

A scenic landscape featuring a large, dark tree in the foreground on the left. A dirt road leads from the bottom left towards the center. The background shows rolling green hills and distant mountains under a bright, hazy sky. The overall tone is warm and natural.

You, Me, Them & the Landscape: Collaborating for the Wellbeing of All

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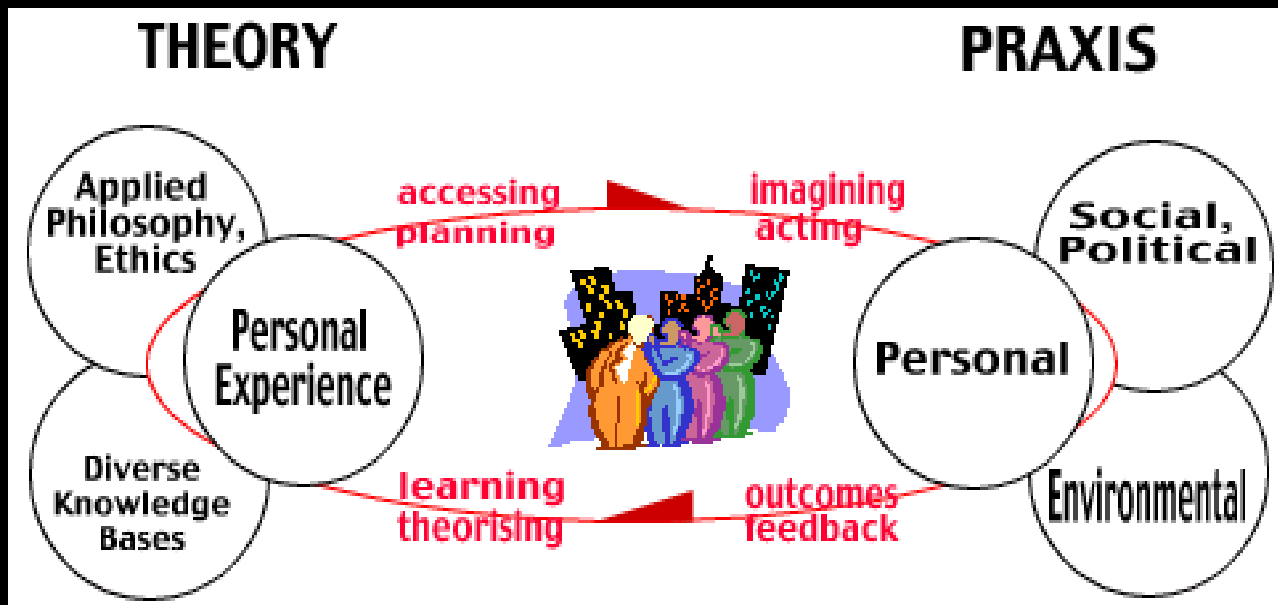
A little about me: Stuart Baxter Hill, & my experience with this topic

born during WWII in Aylesbury (80 km N of London, UK)

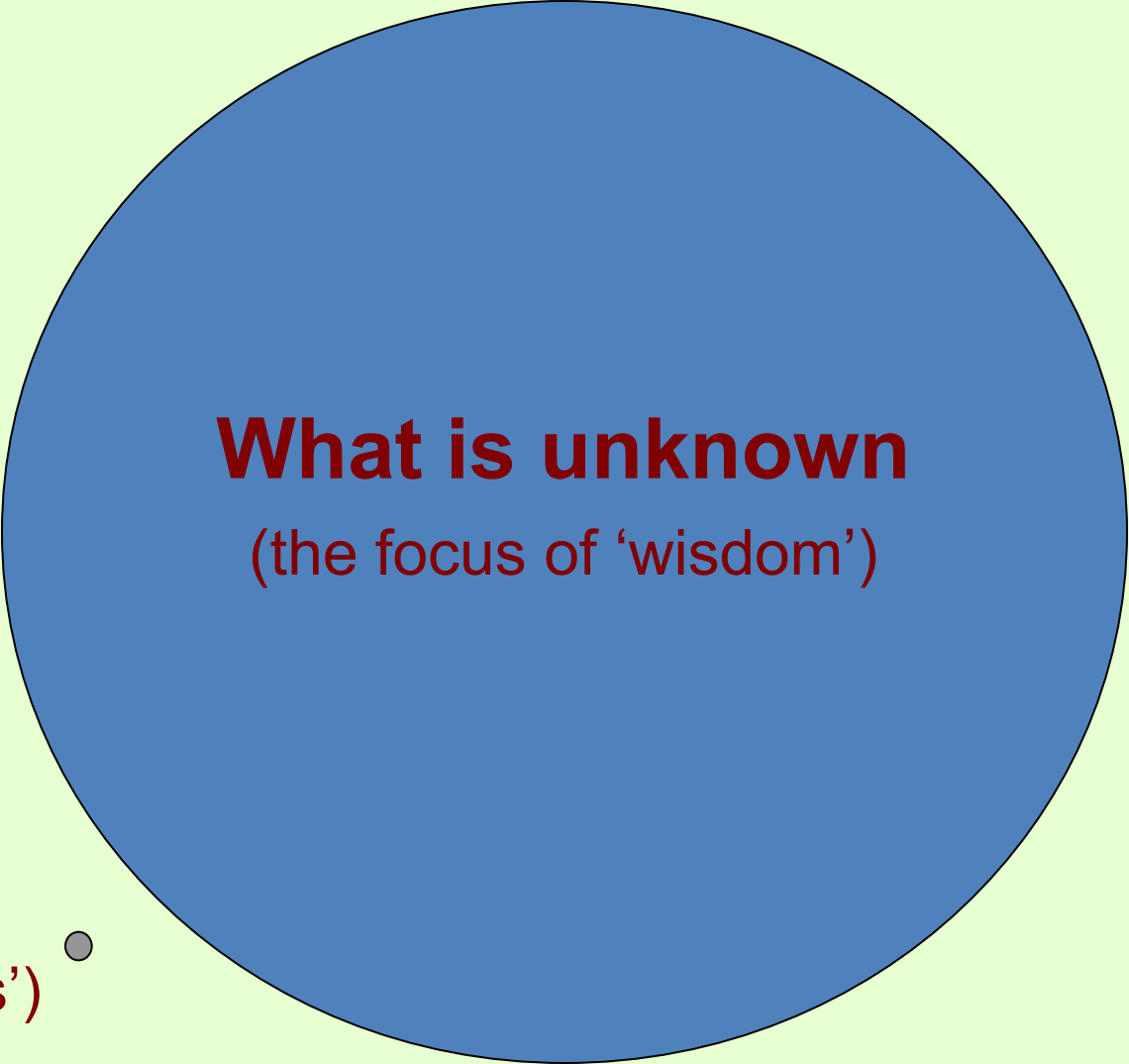


Professor of SOCIAL ECOLOGY

Study & practice of personal, social & ecological sustainability & 'progressive' change based on the critical application & integration of ecological, humanistic, relational, community & 'spiritual' values, for the wellbeing of all



Known & unknown



What is unknown
(the focus of 'wisdom')

What is known
(the focus of 'cleverness')

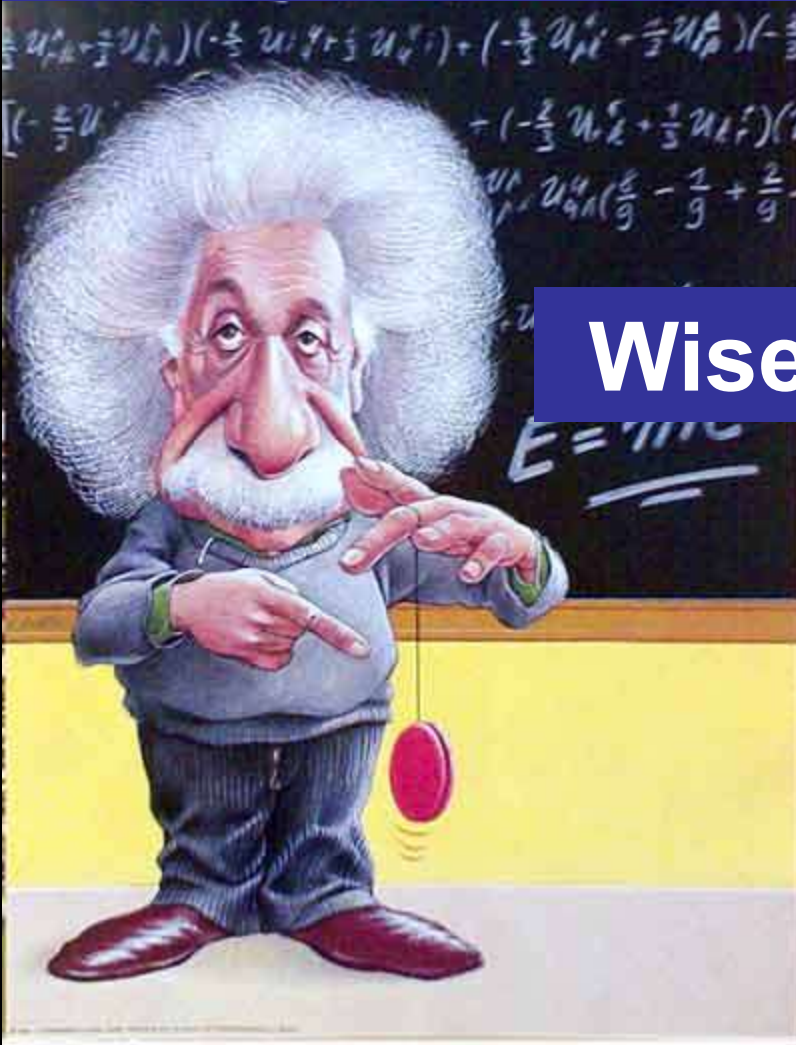
The challenge: how to engage clearly with the unknown & mystical

André Voisin, 1959. *Soil, Grass and Cancer*. Longmans, London

**Clever people know how
to solve problems**

Wise people avoid them!

