

CATALYSTS FOR **CIVIC** **ENGAGEMENT** AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

PATTERNS OF ENGAGEMENT
THEORETICAL GUIDELINES

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How we engage with Community Catalysing as
a living phenomenon

Introduction:

The community catalyst consortium has been working since 2019 on European-funded research projects to deepen the understanding of how to catalyse community transformation towards resilience and regeneration. Our consortium is formed by organisations that have been working in the fields of community resilience, regenerative design, facilitation, popular education, and professional activism for over two decades.

Our research is based on transformational theories from leading universities, where we apply their models and frameworks for social transformation. This assures strictness and consistency in the research process.

The community catalysts consortium also wants to guarantee that the methodologies we propose are fully adapted to the needs of the local catalysts, and for this reason, our research projects always follow a participatory action research approach.

This consortium is also fully committed to decolonization as a necessary process to reach balance, and for that matter, some of our sources are social biomimicry, indigenous cosmovisions and practices, traditional ecological knowledge, and rural traditions.

In these guidelines, we bring a disruptive proposal to catalyse communities towards resilience and regeneration, where we follow an evolutionary approach, proposing different approaches to respond to different community moments.

Even though these methodologies are presented linearly, they have a systemic nature and could be applied in a different order depending on circumstances and context. This is a work-in-progress Beta version, that we'll keep evolving in future research projects.

Engagement Patterns:

This methodology is based on a set of Patterns that we have developed based on our experience and inspired by the work of the Regenes Group on developmental processes. The following 8 patterns make up 8 diverse ways to engage in Community Catalysing according to the context that each Place is experiencing and the potential that it is emerging; they guide ways to interact with the Community Catalysing process presented by this consortium in the rest of the platform: www.catalyst.community.

Patterns	Invitation
Sensing and Expressing Essence	Engage through intuition, sensing place being expressed through essence to embody the freedom that enables responsibility
Managing a Dynamic Balance	Accept the hidden or explicit polarities (shadow & light, top-down & bottom-up, objective & subjective) that are present by voicing both spectrums of essence to sustain our process towards a dynamic balance.
Nourish Emergent Change	Approach crisis as a creative destructive renewal process to birth new maturities that transcend rigidity and scarcity, enabling emergent change through reconciliation
Work on Articulating Wholeness	Weave diverse expressions of wholeness, emphasising singularity, to nourish articulation towards full potential

Enable Potential to Flourish	Bring up the value of your own uniqueness at the service of the bioregion, acquiring the specific capacities needed along the process.
Adapt to Changing Context	Enable transcontextual dialogue to emphasize diversity through the convergence of the edges generating nodes that articulate plurality.
Transform Obsolete Structures	Deep dive into cultural essence to understand how to disrupt current structures, enabling the emergence of a new paradigm
Coevolve with the Bioregion	Stand with full responsibility for your uniqueness at the service of the bioregion listening and nourishing evolution

In the next chapters will be developing an understanding of the importance of these patterns, the relationship among them, and the circumstances where these could be useful.

FUNCTION

1. Sensing and Expressing Essence (Torus):



The current times are challenged by the capacity to adapt to the rhythms of life on earth. We, as humans, have been involved in a series of processes of deep violent transformation in the last millennia. These transformations of our culture and societies have created collective trauma, which defined by Gabor Mate is “a psychic wound that hardens you psychologically that then interferes with your ability to grow and develop. It pains you, and now you’re acting out of pain. It induces fear, and now you’re acting out of fear. Trauma is not what happens to you, it’s what happens inside you as a result of what happened to you. Trauma is that scarring that makes you less flexible, more rigid, less feeling, and more defended.”

When applied to collectivities, our deeply traumatised society is becoming less flexible, more rigid, less feeling, and more defending. Therefore, our capacity to adapt diminishes considerably. We act by reproducing the

violence we suffered, generating more suffering and trauma in a vicious cycle that is taking the world as we know it to a probable collapse.

Indigenous cosmovisions all over the planet, on the other hand, have developed reconciling technologies that enable communities to heal their traumas, and therefore maintain their ability to adapt and evolve, what the Siksika nation calls cultural perpetuation (Cindy Blackstock, 2011). An ability we have lost in the messiness generated by the violent process of globalisation, and we urge recuperating. The healing process starts at the moment that violence stops, understanding violence in its wider spectrum, which according to Johan Galtung includes: direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence. Direct violence is self-explanatory, but structural and cultural violence is a bit more difficult to grasp. In Johan Galtung's words, structural violence is “the avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs” and cultural violence is understood “as any aspect of culture that can be used to legitimise violence in its direct or structural form”. When the three different types of violence are reconciled, healing emerges, as nature thrives when conditions are met.

This process was also expressed in the Santiago Theory, where Francisco Varela and Humberto Maturana defined what is life as “Living systems are units of interactions; they exist in an ambiance. From a purely biological point of view they cannot be understood independently of that part of the ambiance with which they interact: the niche; nor can the niche be defined independently of the living system that specifies it.” With this definition, they generated the concept of autopoiesis that defined by Fritjof Capra “is a networked pattern where the function of its parts is to participate in the production and transformation of other parts of the network, as this network is being self-produced continuously”.

