

Regenerative Development and Design

Healing the earth in 18 months?

Bill Reed
www.regenesisgroup.com
October 2023



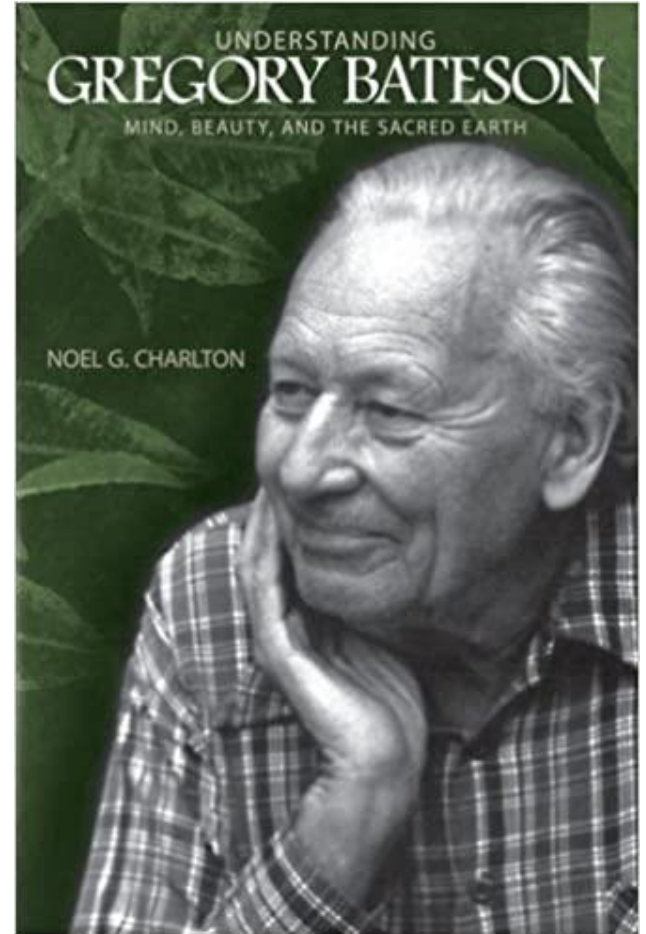
If we 'fix' the carbon issue – are we sustainable?

E.g., Climate Change: a symptom of not understanding Life and our Role in it

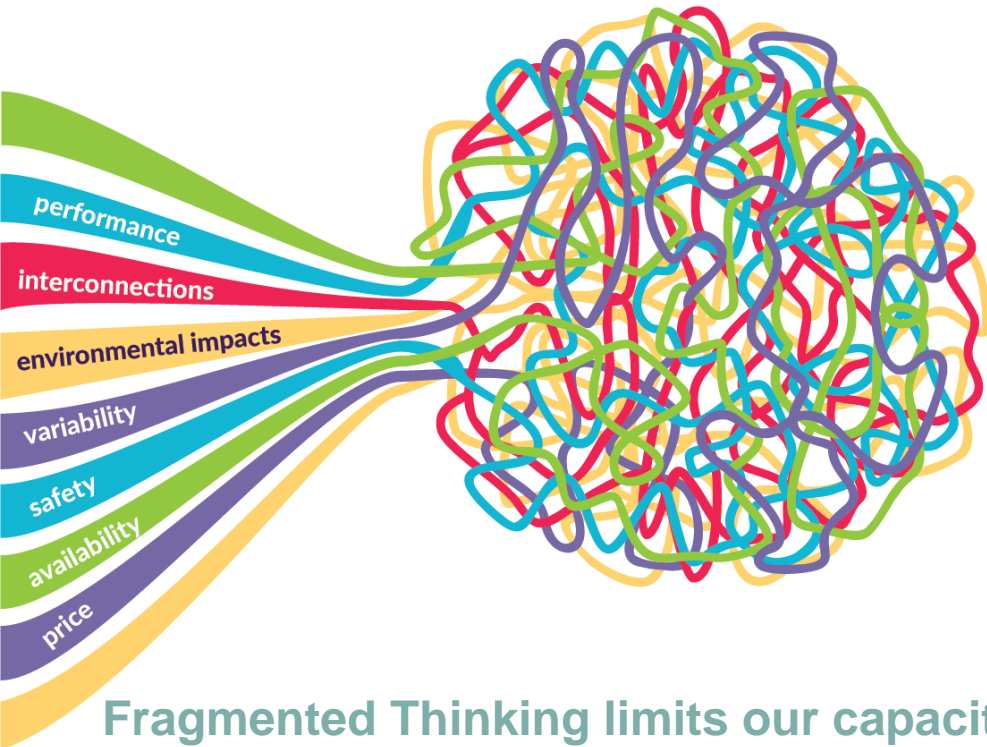


The major problems of the world are the result of the difference between **the way nature works,** and **the way people think.**

- Gregory Bateson



We live in a Whole, Interconnected, Dynamic, Complex and Evolving System



“We treat it as if it were not, as if it were divisible, separable, simple, and infinite. Our persistent, intractable global problems arise directly from this mismatch.”

— Donella Meadows

Fragmented Thinking limits our capacity to make sense of a complex world

50 years of Piecemeal problem-solving

Band-aid 'solutions'



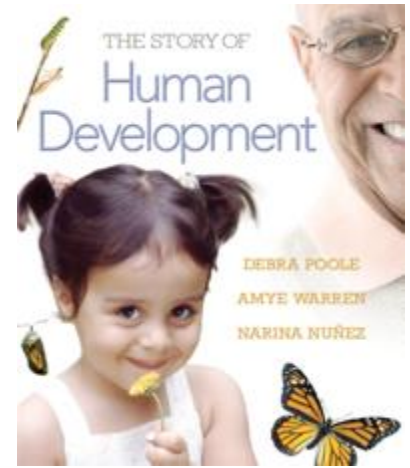
- **Simplification, reductionism, and fragmentation.**
 - Hyperbolic Discounting - with multiple choices before us we conserve energy for those most likely to happen; and those that arrive sooner than later
- **“The Map is not the Territory”**
 - Every tool we use informs us about what information to ignore
- **Abstract thinking:**
 - ‘Sustainable’ paint, concrete, cars, buildings
 - Saving the Earth

What are we sustaining with 'sustainability'?