Attributed to Albert Einstein



We tend to over-focus on knowledge & data; & neglect *wisdom* & *experience*



- most *wisdom* cannot be supported just by data; it involves working with the *unknown* – most of what is – not only by the limited *known*; it must involve intuition, gut feelings, etc; our over-emphasis on „evidence-based decision making“ undermines this, with predictable outcomes

***Wisdom is the product of
experience & emptiness;***

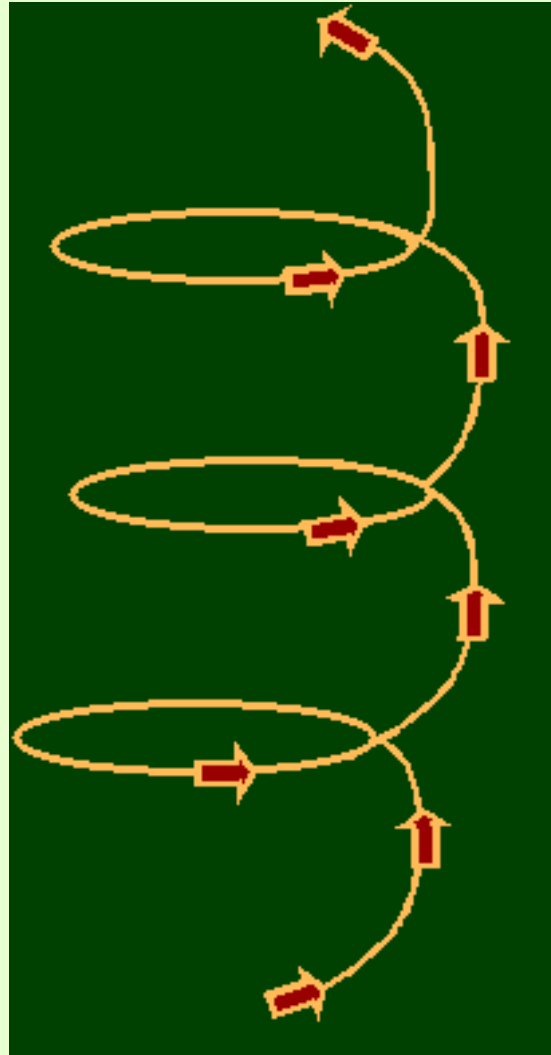
***the more experience one has had,
the more emptiness***

(unknowingness & acknowledgement of mystery)

one will need

Progressive spiral

To learn
↑
Unknowing



To act
↑
Knowing



**We can apply profound understandings
from developed areas to less developed ones**

**Cancer patients who have gone into remission
identified the following four factors as key:**

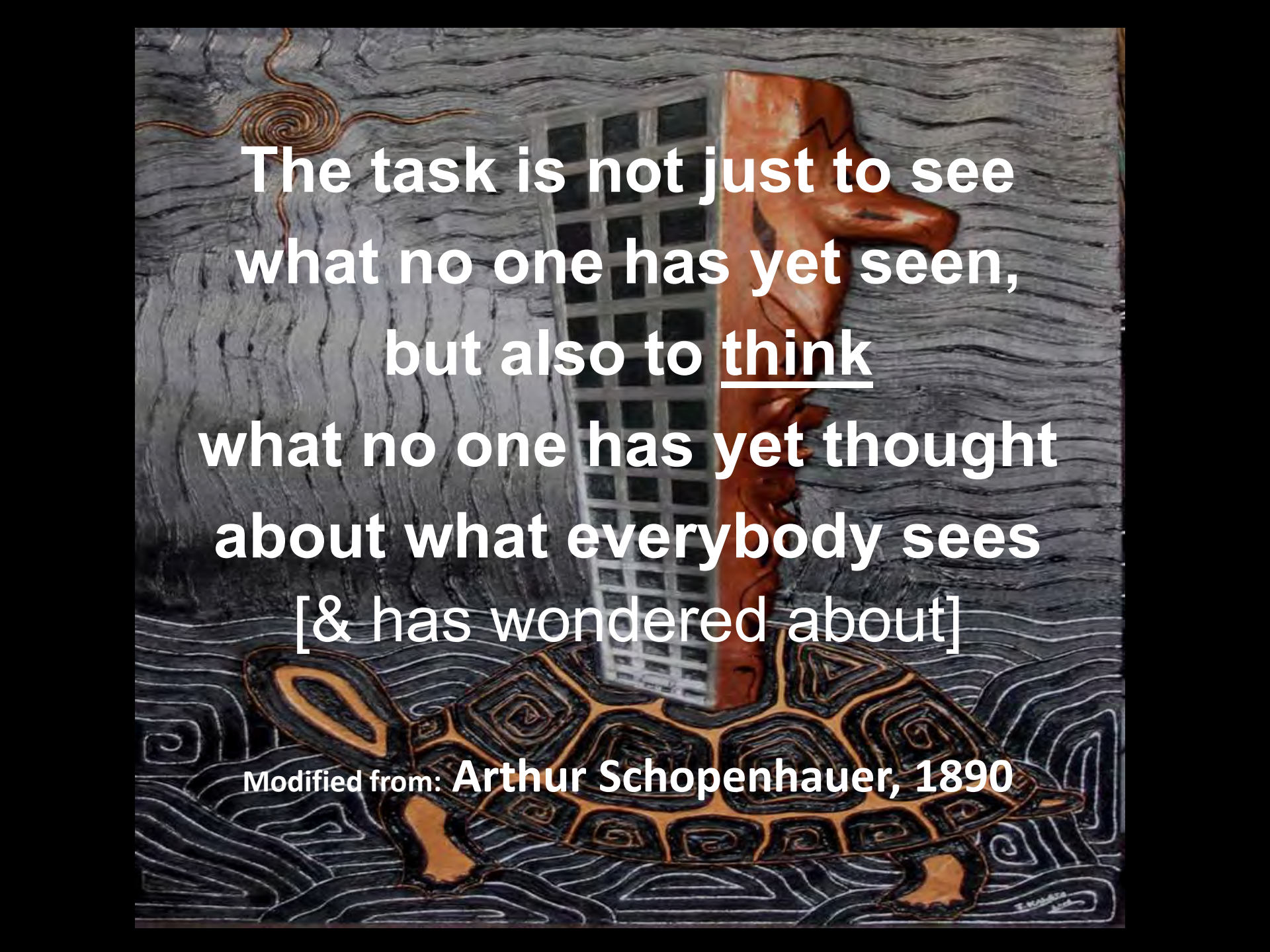
(Herschberg, C. & Barasch, M.I. 1995. *Remarkable Recovery: What Extraordinary Healings Tell Us About Getting Well and Staying Well*. Riverhead Books, San Francisco, CA)

• connectedness

• control over one's life

• passion for life

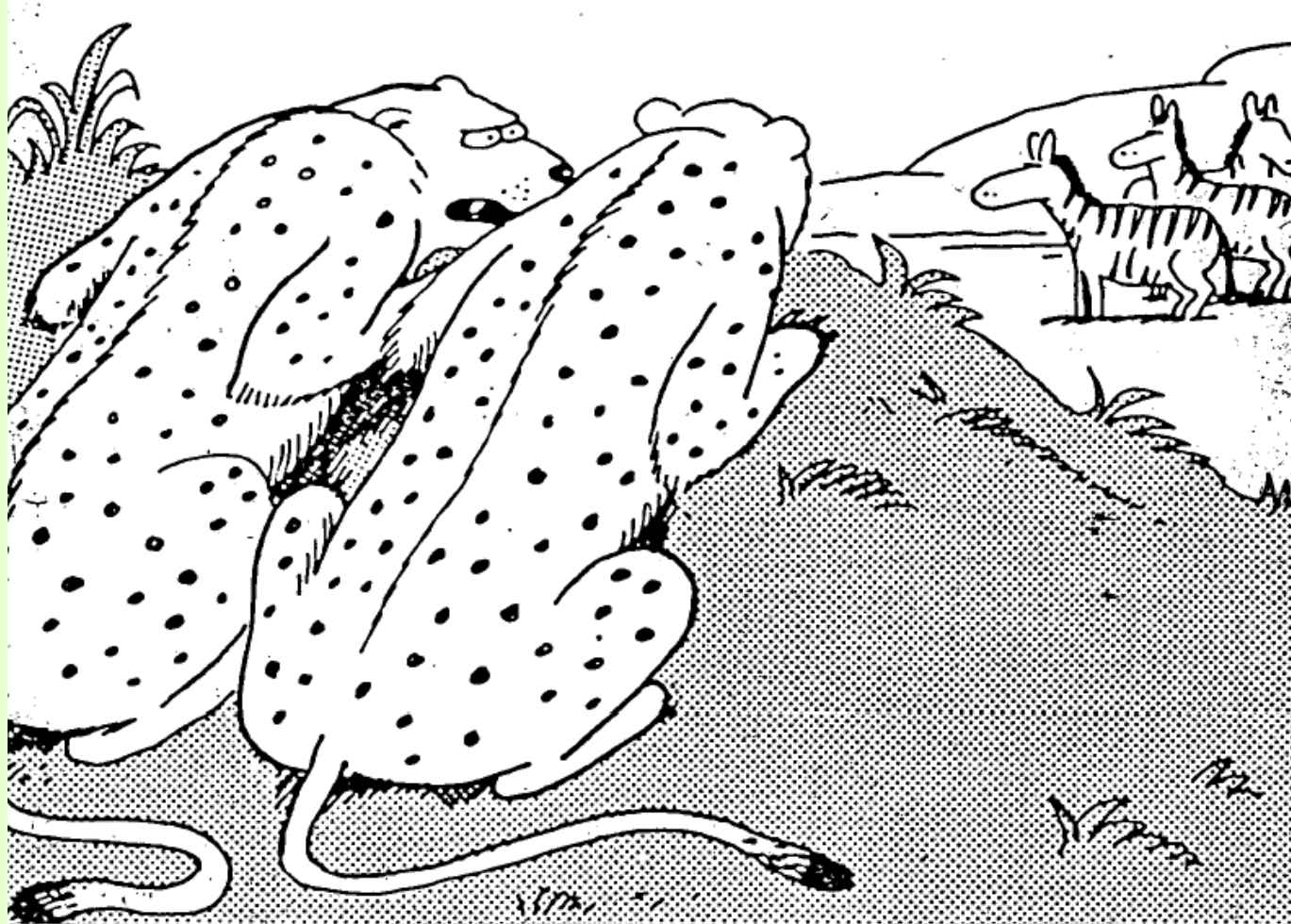
• challenges & goals extending beyond current crises