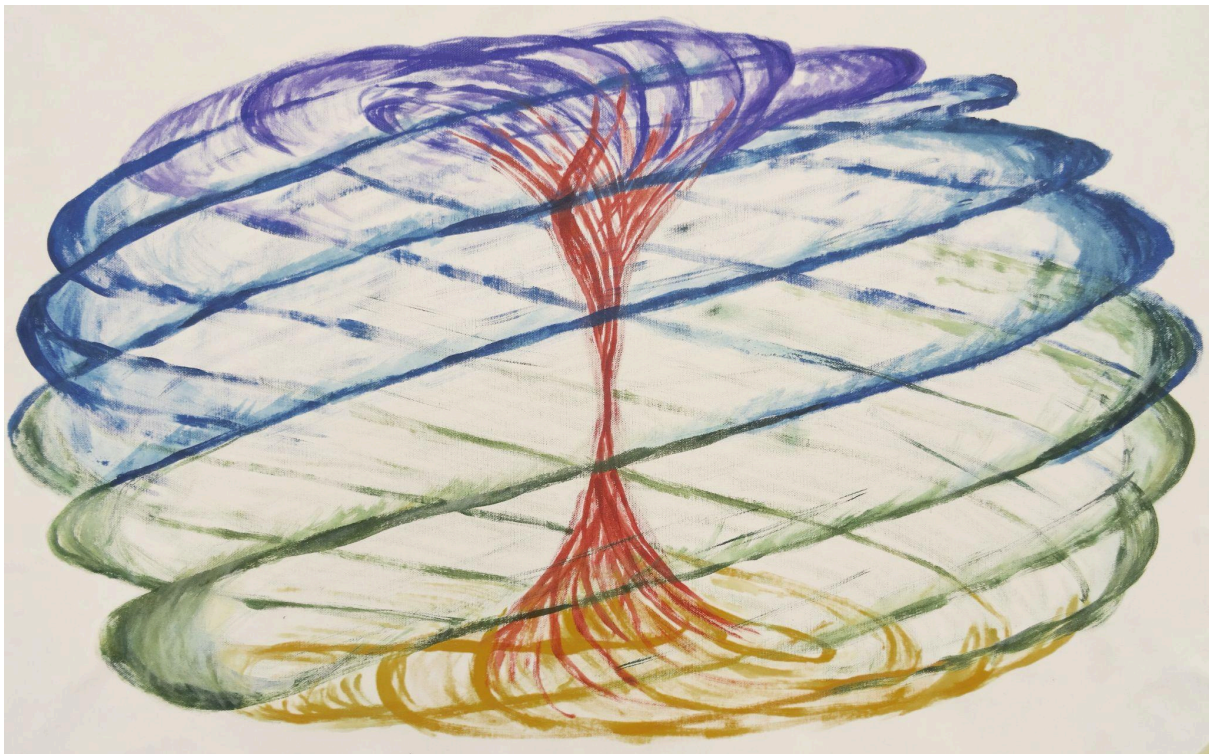
A living system, from an autopoietic perspective, creates its environment as it is being created by its environment. Therefore, a traumatised society is generating violence to its environment, which in turn generates violence to this society, in a degenerating cycle that ends in collapse. To break this pattern, we need to heal the inner traumas that

push us to react in certain ways, repeating the same mistakes over and over. As commonly known, Albert Einstein expressed that “we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them”. When we heal our communities, that enables us to respond rather than react, and to be creative to generate more complexity in the solutions proposed.

To express this type of cycle, the torus shape is the most accurate, as its movement goes from the outside in following the observation and acknowledgment of our collective nature, and then from the inside out expanding the core of our being already with a deeply felt understanding from our place in the Landscape we are part of. The contraction and expansion give us time for inner reflection and avoiding reactive answers to the conditions we face, and instead work the core of the being of Place to really work with the essence of what is creating trauma and leading to structural violence.

For that reason, we invite you to start a collective transformational process following the torus pattern, **engaging through intuition, sensing place being expressed through essence to embody the freedom that enables responsibility.**

This process, with the torus (toroidal vortex) as a guiding natural pattern, enables us to understand the wholeness that arises from the relationship between us and our place.



2. Managing a Dynamic Balance (Edge of chaos):



Evolution is a never-ending process towards complexity, and to be able to heal our communities we need to re-engage in the coevolution of the planet taking our role in the global homeostasis process, which is the result of all the reciprocal relations among all living beings of the planet, generating the biosphere and enabling conditions for life.

To be able to express our full potential, we need to increase our consciousness. The process of gaining consciousness happens when we are able to pay attention to parts of ourselves, individually or collectively, that were hidden before, and that rule our behaviour. Psychologists found out that 90% of our behaviours are unconscious or subconscious, driven by our primal brain's desire for self-preservation and our emotional brain's level of drive or reactivity to any given situation. The other 5% is the conscious mind, which determines our actions and choices. The unconscious mind determines the reactions, and the reactions are just as important as the actions.

These reactions are a mirror of what happens inside you as a result of what happened to you, as Gabor Maté defines trauma. When we don't

meditate or do personal or collective reflection and development, these past experiences rule our lives, sometimes even inherited from our family or community's inner culture. When a whole society is traumatised, and hiding the sufferings and conflicts under the carpet, reactivity becomes the rule.

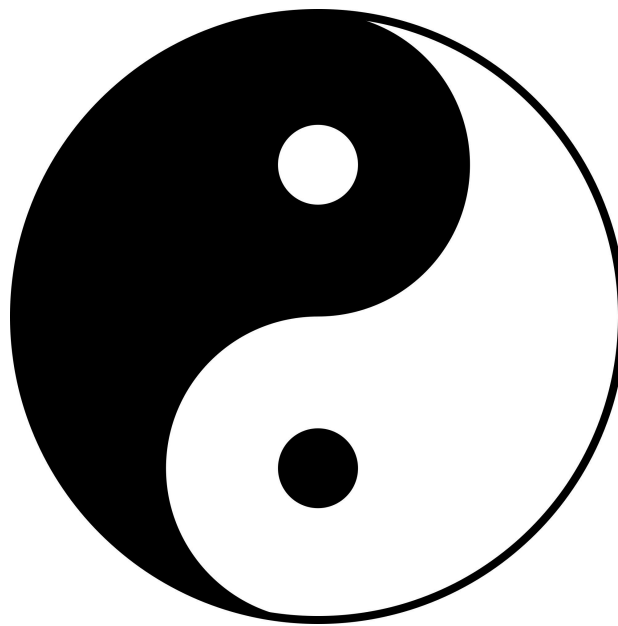
The Anishinabe nation in Canada has a concept called Wetiko, which makes reference to a spiritual virus that enters people and makes them behave like cannibals, where they consume other people's lives to their own benefit, ending in self-destructive behaviour where they destroy everything that generates conditions for life. This concept, which many indigenous nations in the world share, expresses the global north sickness, where we are extracting resources all over the planet to maintain an unsustainable way of life, driving all of us to collapse.

Wetiko is the consequence of a society that has lost its communitarian technologies to be able to reconcile conflict and suffering in a learning process that enables evolution. And therefore, that is in reactive mode sourced by inner trauma. In a way, all this trauma is valuable information from the past that would enable us to learn from our mistakes and generate a brighter future, meaning that it is a hidden treasure that when not looked at, becomes poison.