Life: the process of becoming

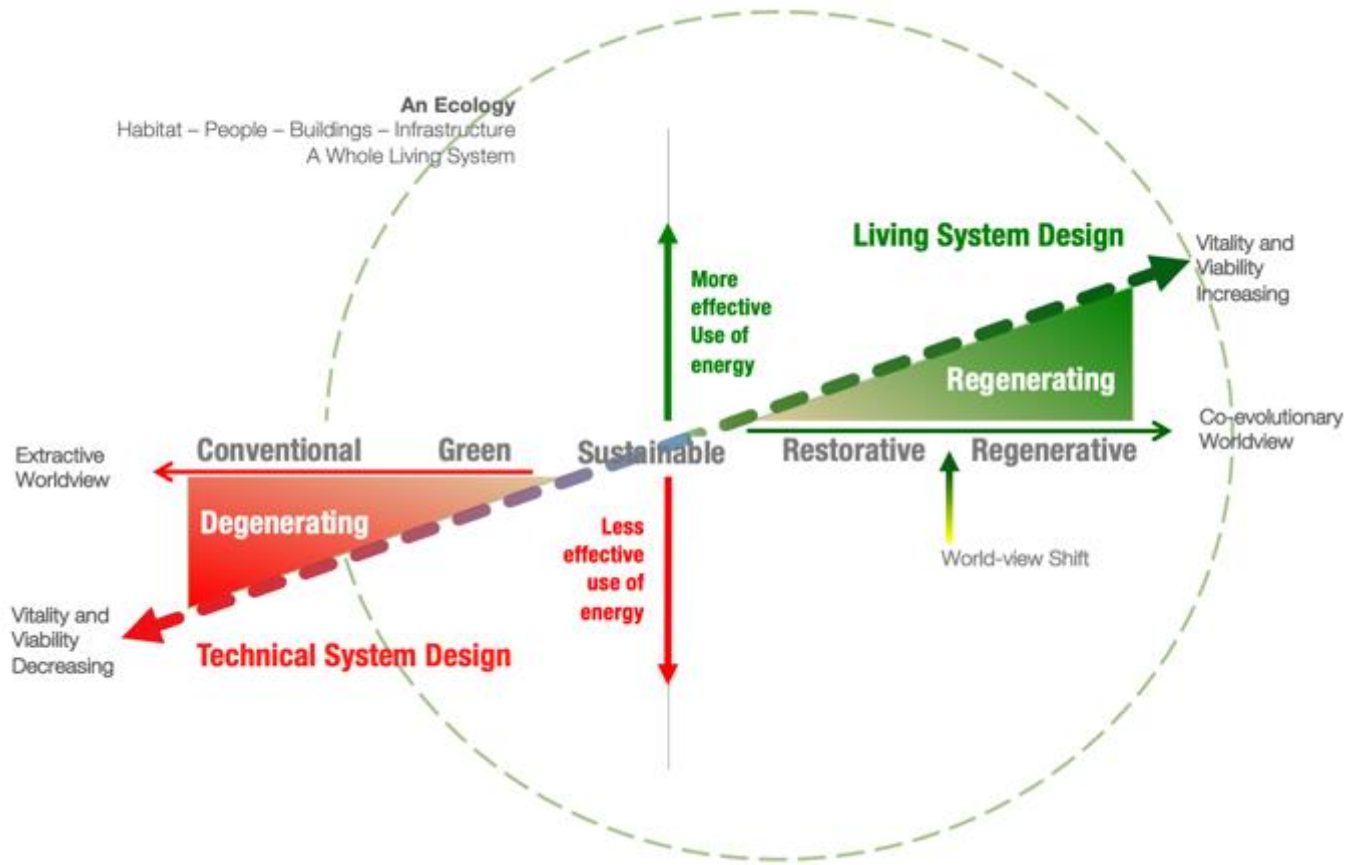
Life runs up!

Greater resiliency and diversity –
dynamic stability through relationships



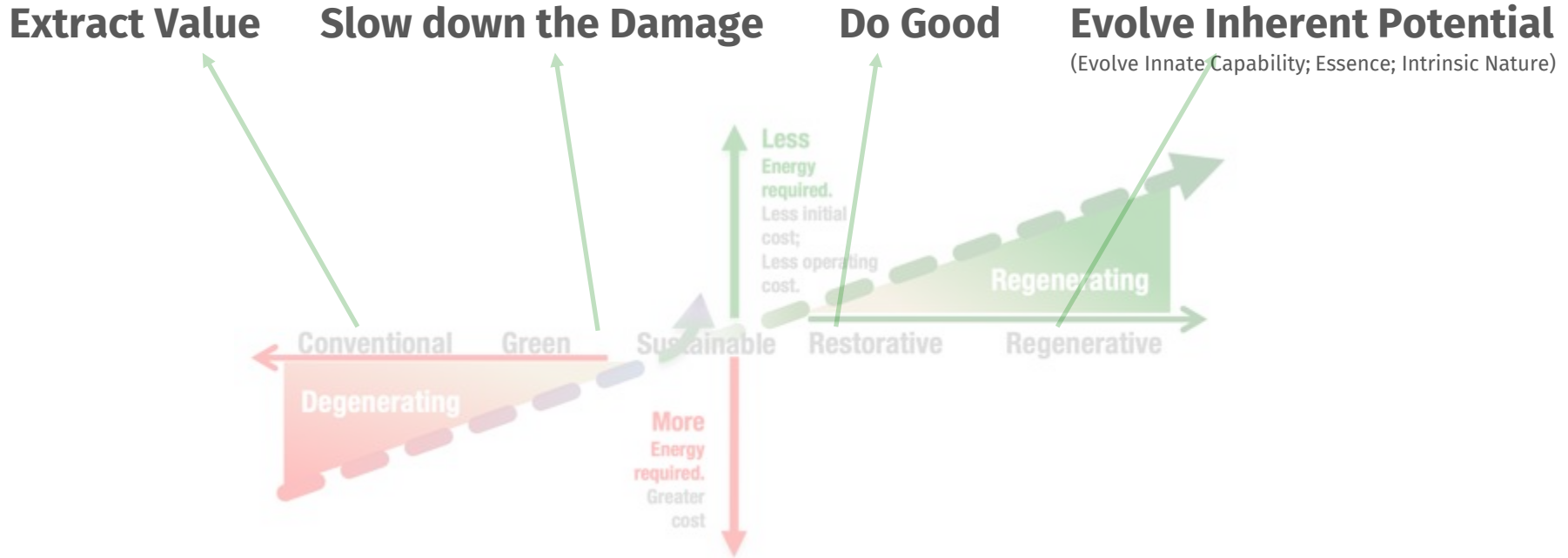
Field: Crabgrass	Year 1 Crabgrass, horseweed	Year 2 Ragweed, heath aster	Years 3-25 Broomsedges, perennial flowers, shrubs, pines	Years 25-100 Pine forest, hardwood understory	Years 100-200 Remnant pines with young oak and hickory trees	Years 200+ Oak-hickory climax forest
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Trajectory of Ecological Design