The task is not just to see
what no one has yet seen,
but also to think
what no one has yet thought
about what everybody sees
[& has wondered about]

Modified from: **Arthur Schopenhauer, 1890**

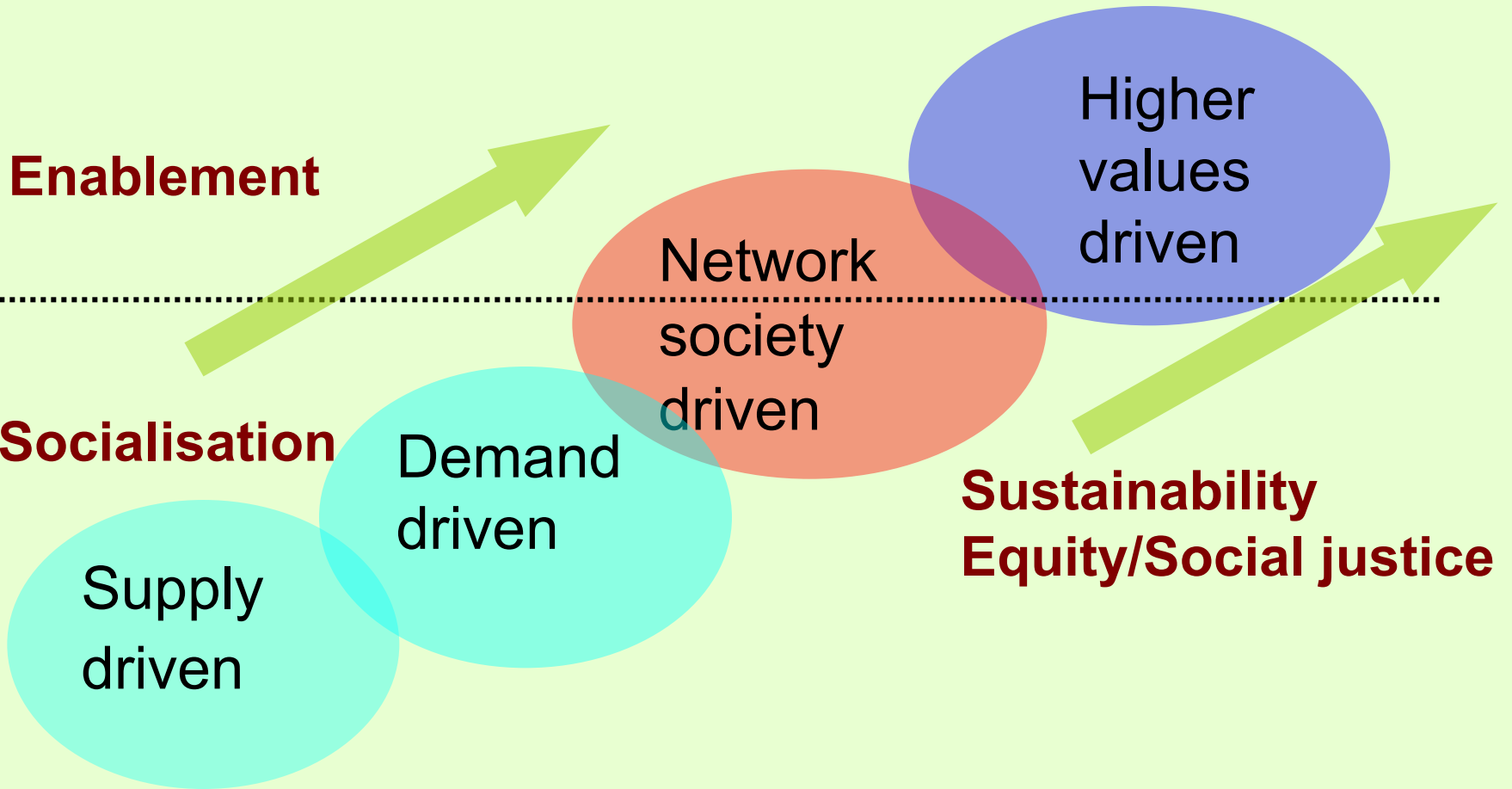
It's time to question the old approaches!



“Listen... I am fed up with this „weeding out the sick and the old“business ... I want something in its prime”

Gary Larson

Our cultural evolution



Dominant Grand Narrative of „Progress“

Neglected/Blocked

- ★ **production** (*regardless of cost*)
- ★ **growth, no limits**
- ★ **wealth**
- ★ **individualism**
- ★ **consumerism**
(*emphasising compensatory wants*)
- ★ **homogenisation, simplification**
- ★ **‘controlling’ science**
(*‘understanding’ science & arts as a disposable luxury*)
- ★ **maintenance, caring**
- ★ **sustainability, limits**
(*resources, ecological...*)
- ★ **sense of enough**
- ★ **community, mutualistic relationships**
- ★ **conservator society**
(*meeting basic needs*)
- ★ **maintenance of & support for diversity**
- ★ **‘understanding’ science & arts**

Dominant Grand Narrative of „Progress“

- ★ **market forces** (*manipulated demand, excessive advertising*)
- ★ **economic rationalism** (*monetary system of values*)
- ★ **transglobal corporate managerialism**
- ★ **mobile disposable workforce** (*disconnected from place*)

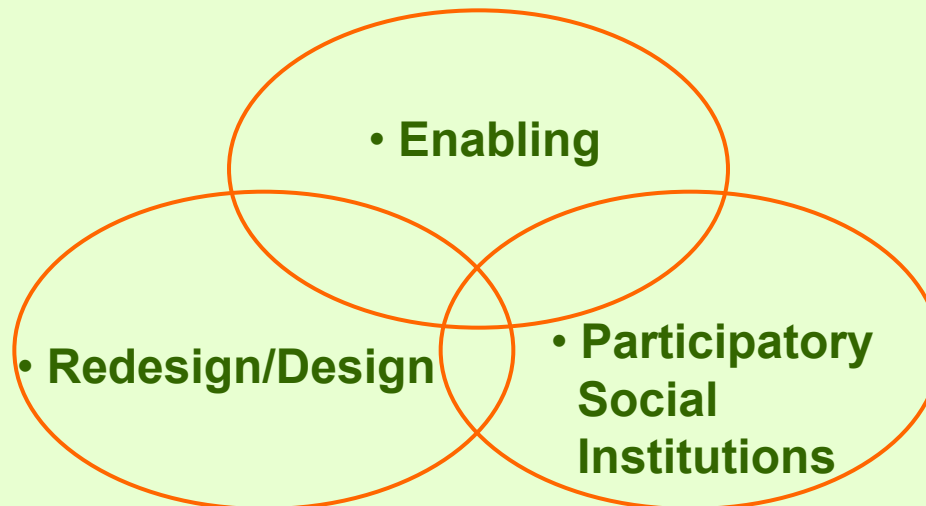
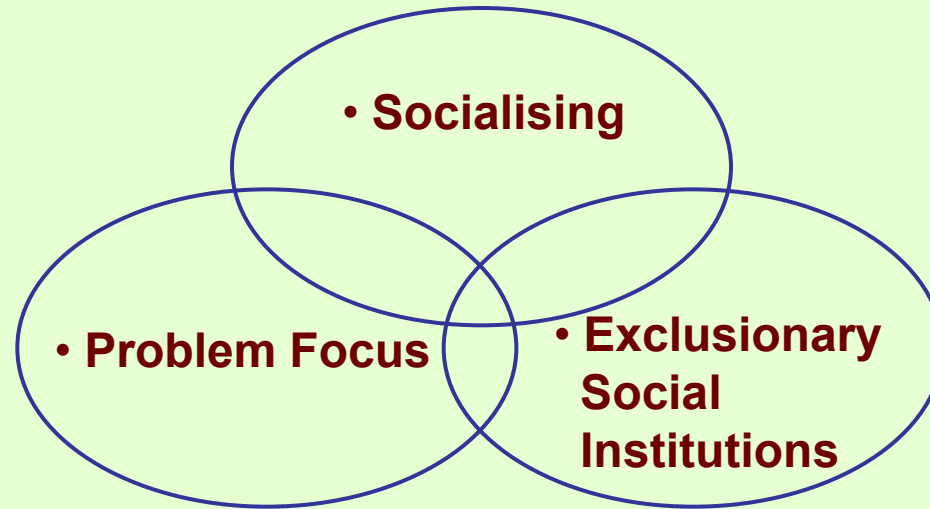
The myths that these are embedded in are inadequate for securing a „good“ future for most in present & future generations

Neglected/Blocked

- ★ **appropriate technologies** (*decentralised, repairable*)
- ★ **meeting greatest ‘good’** (*social justice...*)
- ★ **regional self-reliance & responsibility**
- ★ **sense of place, right to meaningful work**

We need to search for new life-promoting myths that can accommodate these characteristics: some can be found within nature (ecology & psychology)