In the first Engagement Pattern, we introduced the wholeness emerging from the torus. But many times when there is a whole, polarisation can happen. We could understand this as the growing edge of the whole. The part that is not being fully accepted, but when it is accepted, it increases the value of the whole, enabling evolution.

Chaos theory also reflects this dynamic, with the edge between chaos and order being the place that life strives towards. All systems lie on a spectrum, between order and disorder. Ordered systems are rigid, repetitive, and predictable, but they are also highly efficient. Disordered systems are unpredictable and chaotic, but they are also highly creative. Between the two lies the Edge of Chaos, where maximum complexity emerges. Where systems evolve and where life happens. When we are able to reconcile our inner rigidity, our collective trauma, with the outer chaos, the constantly changing

context, we can engage in generating more complexity through creativity. What the Daoists call Ying Yang, is the idea of dualism, that seemingly opposite or contrary forces may actually be complementary, interconnected, and interdependent in the natural world.



We propose that this second Engagement Pattern is used in a context where this polarisation is present and the desire is to Catalyse the Community Evolution process towards a dynamic balance.

For that reason, we invite you to follow a process inspired by the Edge of Chaos represented in the Ying Yang symbolic geometry as a representation of duality in a toroidal movement, **by accepting the hidden or explicit polarities** (shadow & light, top-down & bottom-up, objective & subjective) **that are present, by voicing both spectrums of essence to sustain our process towards a dynamic balance.**

This process with the edge of chaos enables us to understand the dynamic balance of wholeness.

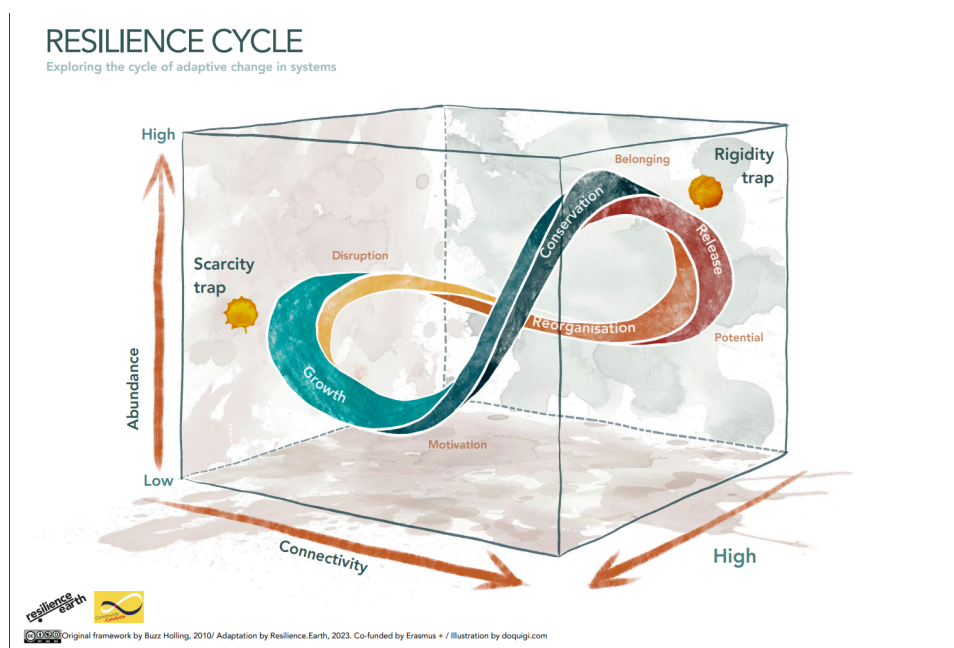
3. Nourish Emergent Change (Resilience Cycle):



Life is uncertain and ever-changing. When the shadow is integrated, we enable creative adaptive responses to the changing context. But that's easier said than done. Change, more than a concept is a category, and in the historical moment that we live, it should be like the Inuit people, which has 70 words to name different types of snow, we should have 70 words to name different types of change. Lately, many different definitions of change are being specified, like:

- Happened Change: the impact of external factors
- Reactive Change: reaction to an event
- Anticipatory Change: preventive of an event
- Planned Change: improvement of the present situation
- Incremental Change: gradually implemented
- Operational Change: need to optimise
- Strategic Change: generates cascading effects
- Directional Change: when a strategy can not be implemented
- Fundamental Change: redefinition of purpose
- Transformational Change: deep and disruptive

A socioecologist named Buzz Holling, in the 80s, started talking about adaptive change through what became much more known as the Resilience Cycle. Which defines a systemic framework that can be applied to ecological and social systems. This framework explains that we increase rigidity gradually until our system can not adapt anymore to the current context and hits a deep collapsing crisis. From there we enter into the release phase, where the system falls and generates space for something new to emerge. In this created space, reorganisation starts and is faced with the need to generate a new organisation that is complex enough to sustain itself. If it doesn't reach the necessary level, it falls into scarcity which degenerates towards collapse, but if it does, generates a new adapted system that is capable of thriving in the new context, heading again to rigidity and after collapse, cycling back infinitely. The interesting part of this framework is that when understood, we are able to hack the process and approach the collapsing crisis from a creative perspective, where we identify our rigidity beforehand and start an ongoing reorganisation, becoming a much more flexible and adaptive community.



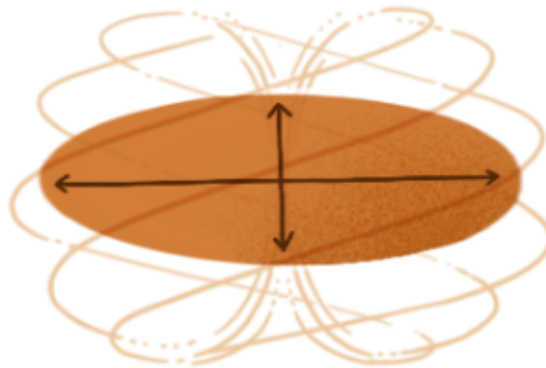
Once we have identified the polarizations in the community, through this third Engagement Pattern we are able to generate a reconciliation and a theory of change, where we take responsibility for the evolving process of our community. Reconciliation is a tricky concept that in some countries has been diluted from its original meaning. Recurring again to indigenous TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge), Sandlane Gid from the Shíshálh Nation in BC, Canada, expresses that “reconciliation is applied when you had a good relationship, to begin with, and then you're reconciling the relationship”. This is not about negotiating or bringing equality, it is about equity, singularity, and empathy. It's about deeply understanding each other and generating a new position that brings value not only to the polarised positions but to the whole community and place. This process is about weaving back the relations of the community through the whole kinship.