The Four Modern Paradigms (Carol Sanford)



The Four Modern Paradigms (Carol Sanford)

Evolve Inherent Potential Whether with people or life sheds, every living entity asks that we approach it individually, to reveal and support its unique potential.

Do Good Promote culturally idealized versions of what is perceived to be good

Arrest Disorder Slowing down the damage we are causing.

Extract Value It is our right to dominate human and nonhuman assets and use them for our benefit.

... inherent potential ... ?



... inherent potential .. ?

Sebastião Salgado's
Family Farm, Brazil



... inherent potential .. ?

The Loess Plateau in China



... inherent potential ... ?

Beijing, 2020



... inherent potential ... ?

Baltimore, 2000

Biohabitats, Inc.



... inherent potential ... ?

Places –
Living Organisms -
Unique Identity
Unique Potential



Brattleboro Food Coop

Building Design
as an
acupuncture
point

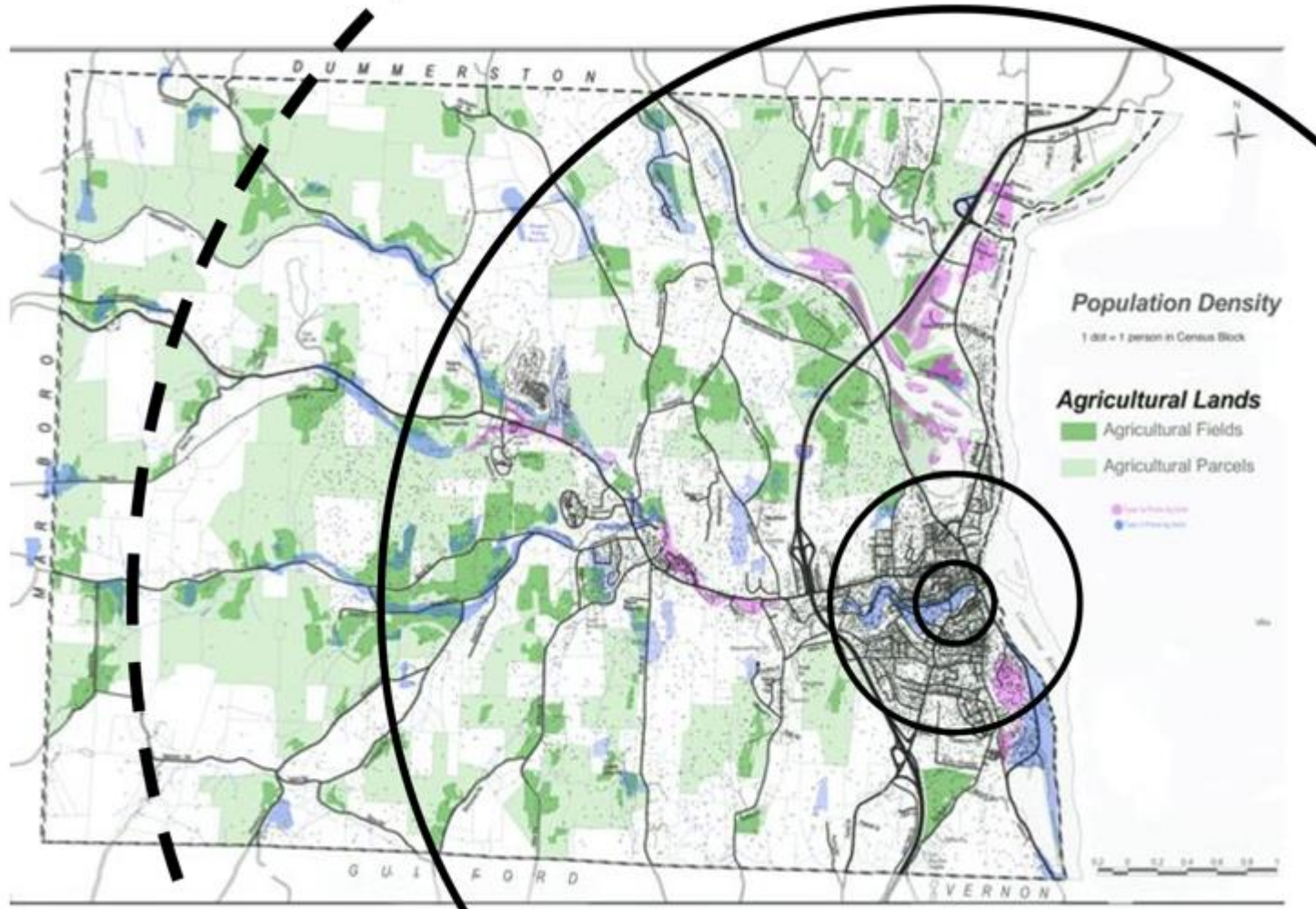


Brattleboro Food Coop

Essence – Localization Movement;
Inherent Community & Food Revitalization;
Potential Healthy land; March of the Heifers;
Working Landscape



Brattleboro Food Coop



... the building itself wasn't as important as we thought.

Mark Goehring, Coop Pres.