Psychosocial evolution & transformative institutional & structural change



You, Me, Them & the Landacape: Collaborating for the Wellbeing of All

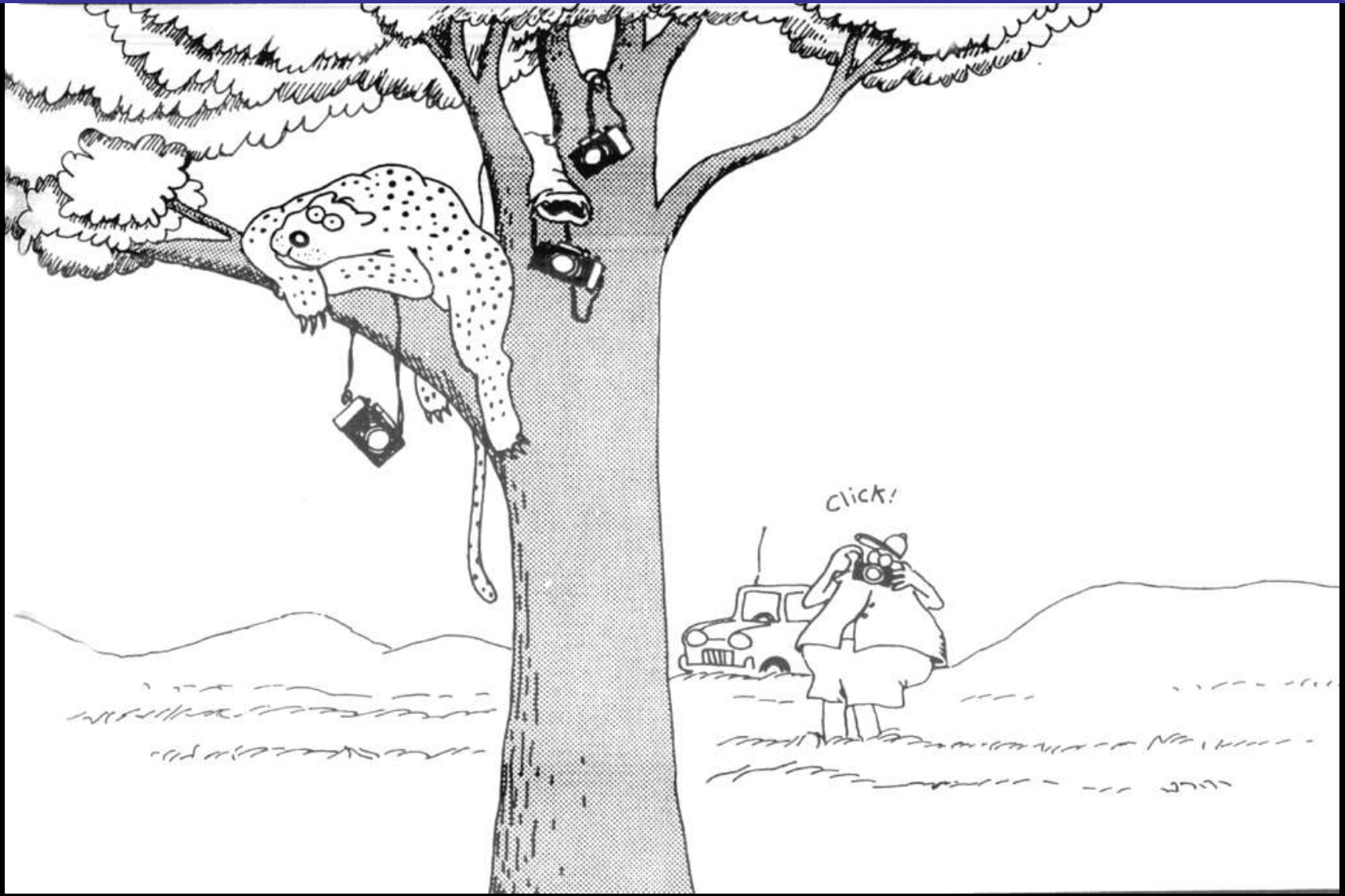
- *I am well in every sense*
- *leading a meaningful life*
- *with exceptional caring family & community relationships*
- *within a society that understands, rewards & supports my work*
- *& within landscapes that are ecologically 'healthy' & sustainable*

„You“ (& your/our species)

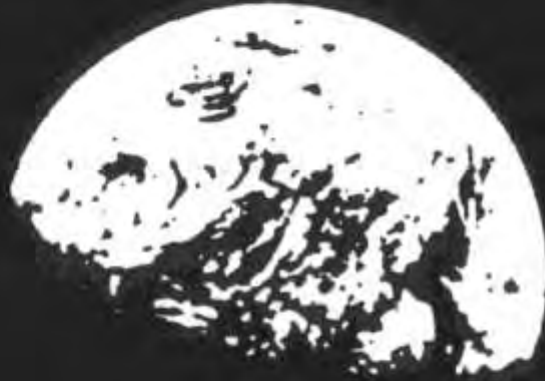
- are all truly amazing beings; your species has **learned a phenomenal amount through its experiences**; & yet...
- you have **hardly scratched the surface** of your potential
- consequently, **opportunities** for ‘improvement’ & ‘progress’ are **enormous**



Why do so many of „them“
keep making the same mistakes?



BUT WHAT
IF YOU'RE
WRONG AND
WE RUIN
THE PLANET?

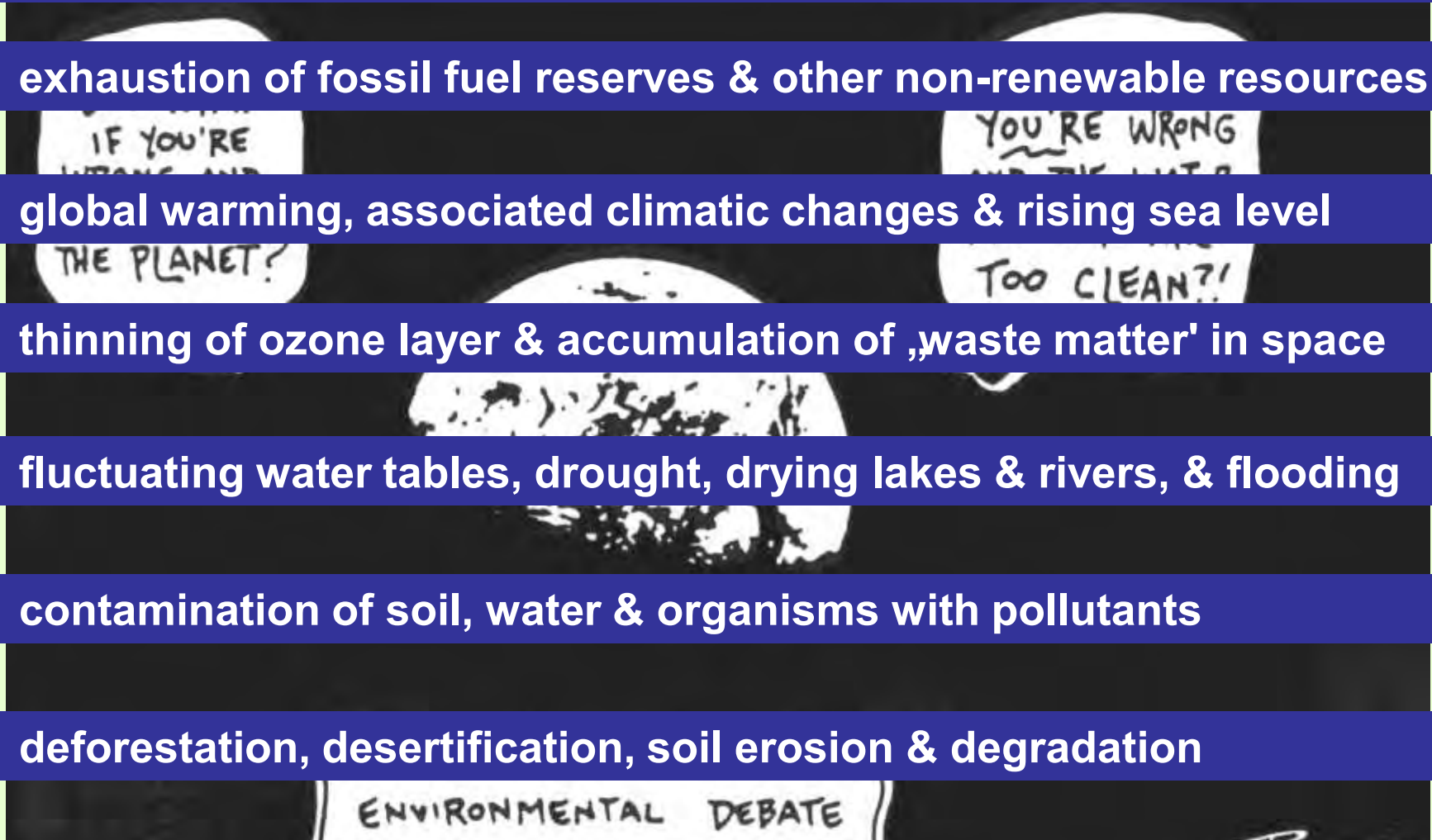


WHAT IF
YOU'RE WRONG
AND THE WATER
AND AIR ARE
TOO CLEAN?!