For the Global North, the kinship concept has been deeply disrupted and diminished to the closest family members through the process of fragmentation generated by different types of violence. But for resilient indigenous communities, the kinship concept embeds the whole community in a deeply interconnected web. For the Yolŋu people in Arnhem, North of Australia, Gurrutu is a type of kinship that is as extended as you can remember and not limited to blood relations, this understanding of the Gurrutu intricate system, frames the Yolŋu worldview and underpins all aspects of Yolŋu culture, becoming gurrutu-centred communities. When reconciling, it's important not to focus only on the direct violence, but also on the structural violence that created the conditions and the cultural violence that legitimised it. Understanding and reconciling structural and cultural violence, generates an impact on the whole kinship web of the community and the territory, learning from the trauma and enabling emergent change.

To do this, we invite you to **approach crisis as a creative destructive renewal process to birth new maturities that transcend rigidity and scarcity, enabling emergent change through reconciliation.**

This process with the resilience cycle enables us to reconcile and catalyse different types of change.

4. Work on Articulating Wholeness (Medicine Wheel):



In the Global North, communities are being fragmented through structural violence, work style, urban environment, way of understanding the economy, or our relation with nature, among other behaviours. All these are deeply affecting our sense of community, generating isolation, depression, frustration, and meaningless lives. The Wetiko embedded in our cultures, filled with greed and fear, are generating amnesia on our identity and belonging, impoverishing and degenerating our cultures.

With this Engagement Pattern, once we have woven back the fragmented parts of our community through reconciliation, it's important to consolidate and articulate the community to be able to express its singularity.

Zulu and Xhosa people from Southern Africa, have developed the known concept of Ubuntu, which many other Bantu languages share with slightly different meanings. Ubuntu means “I am because we are” or “the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity”. Loyalty, solidarity, truth, and reconciliation are values deeply attached to Ubuntu. This signifies that our day-to-day existence is a result of the collective and

collaborative efforts of others. In a sense, it is the complementary opposite of Wetiko. If Wetiko is the virus that is threatening humanity, Ubuntu is its vaccination.

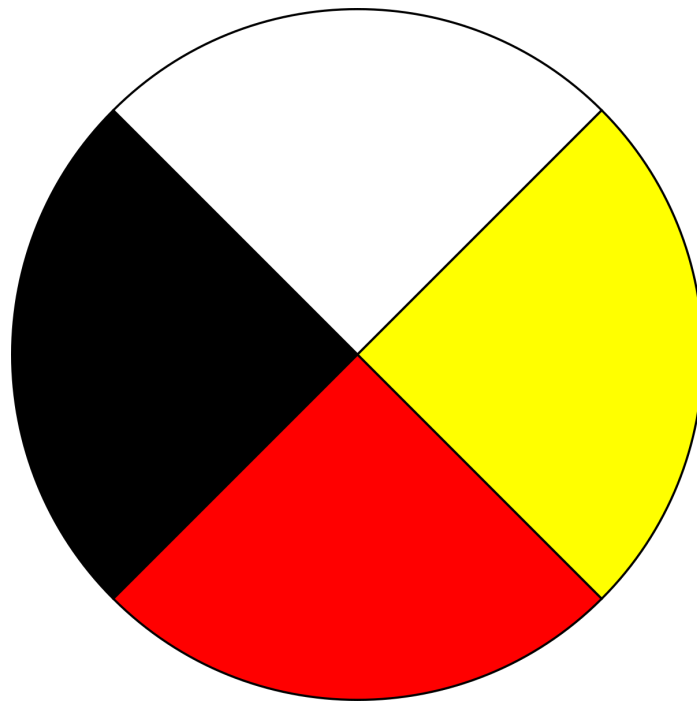
To work with community healing, we need to move from the Me Paradigm to the We Paradigm, two complementary paradigms mirroring each other, one expressing the basic instincts of humanity, and the other its higher purpose.

Articulating communities towards this end, needs some wisdom from High Community TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge), from the Cree Nation. Wahkohtowin is a Cree word meaning the interconnected nature of relationships, communities, and natural systems. This concept is embedded in Cree law, which is based on storytelling.

Wahkohtowin is commonly represented as a circle that represents the interconnectedness of the parts of a whole. It is one of many representations of the pan-indigenous model, known as the Medicine Wheel, that provides direction on how to live a healthy life. The Medicine Wheel is always divided into four quadrants orienting the four cardinal points that represent different parts of life in a continuum.

Wahkohtowin often takes a circle shape to gather the community for healing, governance, or prayer. The four quadrants can refer to many different things or legal principles of Cree law. One of the possible organisations is through identity, where each of the person's needs to understand its identity position in the circle, and then accept the responsibility related to it. When expressed as nested systems, the person goes to the central circle, followed by family, then community, and nation last. In Cree cosmovision, individual identity is inseparable from home, family, community, or place.

When organised around the community, children go to the middle as the best-kept treasure, the next circle is for the elders who keep the wisdom. Then women, who nourish the community, and finally, men, who take responsibility for safety. All these together create a healthy Wahkohtowin.



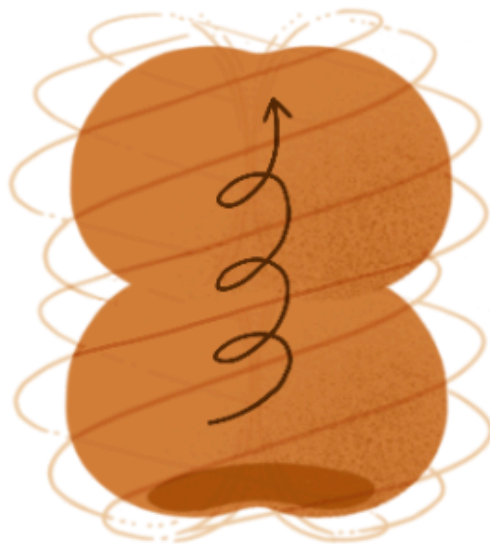
At this moment, working with the medicine wheel pattern enables the community to articulate themselves in healthy relations.

