



# SOURCE TRACING – WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ONE OR MORE FACTORS, LOOKING ONLY AT STORIES TOLD IN THEIR ENTIRETY BY INDIVIDUAL SOURCES ?

Source tracing is more conservative than path tracing and helps us avoid [The transitivity trap](#).

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- Avoid the "transitivity trap": if source 'A' says that *sanitation* influenced *wellbeing*, and source 'B' says that *wellbeing* influenced *peace*, you have to be careful in concluding that *sanitation* influenced *peace*.
- Source tracing eliminates this false conclusion by only tracing, link by link, stories told in their entirety by specific individuals. It is a safer, more conservative approach.
- This can be quite tricky to do: you need patience or specialised software like Causal Map!

When source tracing is used inside path tracing, the **From × To matrix** can summarise which From→To pathways are supported by continuous stories from the same sources, and which expected pairs have zero support.

If doing any kind of recoding, even zoom, and especially soft recoding, the order makes a difference. Doing the tracing first is more conservative.