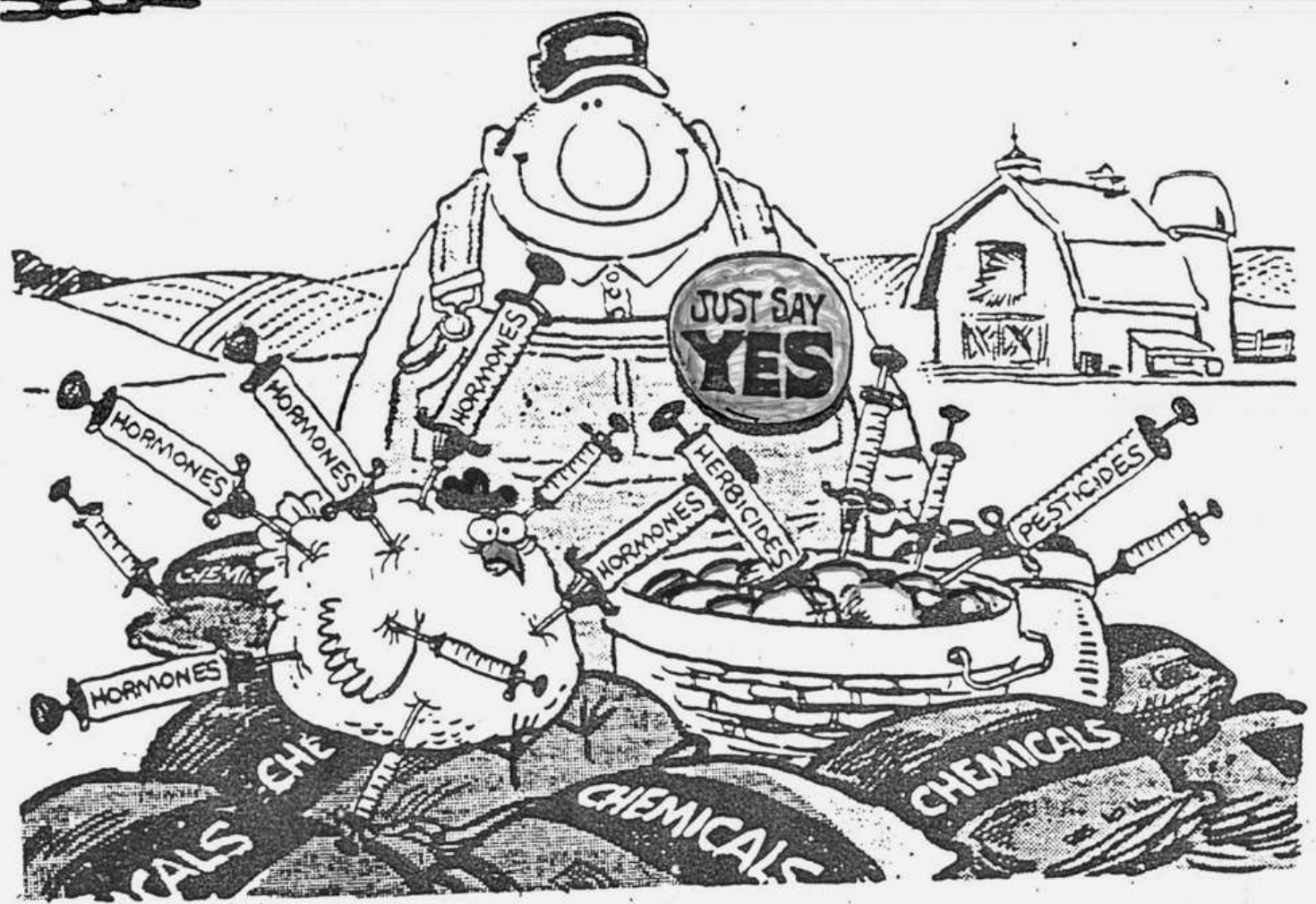
ENVIRONMENTAL DEBATE

Planet (including 'Landscapes')

- exhaustion of fossil fuel reserves & other non-renewable resources
- global warming, associated climatic changes & rising sea level
- thinning of ozone layer & accumulation of 'waste matter' in space
- fluctuating water tables, drought, drying lakes & rivers, & flooding
- contamination of soil, water & organisms with pollutants
- deforestation, desertification, soil erosion & degradation
- loss of habitat, biodiversity, species extinctions & loss of varieties



STAR TRIBUNE
~~SOON~~



Agroecosystems

- 
- **loss of natural capital (soil, water, biodiversity) & declining energy & resource efficiency**

- 
- **breakdown of maintenance functions (soil regeneration, natural pest control...)**

- 
- **increased vulnerability & associated pest, weed, disease, & livestock stress problems**

- 
- **increased dependence on imported resources, curative inputs, & „experts“ (& associated reduced return on investment)**

CONSUMERISM FOR BEGINNERS

LOOK HONEY, I BOUGHT
SOMETHING TODAY!

OH DARLING, I'M
SO PROUD OF YOU!



CLAW093

Idewalk Bubblegum ©1993 Clay Butler

Rural societies & economies

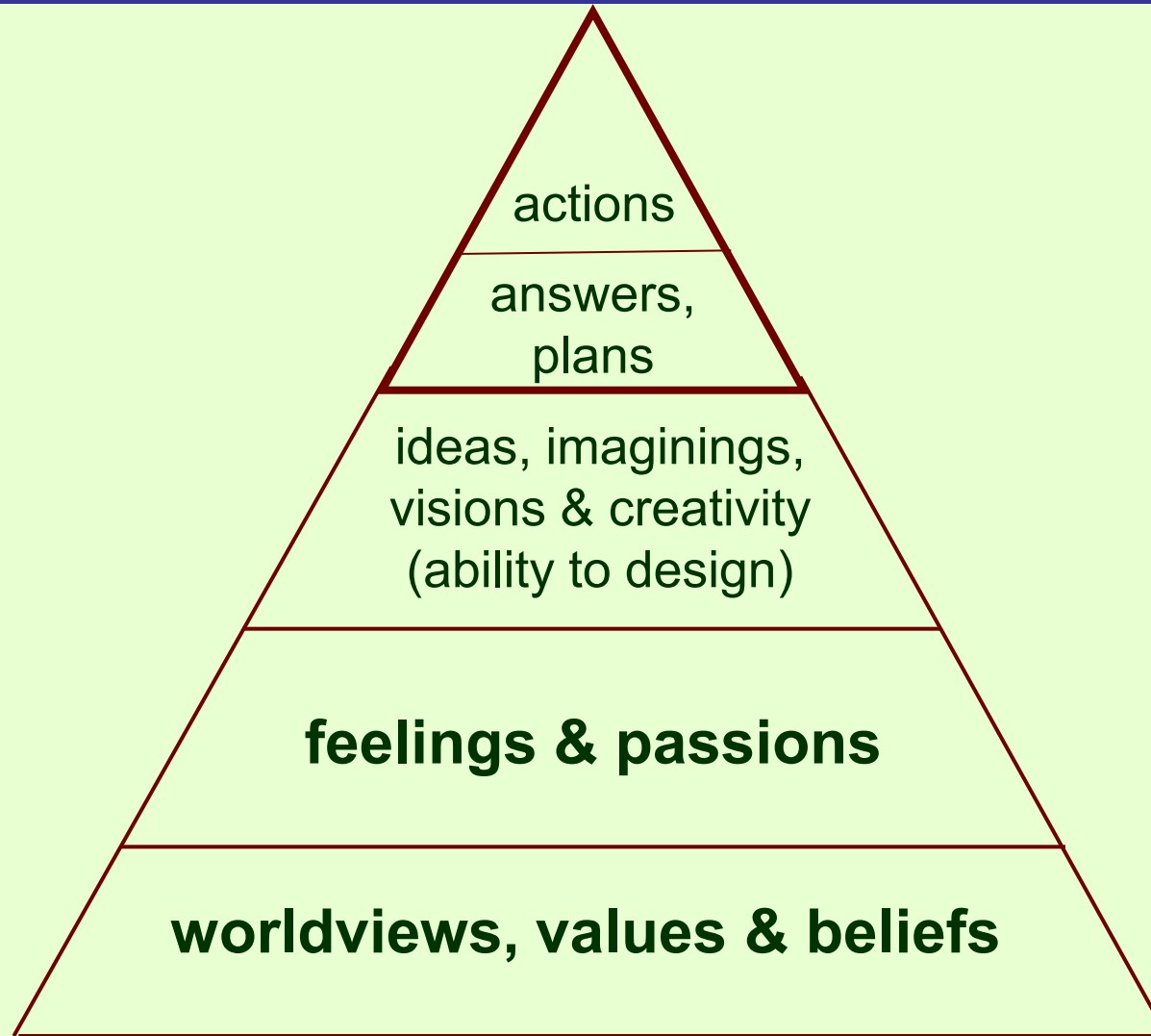
- war, prejudice, oppression & maldistribution problems
- displacement from land & lack of access to basic needs
- farm bankruptcies, decaying rural communities, & loss of social & cultural capital
- increasing dependence on subsidies & imported inputs
- dependence on unstable distant & world markets & other external controls
- malnourishment, zoonoses (diseases of 'lower' animals that can infect humans), allergies, stress-related & degenerative conditions
- illiteracy, learning disabilities, emotional disturbance & depression
- „compensatory“, addictive, compulsive, aggressive & self-harming behaviours
- feelings of isolation, hopelessness & helplessness

Main Ways These Issues are Dealt With

- denial
- postponement
- blame
- complaining
- emergency measures
- distractive & compensatory activities
- problem-solving interventions
- projects addressing only parts of the problem

*together with engagement with helpful networks,
such as Landcare, Riverina Bluebell & Mate Helping Mate*

Levels of consideration for better action



Top two overemphasised

(modified from John Herron, 1992. *Feeling and Personhood*. Sage, London)



Head
Thinking
Cognitive

Heart
Feeling
Affective
Emotional

Hands
Physical Body
Action

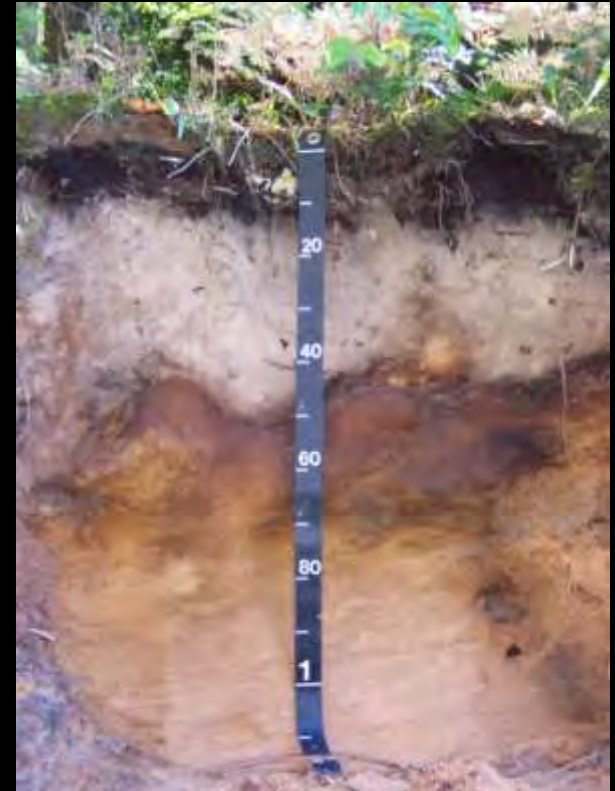
Soul/Spirit
Values/Ethics
Agenda/
Mission

We need to recognise the degree to which psychological processes influence everything (as barriers & enablers)