We invite you to do this by **weaving diverse expressions of wholeness, emphasising singularity, to nourish articulation towards full potential.**

This process with the Medicine Wheel enables us to articulate the community to find and express their own singularity.

BEING

5. Enable Potential to Flourish (Double Torus)



Now that we have articulated the community through healthy relations on the We Paradigm, it's time to take this further and see what this community is capable of. How this new wholeness can enable potential to flourish.

In the Quechua and Aymara nations, the concept of community is called Ayllu. This concept refers to people with a common ancestor living in a precisely defined place. Humans don't exist by themselves, rather we exist in relation to others. The Ayllus existed since before the conquest, and

still exist today in some regions. These are self-governing social structures: managing, education, justice, agriculture, commerce, and so on.

In the Ayllus model, there is another concept called Ayni, a type of reciprocal work among different families to help each other in specific work. But when the reciprocity goes further, and they work for the common good, like making a path, then it is called Minka, the work related to the whole community bringing collective benefit. And when it would be worked in between different Ayllus investing together for a common goal, this would be called Waki. The Ayllus were also commonly divided into two halves, these were complementary and related to their geographical position, taking different roles and responsibilities. The uniqueness of their place and their possibilities would define the way in which they would interact with the other communities to bring value.

This extensive network of solidarity, cooperation, reciprocity, and complementarity, at different nested systems, like families, communities, and nations, implies that each one works from their own singularity for the whole ecosystem. Then each community wants to nourish the potential of the others, as they work as organs of the same organism, and the more one part is fully expressed the better for the whole, watching out for the right balance. This behaviour nourishes cultural evolution.

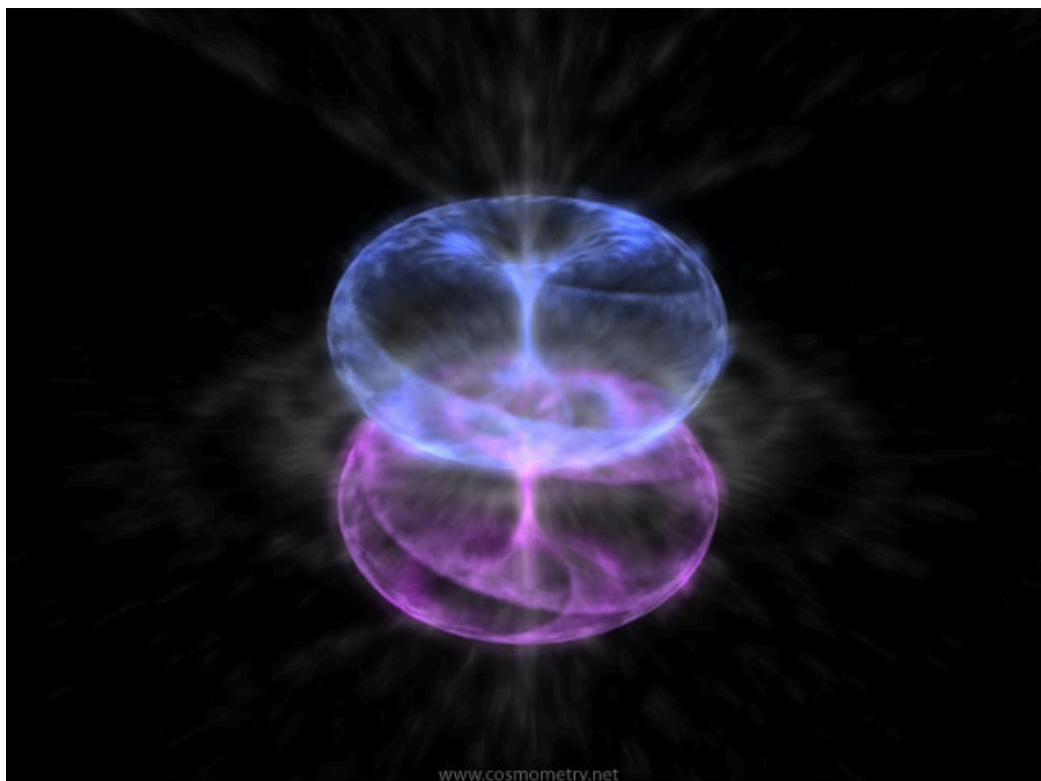
Working on the collective expression of reciprocity brings together the need to innerly develop a singularity that is in continuous transformation as it encounters the whole that is the community and its place.

For that an outer movement is accompanied by an inner movement, bringing continuous learning and interactive expression. A movement that simultaneously spiritualizes matter and materialises spirit.

So with this Pattern of Engagement, we're looking, in parallel, to design the transformative learning journey for our ecological-self to be able to complement the potential that is arising from Place and the community

with the individual self-development work needed, towards enabling the full potential of this moment to emerge. So we look for deep eco-psychological processes that bring each person closer to their full potential at the same time that we accompany that process with a community regenerative collaborative design that expresses the uniqueness of each place and its human and other-than-human elements.

Mirroring the first pattern of engagement the does a cycle of catalysing with a full cycle of a toroidal flow focussing on the place and catalysing it for levels of heightened regeneration, in this Pattern of Engagement we accompany such process with as many individual cycles as participants in the process so that each catalyst is also working on bringing out the closet to their full potential as possible to the design table and catalysation work.



To realise this purpose, we propose to **bring up the value of your own uniqueness at the service of the bioregion, acquiring the specific capacities needed along the process.**

6. Adapt to Changing Context (Seed of life):



We are moving towards higher order communities, where they are capable of being fully themselves, in service of the bioregion. But the shadow is inherent to every process we develop. In this phase, we are mirroring phase 2, we need to pay attention to the marginalised voices, deal with power and privilege, and embed intersectionality.