It inspired a process to continually regenerate the system
- a 100 year “ends policy” -

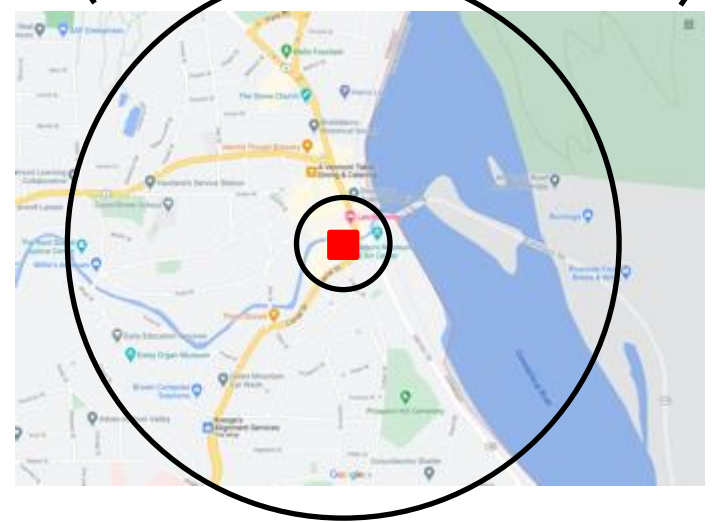
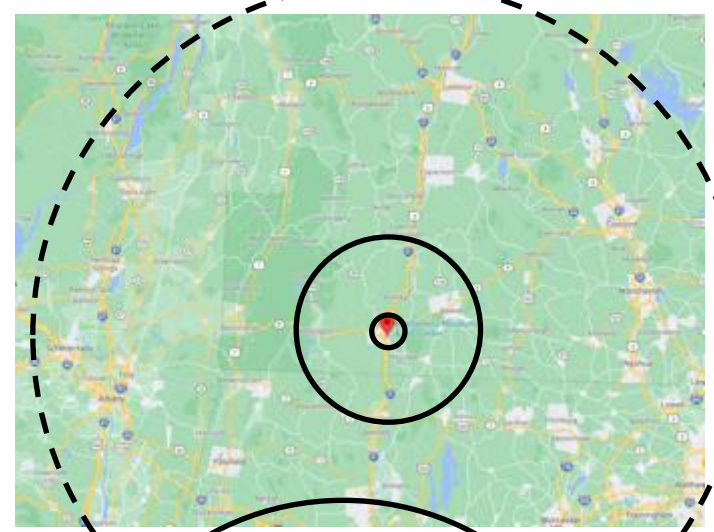
Staying in the game of evolution.



Brattleboro Food Coop

Nested Systems – Mutually-beneficial Value is added between: Coop, Town, Land, Larger Coop System

Whole System / Every System – Food, land, farming, community, Business, Governance



With regenerative development and design:

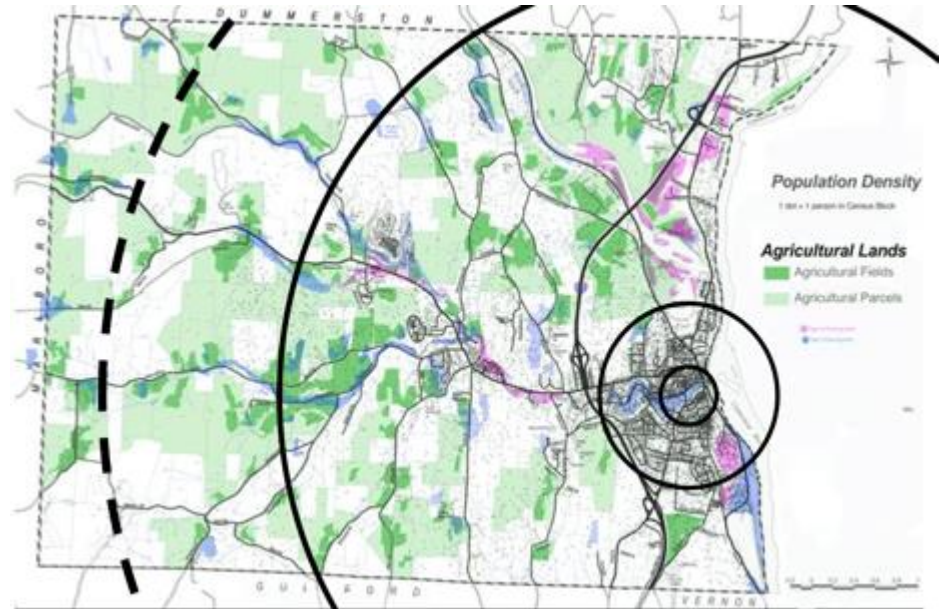
Your project

is not

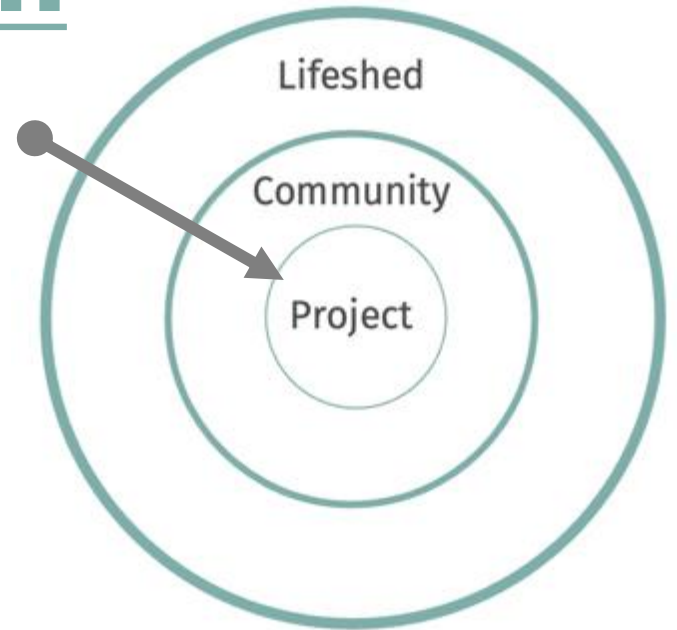
THE PROJECT

the Project: A Thriving Living System

The System's potential
for evolutionary health ::
**greater Diversity and
Diversity of Relationships**