Soil within terrestrial ecosystems

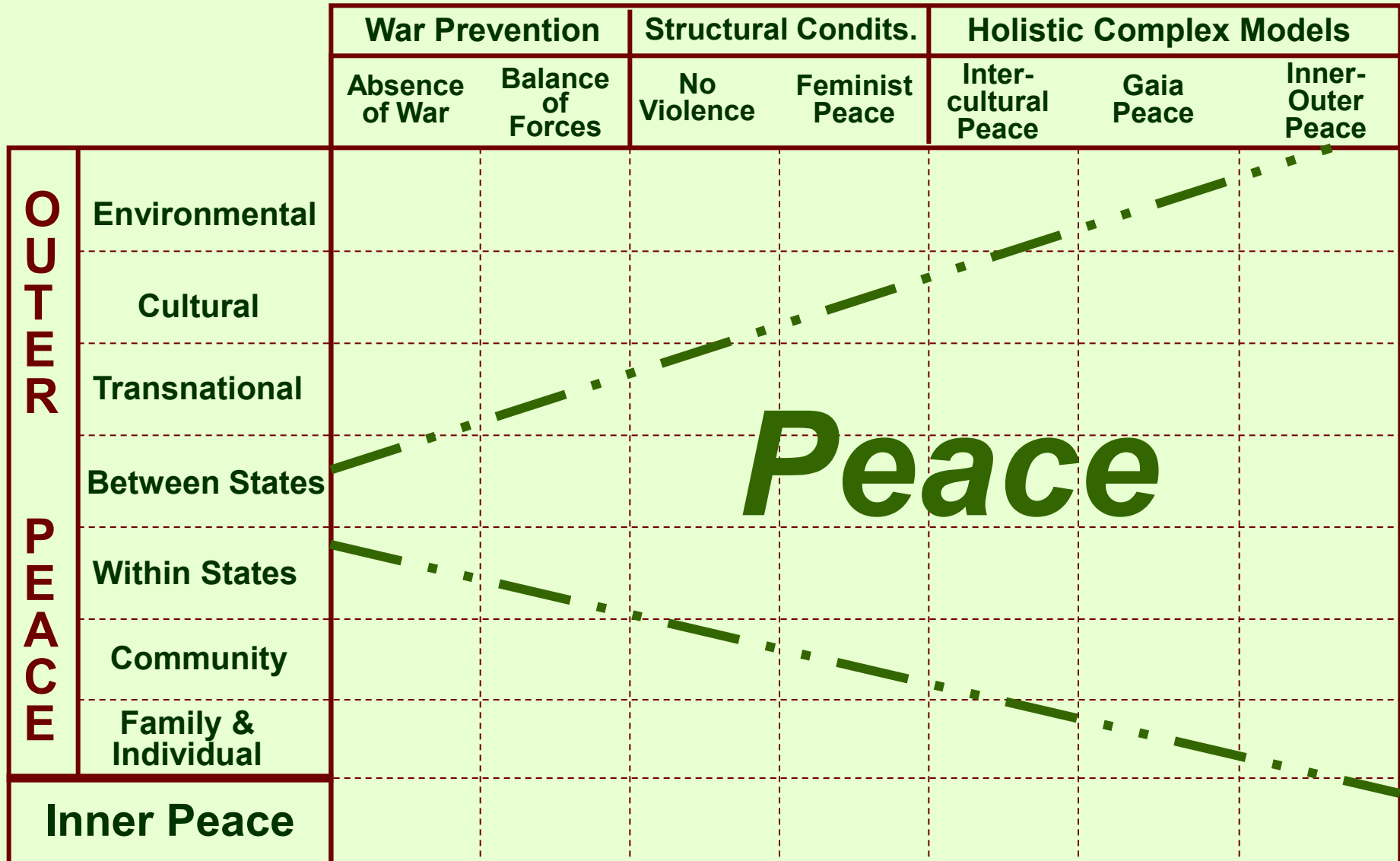
Subconscious within the human mind

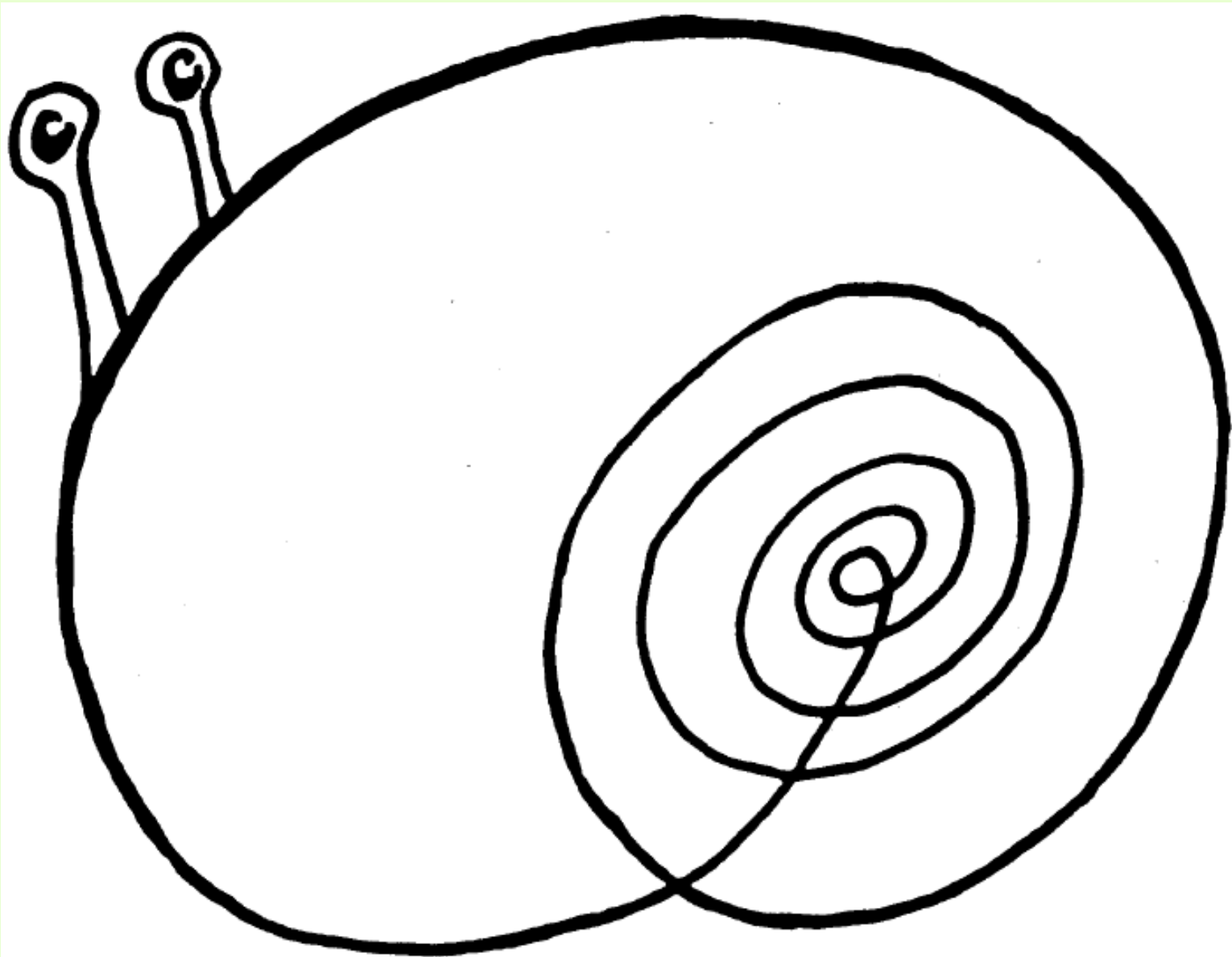


What might be the interrelationships between them?

We must extend the boundaries of our thinking

(modified from Geoff, L. & P. Smoker 1997. Peace: an evolving idea. Future Generations J. 23 (2): 4-9)





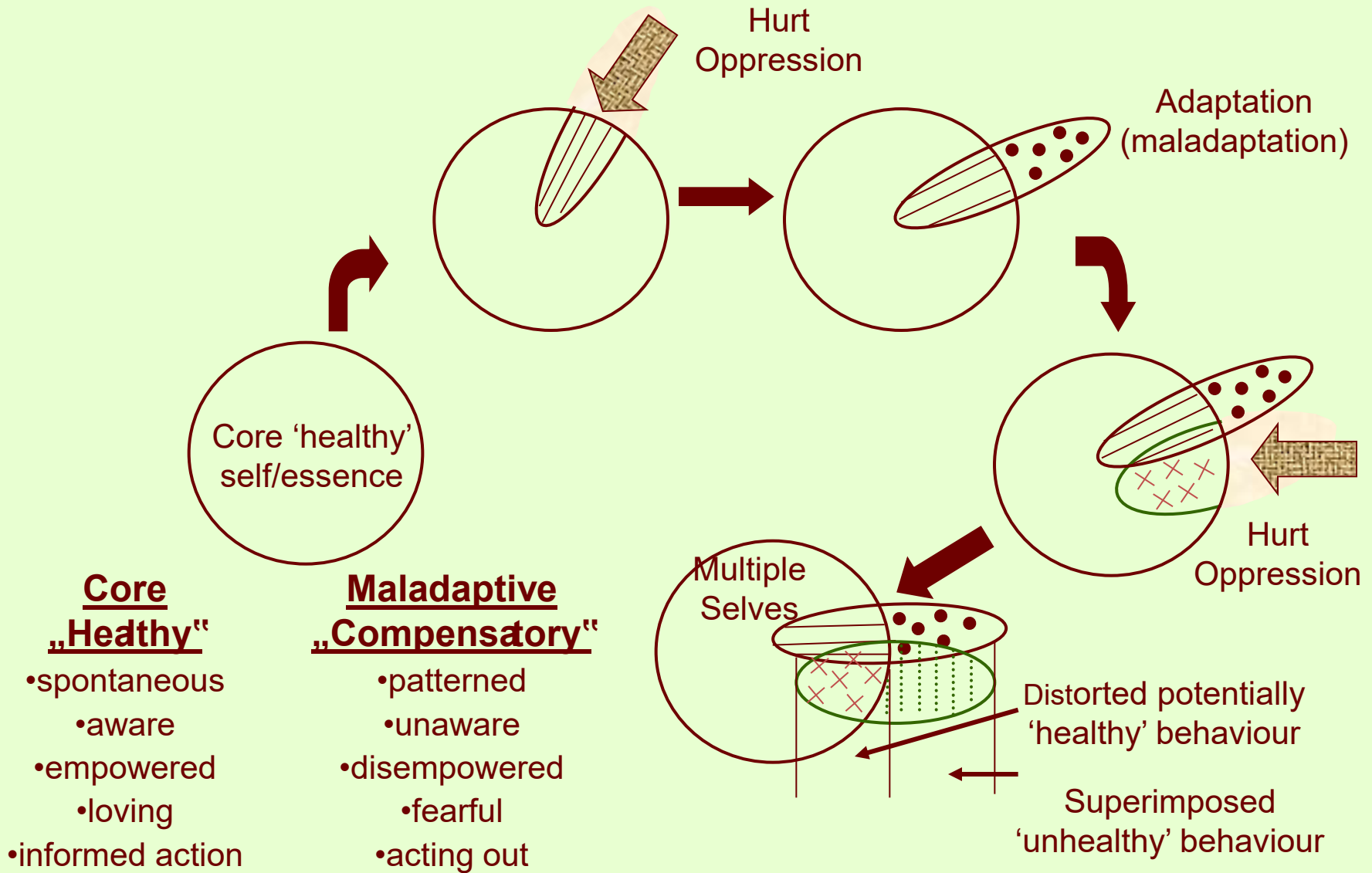
outside – inside – out !