Complexity is arising, there are many different perspectives in a community that cannot be expressed because of normalisation and standardisation, two different forms of structural violence. Our current democratic system doesn't promote these dialogues either, as it is based on a centralising political party system based on ideologies.

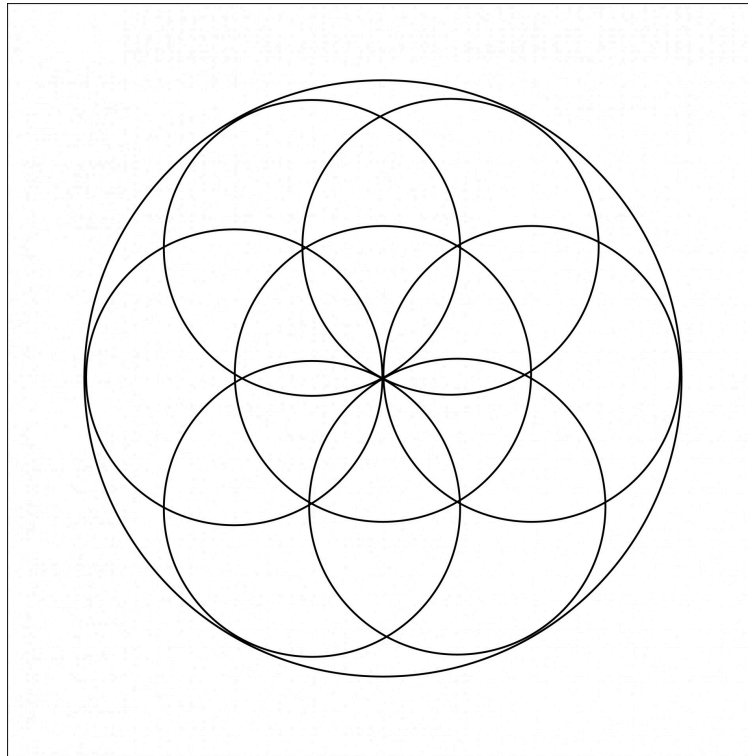
But ideologies are just an intuitive extrapolation of the will of the population. A system definitely needed to transcend the dictatorships and directive governments of the last century, but completely anachronistic in this historical moment, where we have the technologies and the capacities to evolve democracy. Continuous transcultural dialogue and distributed governance define the next step in democracy. This enables us to express what we are capable of becoming, and the deep listening of the context through the diverse voices of the edges enables us to understand what the bioregion needs us to become. These two complementary processes generate reconciliation that sets the direction of the community embedded in the bioregion.

With this Pattern, we propose to generate a deeply interconnected network that listens to all the voices, emphasising the marginalised ones, as their unique information is highly valuable for the community process. This network should not exclude the voices of non-human inhabitants, as in many cases these are the most marginalised in our bioregions, and probably the ones bringing the most value for our future. Reconnecting to our land means recuperating toponymy, relating the diverse places of our bioregion from an intimate relation, to recuperate our languages and dialects that had been evolving with place, uniquely expressing its essence. This also implies stewardship of the value of biodiversity, nourishing it to help it flourish. And become a meaningful node of the intricate network of life, where we finally move from egocentrism to ecocentrism, as Satish Kumar exposes it.

The Haudenosaunne Confederacy, in Ontario (Canada), is one of the longest-living democracies in the world, which inspired our current democracy in Europe. Their model of relational sovereignty exemplifies how communities can support, protect, and maintain balance without compromising the agency of their people or the health of the ecosystem. Their creation story explains that the Haudenosaunee come from and are related to the Earth, our Mother. The Kayanerenkó:wa, the Great Law of Peace, shows them how they must continue to live in relationship with our

Mother, and with one another. They say, “According to our law, the land is not private property that can be held by any individual. In our worldview, the land is a collective right. It is held in common for the benefit of all. Cayuga Snipe from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy reminds us that “Without land to grow as a community, more generations of Haudenosaunee children will suffer the harms of colonialism” (Clifford Atleo, 2022).

Colonisation is not something that exclusively happened in the last centuries, perpetrated by Western countries, but also that has been a common pattern in the last millennia, where communities and societies all over the world have suffered and felt the consequences of social fragmentation, cultural amnesia, and lost connection to place. Once societies had fallen on this Wetiko path, they reproduced the same violence they received. Leroy Little Bear, a Blackfoot scholar, says that colonisation attempted to destroy indigenous worldviews through a variety of eliminatory and assimilative methods, and although they failed, we are left to navigate the heritage of colonisation and persisting structures of settler-colonialism with what cultural context we have to protect and maintain (Clifford Atleo, 2022). In the case of European rural communities, it’s difficult to justify that the different colonisation processes that affected us didn’t succeed, but it is also clear that we still have kept some of our uniqueness. Maybe listening deeply to the different voices of our community and our land will help us wake up.



With this Engagement Pattern we will work with the seed of life, a common symbol found in many places of ancient Europe, as part of our pre-colonial heritage. This geometry, generated by the overlapping of six + one circles, refers to the interconnectedness of life, its creation, and the consciousness involved. This symbol can help us understand the importance of the overlapping voices of our communities, where these overlaps represent the dialogue that keeps the community together.