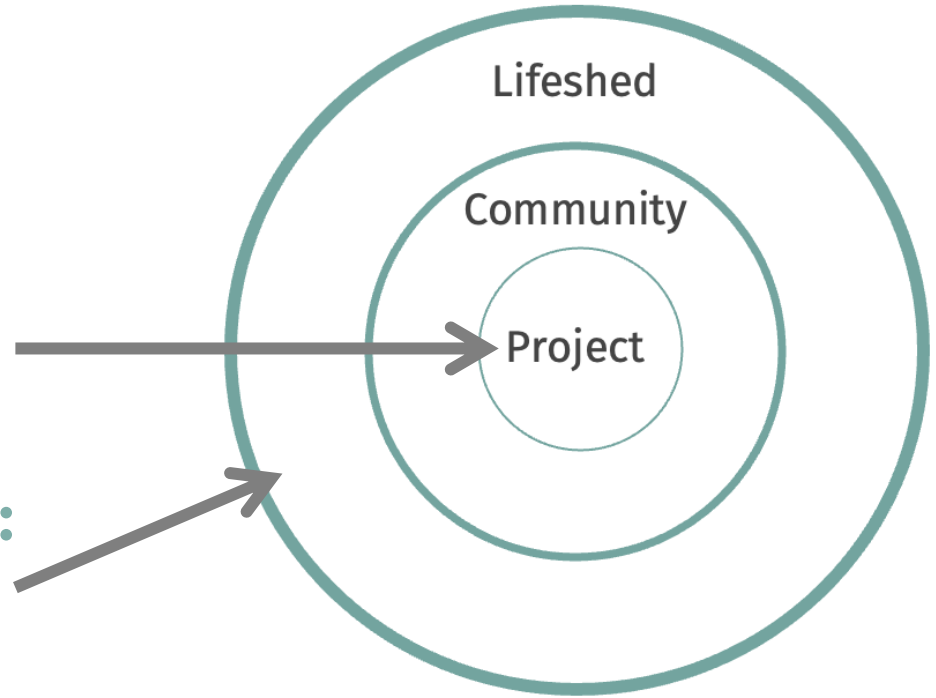
Your project then
Emerges, or is born
from this new
perspective



Money and Value?

Integrative Team Process:
2% less CapEx and 50-80%
reduced operating costs

Regenerative Relationships:
Average 18 months faster
site plan approval time in
contentious areas of
development

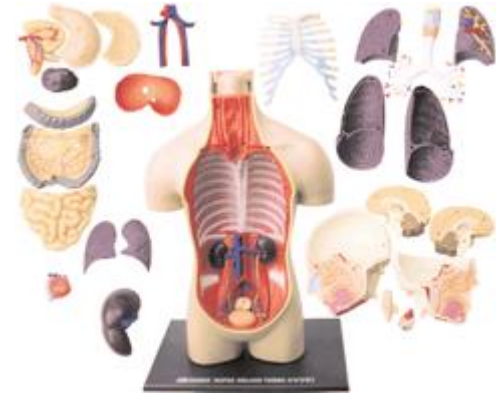


How do we work with Life?

Some Premises and Principles . . .

Life works as a Whole Living System

People, Organizations, Places, Infrastructure - interconnected



Wholes = Singular, Alive, and Evolving . . . not understandable from parts

Place

the largest
manageable
Whole

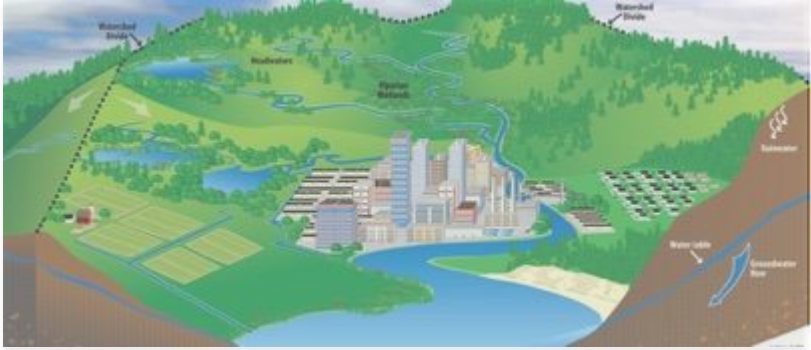
(Elinor Ostrom)