Assumption

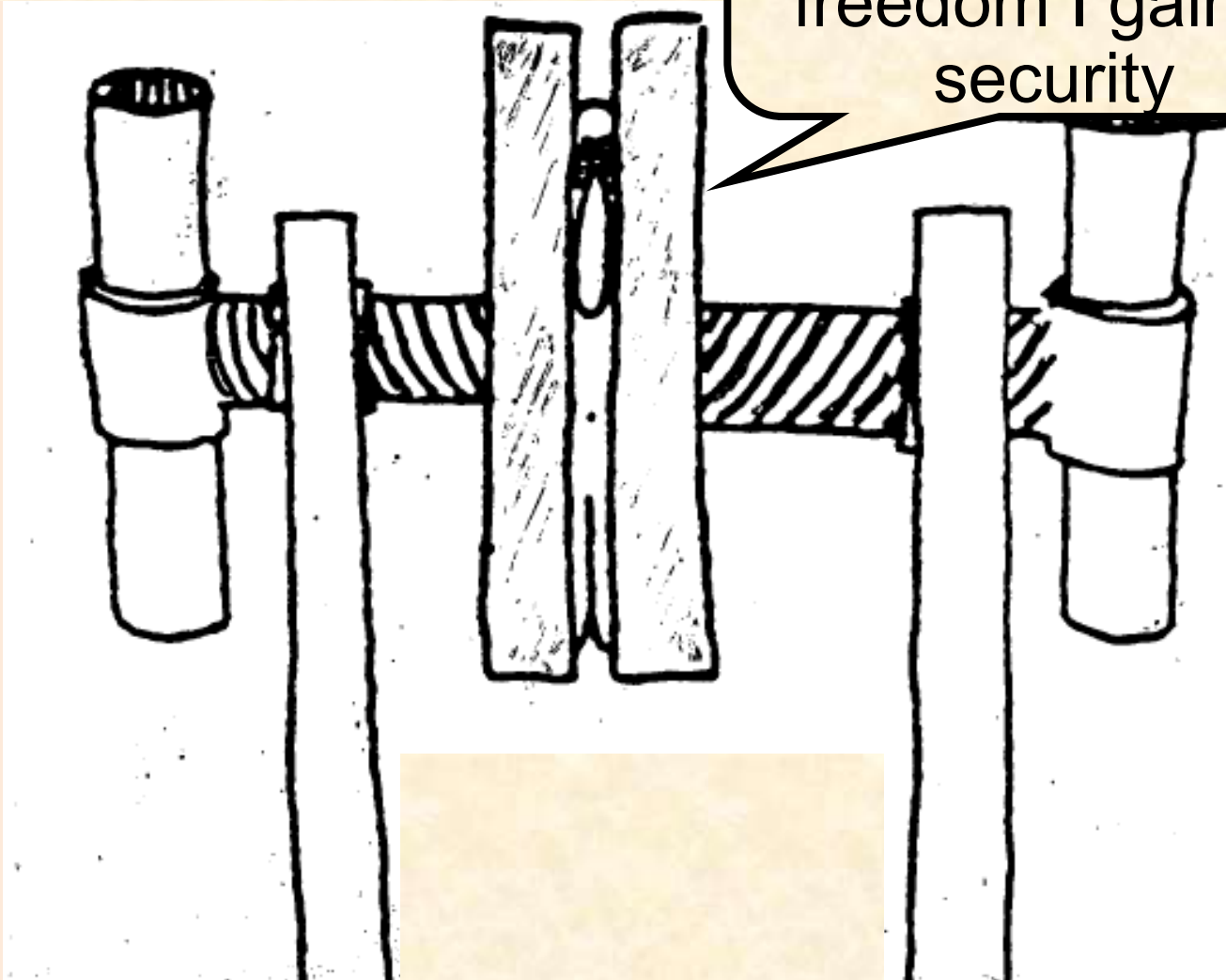
At every moment we are all always doing the best we can, given:

- 
- A group of eleven diverse young children, including boys and girls of various ethnicities, are sitting on a wooden bench outdoors. They are dressed in casual clothing like t-shirts, hoodies, and jackets. The background shows lush green trees and grass, suggesting a park or schoolyard setting.
- what we inherited (genetics plus)
 - our past experiences, & adaptations to them
 - present contexts & conditions

Establishment of maladaptive 'compensatory' selves



The way I look at
it, for what I lose in
freedom I gain in
security



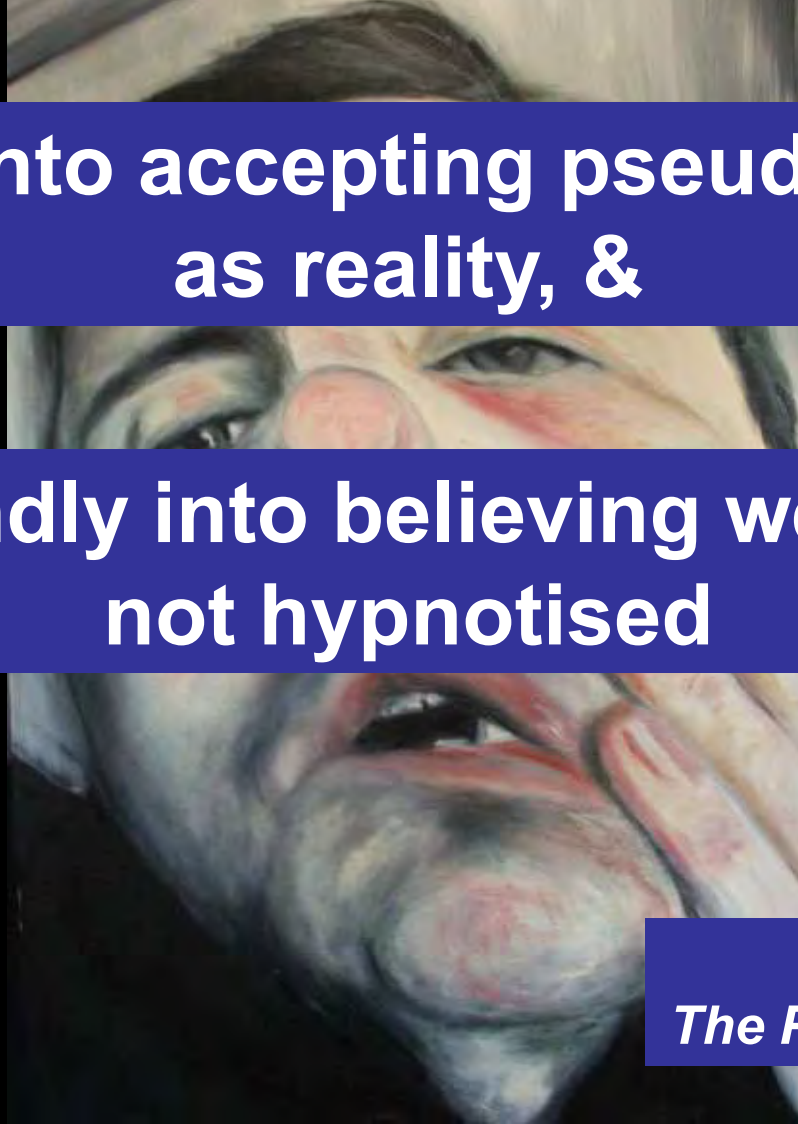
Mal

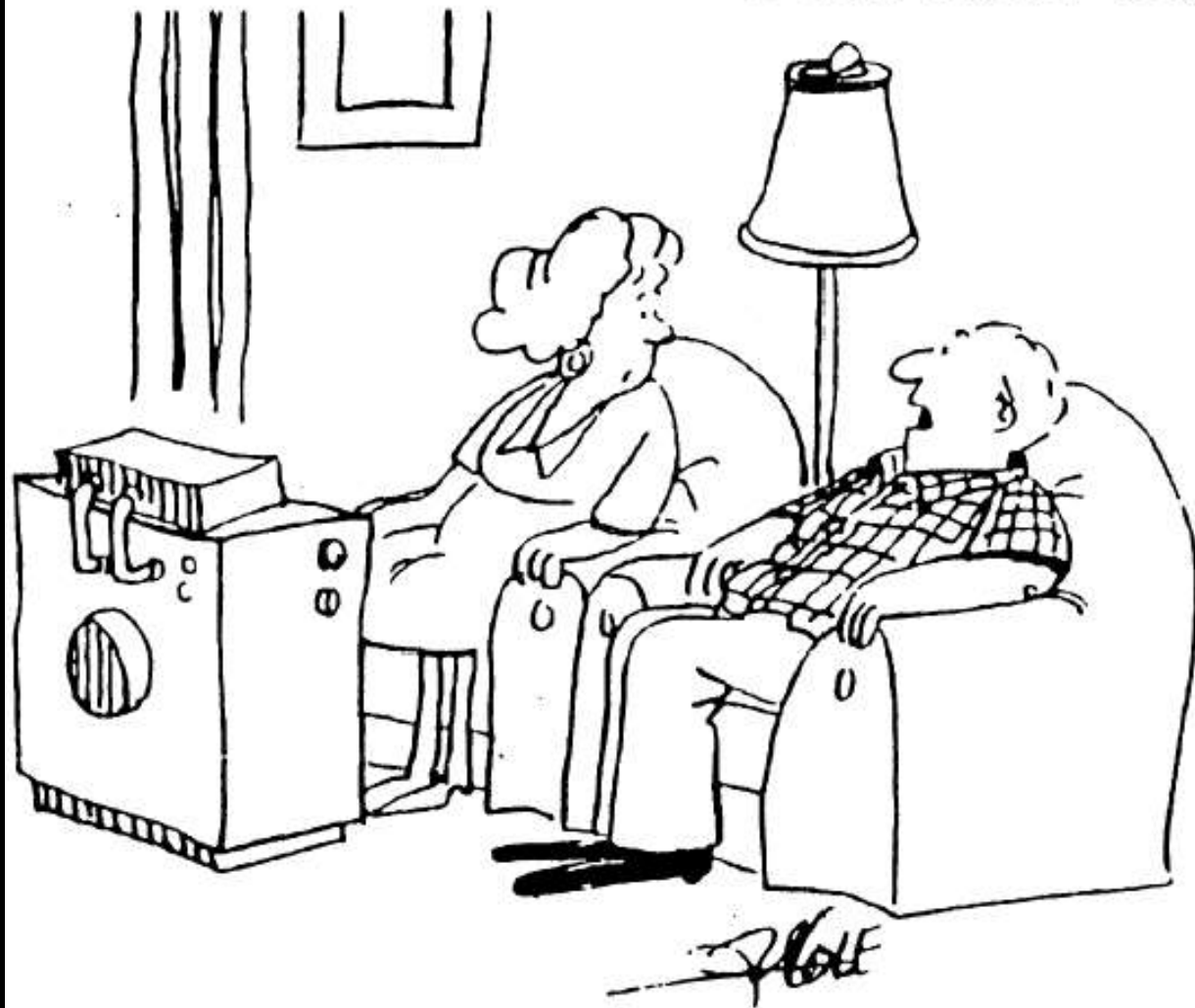
**Most of the time we behave as if we
were „hypnotisedtwice“**