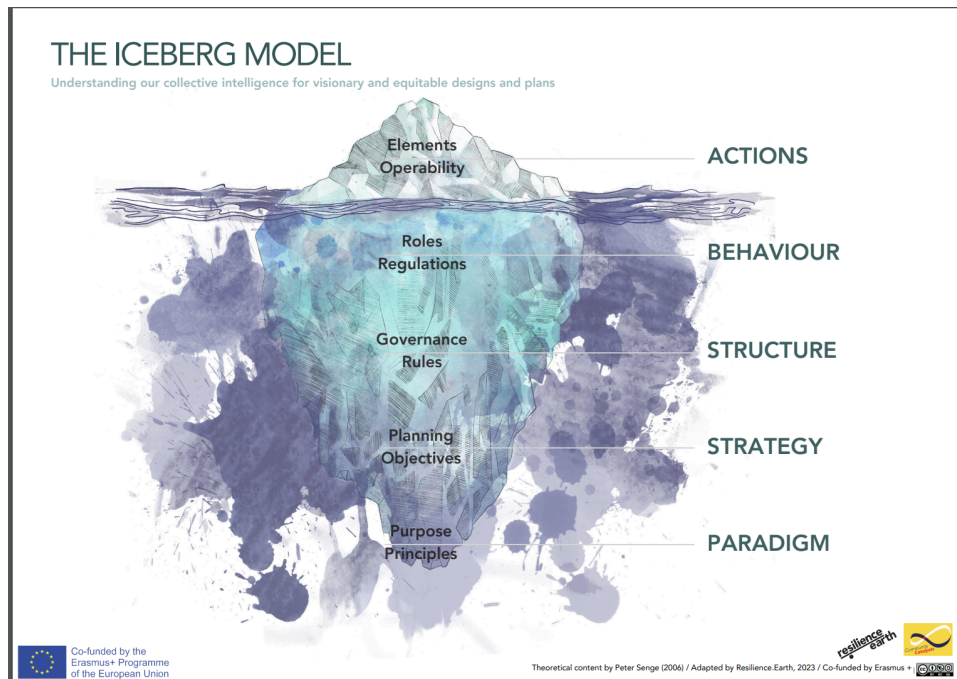
We invite you to do so by **enabling transcontextual dialogue to emphasise diversity through the convergence of the edges generating nodes that articulate plurality.**

This process with the seed of life enables us to take responsibility for our power and privileges, and nourish plurality.

7. Transform Obsolete Structures (Iceberg):



In 1972 Donella Meadows from MIT, along with other researchers, wrote *The Limits of Growth*, a controversial book that has become a Classic. This book was predicting, quite accurately, our current development situation facing cascading collapse. After this, Donella worked on the concept of Leverage Points, which she would define as “places in a complex system (a corporation, an economy, a living body, a city, an ecosystem) where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything”. Peter Senge, also contributed to change management through systems thinking, by writing his world-known book *The Fifth Discipline*, where he simplified the way to intervene in a system, and he developed the known Iceberg Model. This model has evolved in the last decade into the framework known as Theory U which has been proposed by Otto Scharmer, also an MIT scholar.



The main leverage points lie at the bottom of the Iceberg, where we find the paradigm level. But paradigms are difficult to grasp as Donella expresses: “Your paradigm is so intrinsic to your mental process that you are hardly aware of its existence, until you try to communicate with someone with a different paradigm”. To be able to evolve our own paradigm she proposes that we should “remember, always, that everything you know, and everything everyone knows, is only a model. Get your model out there where it can be viewed. Invite others to challenge your assumptions and add their own.” If we were able to awaken to the influence that our paradigms have in our lives, and if we would develop a culture around this, this probably would be the shift we need to change everything and generate a hopeful thriving future. As Donella expresses: “People don't need enormous cars; they need admiration and respect. They don't need a constant stream of new clothes; they need to feel that others consider them to be attractive, and they need excitement, variety, and beauty. People don't need electronic entertainment; they need something interesting to occupy their minds and emotions. And so forth. Trying to fill real but non-material needs -for identity, community, self-esteem,

challenge, love, joy- with material things is to set up an unquenchable appetite for false solutions to never-satisfied longings. A society that allows itself to admit and articulate its non-material human needs, and to find non-material ways to satisfy them, the world requires much lower material and energy throughputs and would provide much higher levels of human fulfilment.”

Tibetan indigenous culture, now deeply immersed in a colonisation process through assimilation, under the rule of China, has many things to teach us about paradigm and consciousness work at the community level. With their massive emphasis on spirituality, the author Huston Smith described them as “as rain forests are to the earth’s atmosphere, so are the Tibetan people to the soul of this planet...”. Being masters of training their minds, they have become a source of wisdom worldwide in reminding us about our inner nature. As the Dalai Lama explains: “A disciplined mind leads to happiness, and an undisciplined mind leads to suffering”.

Tibetan society, far from being perfect, has developed its way to perpetuate its cultural wisdom, through adapting the whole structure of their society around spirituality. This, in turn, generates a conscious behaviour promoting daily spiritual practice that leads to more peaceful people. A peaceful person can influence a peaceful family. And many peaceful families can catalyse a peaceful community, and so on. As widely known, Gandhi said: “Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny.”

After we have articulated our community with Engagement Pattern six, listening deeply to the plurality of the diverse voices, in this seventh Engagement Pattern we want to encourage to deepen our understanding of the cultural and structural violence of our societies as different layers of past colonisation waves. And come back from this process, disrupting a regenerative change through the inner core of our communities.

We invite you to do this by **deep diving into cultural essence to understand how to regeneratively disrupt current structures, enabling the emergence of a new paradigm.**

This process with the iceberg and theory U enables us to disrupt the oppressing context to enable our communities to fully express their diversity.

8. Coevolve with the Bioregion (Golden Ratio):



Communities, fully articulated and able to listen to the plurality of the inner voices, are deeply resilient organisations. Capable of sensing its environment from a variety of perspectives; capable of conflicting from a creative approach; capable of sustaining healthy and complementary disagreements: capable of managing intersectionality; and also capable of distributed governance. That makes a community able to sustain a dynamic balance with its context, changing and evolving together. And this is the approach of this 8 Engagement Pattern, where we propose to work on how the bioregion can evolve as a whole.

John Thakara, a known bioregional designer, explains why it is important to do bioregional work: “What I’ve understood is that we had been having discussions in a very abstract sense about words such as ‘sustainability’, which don’t necessarily touch us in our daily lives. There’s a metabolic gap between the natural and the man-made world. Because of this split, we’ve been able to carry on being told the world is in a sick condition, but not really feeling it was our responsibility. This is where the

subject of a bioregion comes in. Place has the power to connect people to the reality of the situation and to provide a context for networking with people that we would otherwise disagree with. Bioregion is an alternative to all those abstract words, I use it to provoke people to ask “How can we make our place healthier, and have a better future?”. John continues by saying: “Communities are being confident in looking to their own resources and making solutions based on this rather than following an abstract rulebook. What to me is very inspiring is the sheer variety of ways we ourselves invented in the past. We don’t have to invent, but to ask: “How did people make sure everyone had plenty to eat or that their kids were looked after? Can we therefore reinvent, modify, or improve those historical systems using our tools?”.