Heal the Earth: Place-by-place



Work with Nested Wholes - mutually adding value

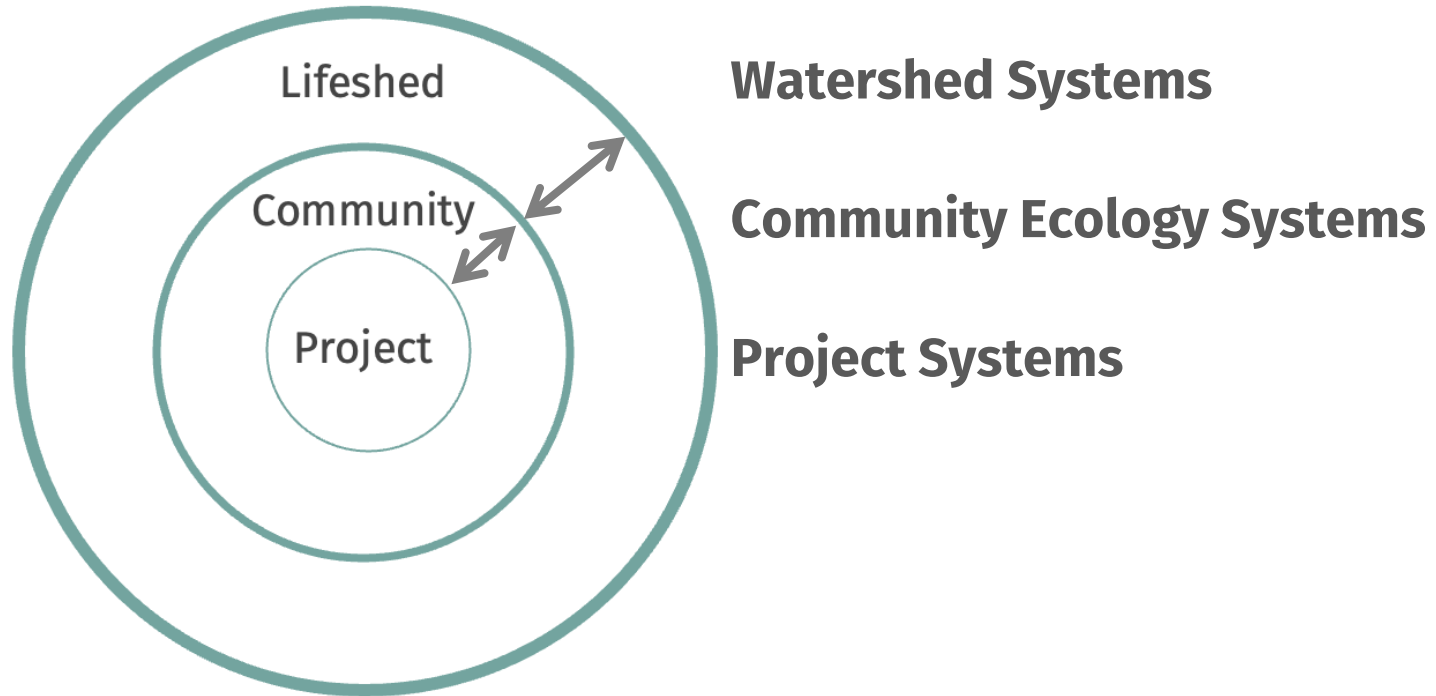


Site

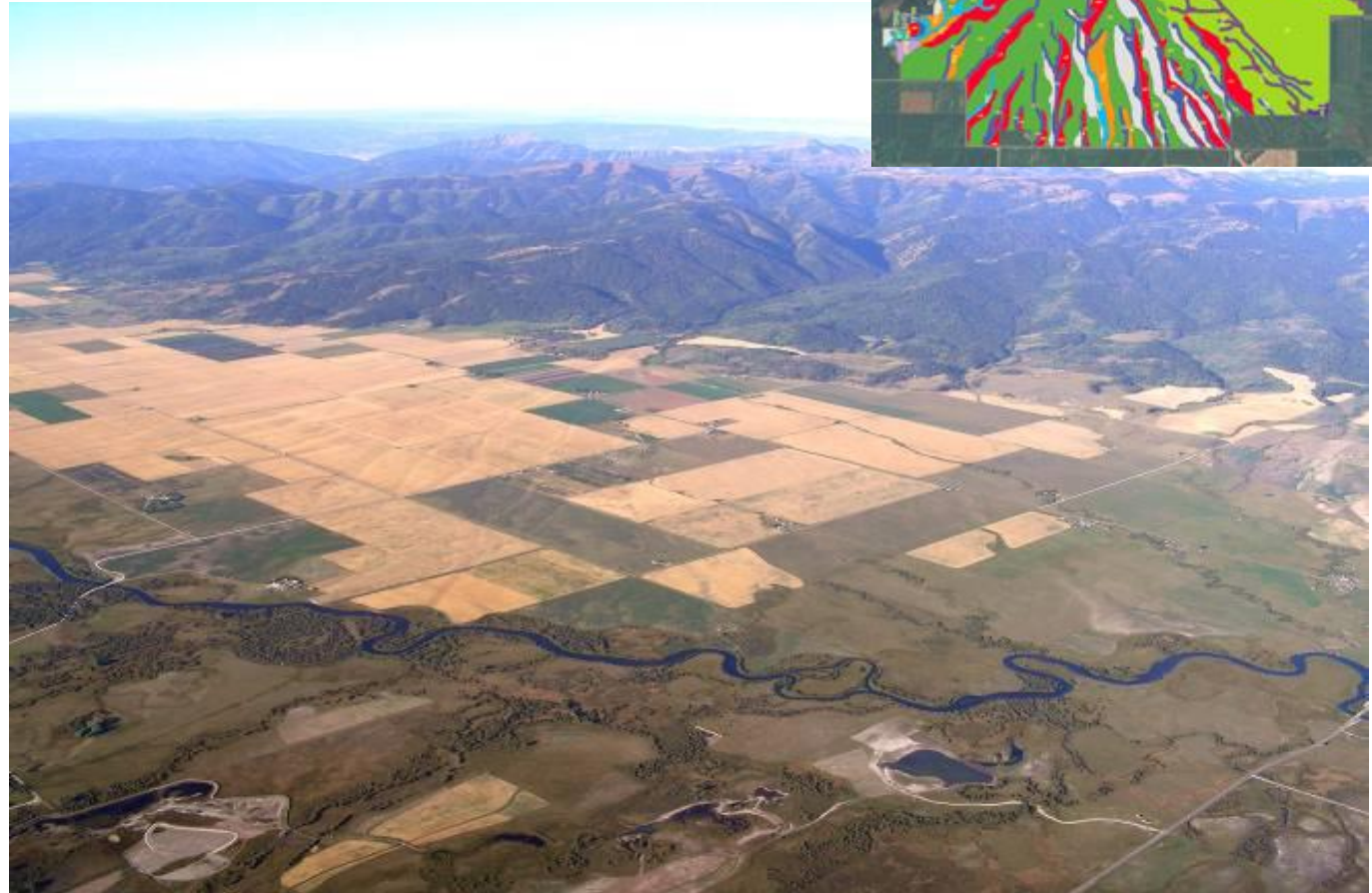
Neighborhood /
City

Life-shed /
Watershed

Life depends on Value-adding Inter-relationships



Work with the
unique role -
'essence' of living
entities . . .



Mahogany Creek-
Victor, Idaho

Work with 'essence'
of living entities . . .

