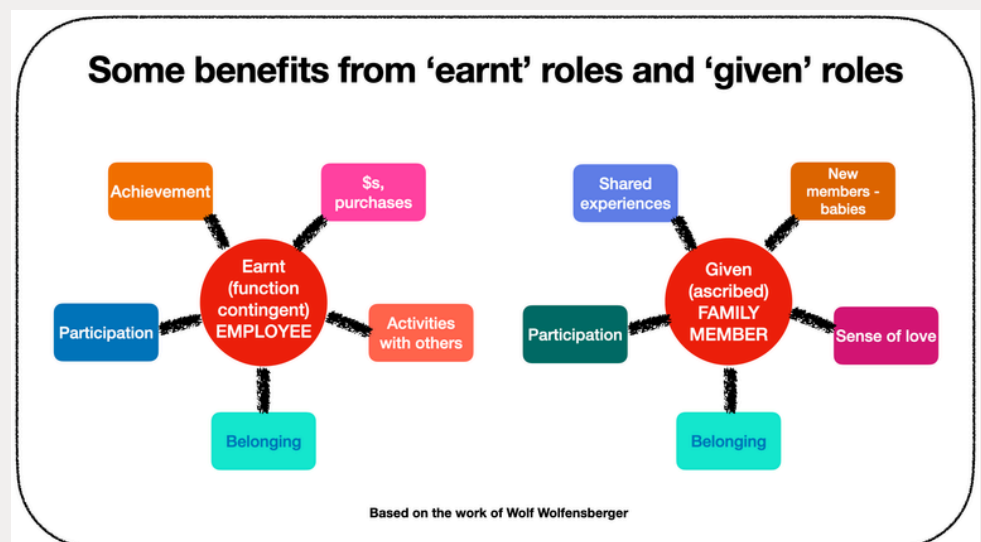
Roles shape our social identity. The number and type of roles, whether they are positively or negatively values roles, influence how others see us and how they treat us, and therefore how we feel about ourselves.

SRV outlines the benefits of roles.

Satisfaction arises from contributing to society through one's work or other types of contributing roles. Satisfaction is also earned through becoming effective interpersonally, for example, in family and friendship roles. Fulfilling our roles is essential for personal growth and self-realisation. When we feel we're successfully playing our part in life and reaching certain milestones, it brings immense satisfaction and happiness.

Consider a range of common roles – roles that many of us hold or hope to hold – and then consider how those might assist in getting the good things of life. The following diagrams include only a small sampling of likely flow-on benefits.

Finally, take a moment to map out the benefits you've received from an earned and a given role. Also, what might life look like with no function-contingent (earned) roles and with only negative ascribed (given) roles?



SRV Ideas: Improved SRV application