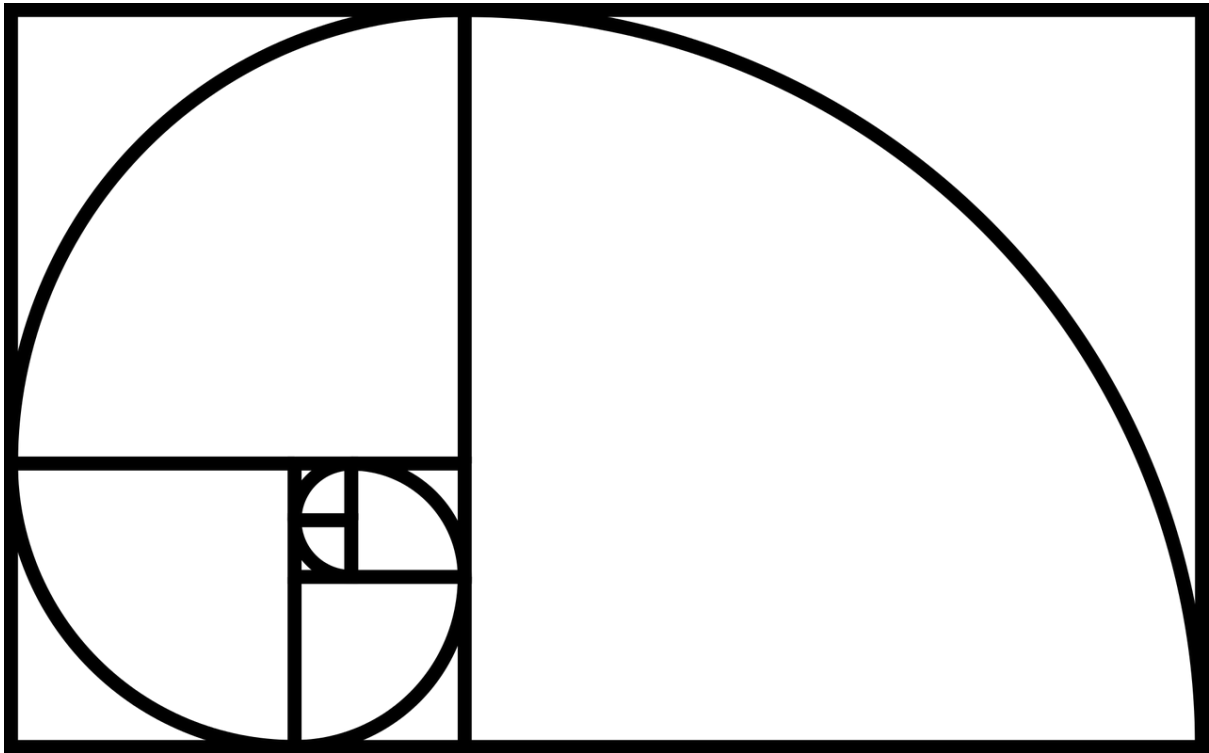
Interesting questions! Let’s have a look at the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo which are three indigenous nations unified in the Amazon rainforest of Peru. They are working on self-governance to reach self-determination and become a nation, with a newly created council, called Coshikox. They are doing so, by generating equitable participatory modes of governance. These models are based on their traditional governance structures, the local councils, as a way to ensure that the local communities remain at the centre of all project development. They have the Ani Tsinkiti, the annual assembly that gathers leaders from throughout the region, motivating bottom-up organising and participatory decision-making. They are starting to work with digital cartographic technologies, to provide Coshikox with the tools for environmental and territorial management and push forward their political agenda. Combining indigenous and scientific spatial knowledge, the initiative aims to develop a hybridised form of spatial representation that recognizes and respects the uniqueness and importance of indigenous spatial expressions. The participatory mapping project gives the Shipibo multiple, integrated instruments to gather data to define territorial borders, earn land titles, quantify natural resources, denounce land violations, and enforce their right to free, prior, and informed consent. It is also the platform to create cultural maps that locate social, environmental, and historical information such as the sites of ancestral stories or legendary events,

representing a self-described digital presence with the potential of instilling a spirit of renewed indigenous identity one that can adapt, participate, and even advance novel ideas in today world.

They are also working with Plant-Based Economies to introduce entrepreneurial opportunities for Shipibo to monetize their plant knowledge and gain local, culturally-specific employment. The Shipibo Agroforestry Cooperative Koshicoop is an initiative that fosters coordination among indigenous farming communities as opposed to competition. It has the potential of reconciling sustainable development and conservation through a market solution, by creating a long-term employment opportunity to decrease out-migration from indigenous communities while demonstrating that non-timber forest products are higher in value than the price of the logs the Amazon is destroyed for.

This Shipibo example illustrates what it means for a community to act with responsibility for their role in the bioregion. And it also expresses that is not a matter of reduction, but a matter of how to grow, as the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo people could become a world reference on medicinal plants, bioregional stewardship, new types of nature-based technologies, and regenerative tourism, along with many other possibilities. With bioregional governance and bioregional economy, they will just nourish their own potential at the service of the planet as a whole.

An ancient symbol could help with this process: The Golden Ratio, first mentioned around 300 BCE, in Euclid's Elements, the Classical Greek work on mathematics and geometry. This ratio, which is a highly common pattern in nature, illustrates a nested and exponential growth occurring in a natural rhythm. Bioregioning can help us generate a new type of growth that includes nature in it, reaching a thriving place.



But what does it mean to do bioregioning, in the words of the Bioregional Learning Center: Climate change, biodiversity loss, economic contraction, and pandemics reveal systems under stress, requiring a systemic response. Working at the scale of the bioregion—how human societies have organised themselves for millennia—we can see the many ecosystems and human systems alive within our place. Bioregioning is the set of skills and pathways that bring vitality to these connections and enable us to take action at the scale of the system.

For this Pattern of Engagement, we invite you to **stand with full responsibility for your uniqueness at the service of the bioregion listening and nourishing evolution.**

This process with the Golden Ratio enables us to coevolve with the bioregion in a new model of development.