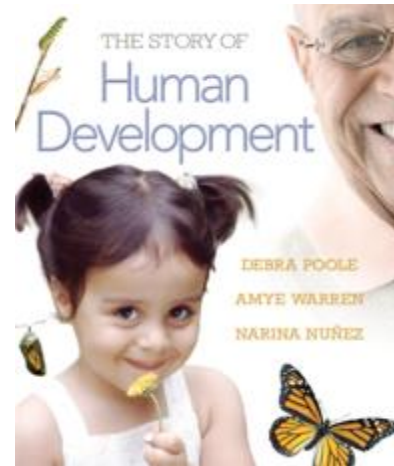


Jane Jacobs –
Lower West Side NYC

Work with Potential, not problems

Life: the process of becoming

Life: runs up! It is **Emergent**



Life Harmonizes and adapts

“Either humans or nature” is a false choice

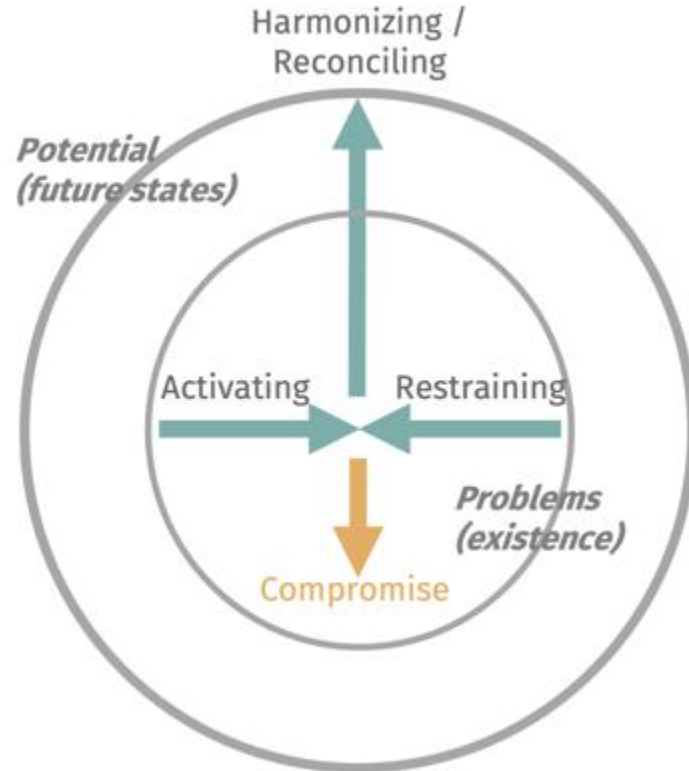
Potential vs. Problems

Nature doesn't have problems, it has potential.

We cannot impose our will on a system.

We can listen to what the system tells us and discover how its properties and our values can work together to bring forth something much better than could ever be produced by our will alone.

Donella H. Meadows, Thinking in Systems





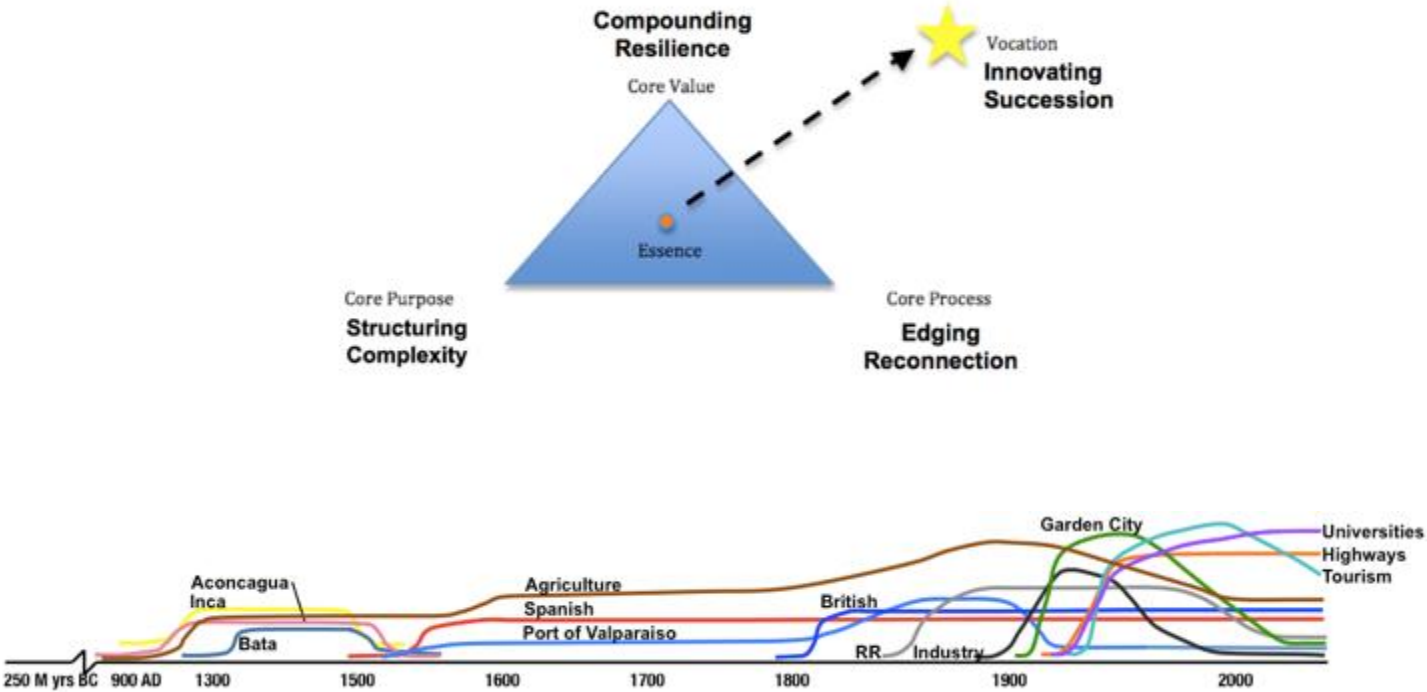






Patterns made visible - indicate potential:

Story of Place

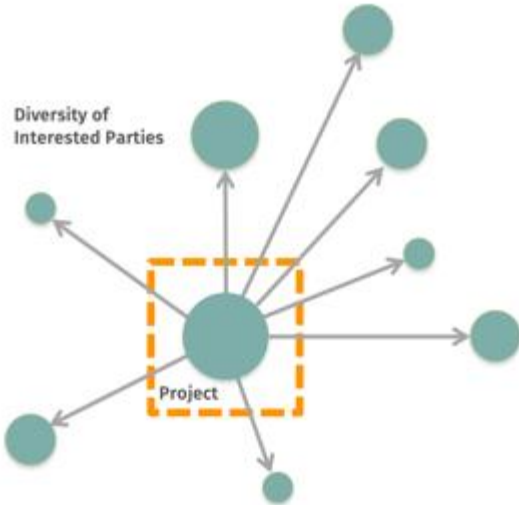


Building a Field of Trust and Reciprocity - Creating Common Ground



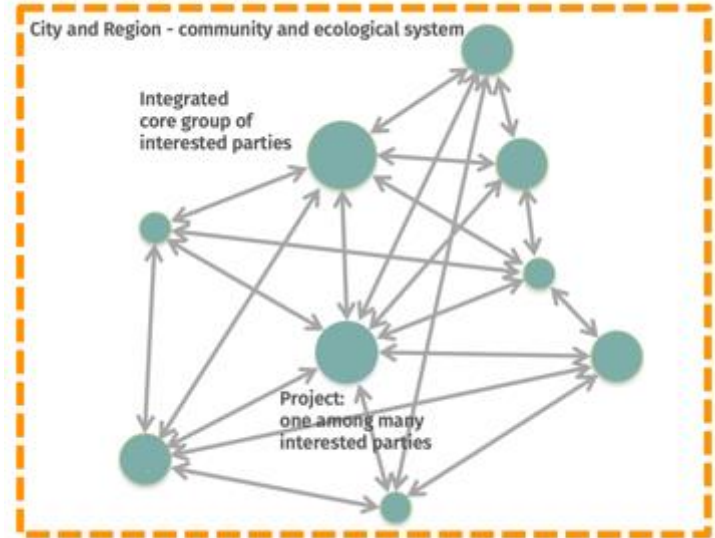
Fields of Cooperation / Co-evolution

Old Relationship



Transactional (Rewards / Cost-benefits)

New Relationship



Reciprocal - (a dance of mutual benefit and greater potential)

Integrate the the Inherent Genius of people and the Genius Loci of Place

Build ongoing Collaborative Fields

through relationships with meaningful purpose







LAS SALINAS

PLAN MAESTRO

0 10 50 100m

Sasaki Associates

Cultivate Relationships

(essential for any significant progress)

We need . . .

Meaningful Purpose

developed around the . . .

Potential for life in a Place.

Invite the Gifts of each.

Practice Co-creation.

Learn and Adapt.

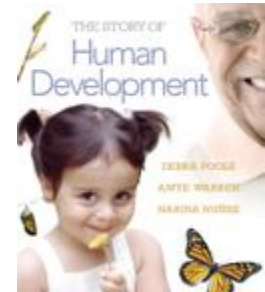


Co-evolution is an ongoing Practice

the system is within me



- **SYSTEM:** The effect we have in this place.
- **GROUP:** How we work together.
- **SELF:** Who I am.
Who I am becoming.



If you want to save the planet, start at home

Place is a doorway into caring . . .

Love of place unleashes the personal and political will needed to make profound change.

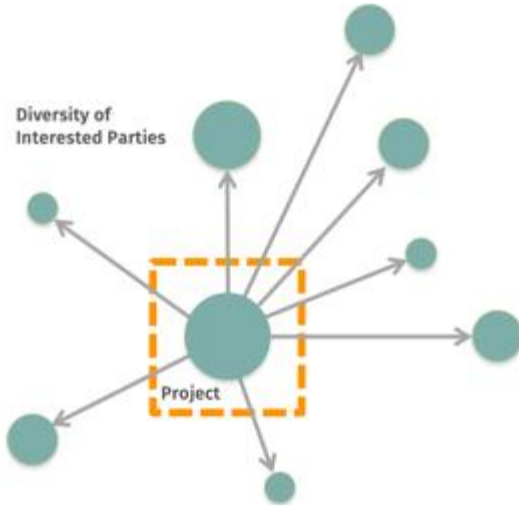
It can also **unite people across ideological spectra** because place is what we all share: it is the common that allows people to call themselves a community.

Simon Weil



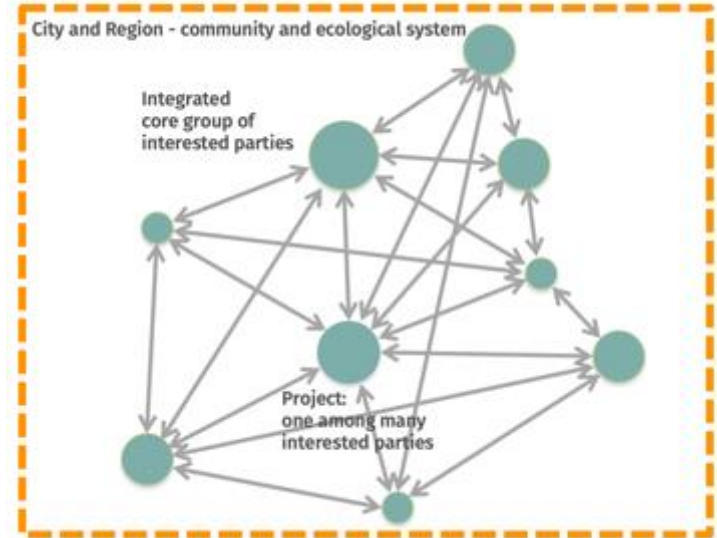
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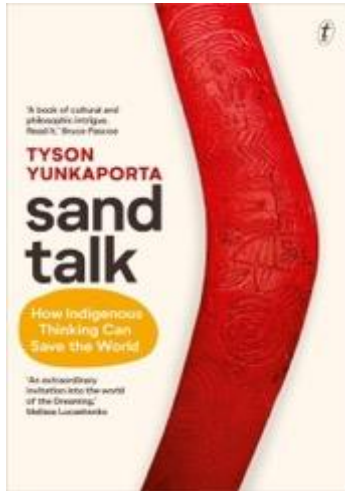
New Relationship



Reciprocal - (a dance of mutual benefit and greater potential)

Integrate the the Inherent Genius of people and the Genius Loci of Place

Work with the Emergence of Life and Potential Energies



Respect, Connect, Reflect and Direct (repeat)

Tyson Yunkaporta quoting an Elder, Mumma Doris Shillingsworth, about Indigenous ways of valuing, ways of being, ways of knowing and ways of doing.



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