**firstly into accepting pseudoreality
as reality, &**

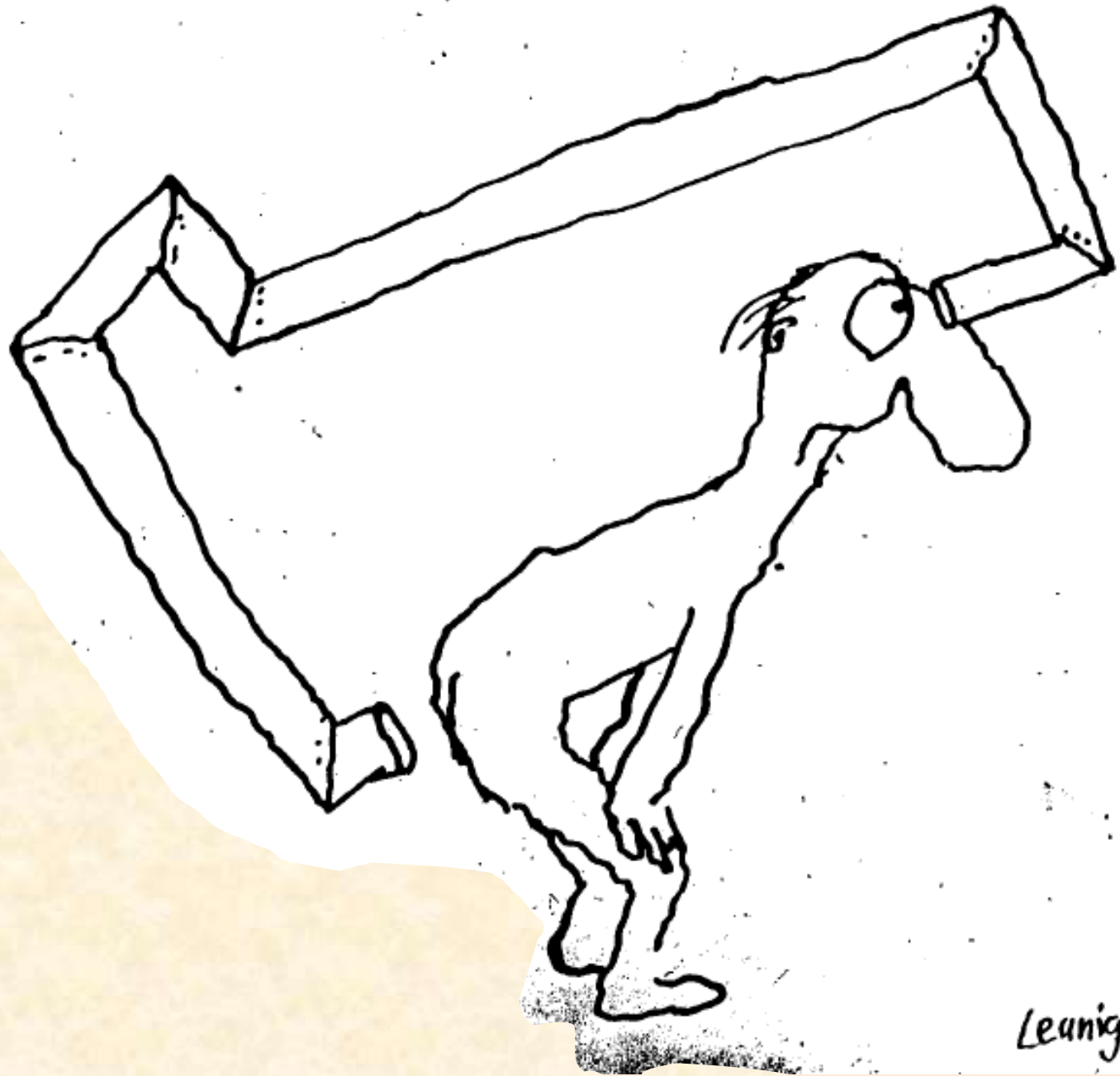
**secondly into believing we were
not hypnotised**

**R. D. Laing 1971
*The Politics of the Family***





“I’m worried. Nothing seems to insult my intelligence anymore.”



Leunig

REDUCE

REUSE

RECYCLE

REPAIR

REFRAIN

REFUSE

RESCUE

REGENERATE

REDESIGN

REFLECT

REVIEW

RE-EVALUATE

READ

RISK

REGISTER

RULES

RESPONSIBILITY

RECOVER

REVOLT

REBEL

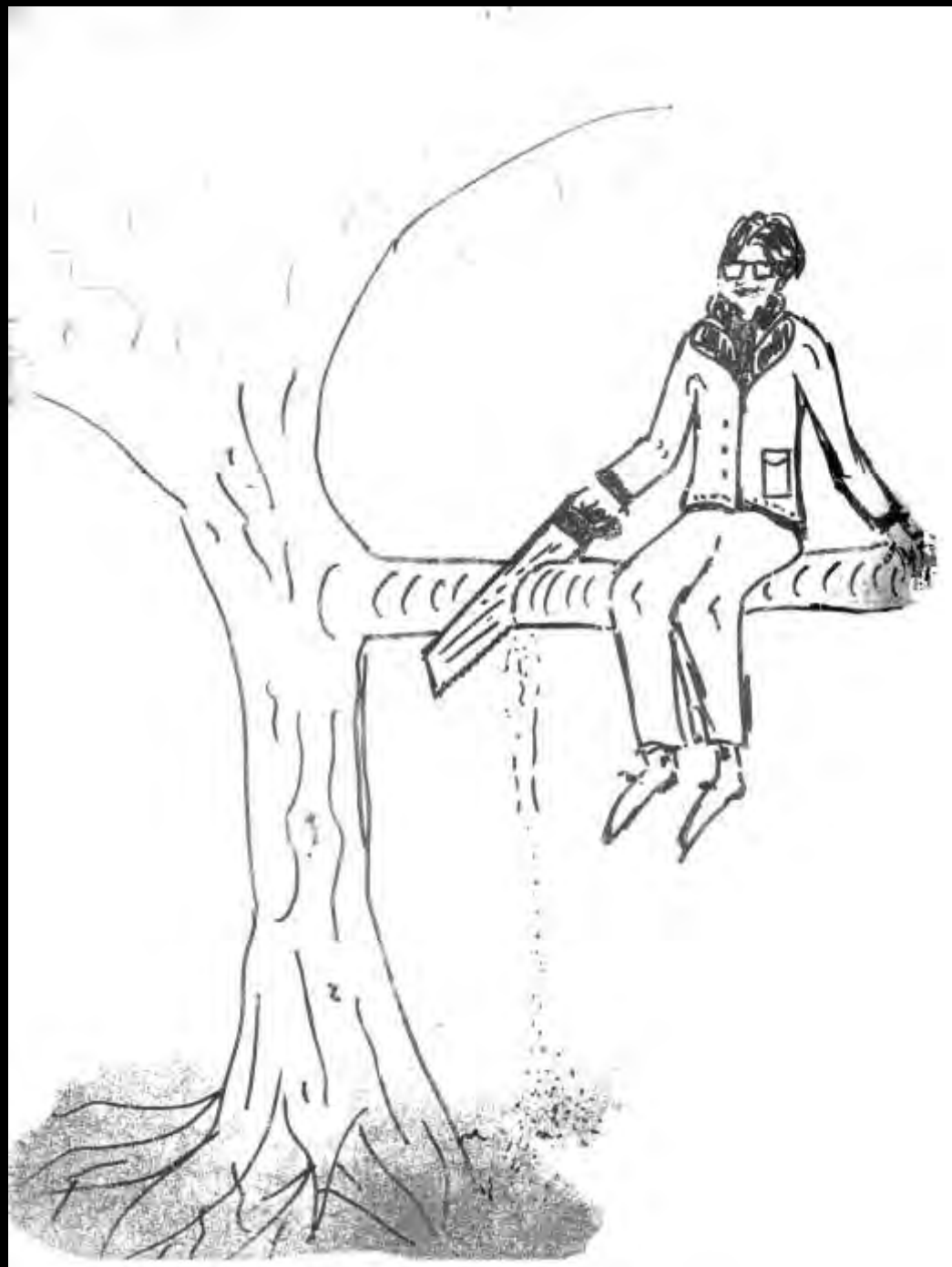
RECONSIDER

REFUTE

REBUKE

REGULATE

Etc, etc, AND all other letters & alphabets



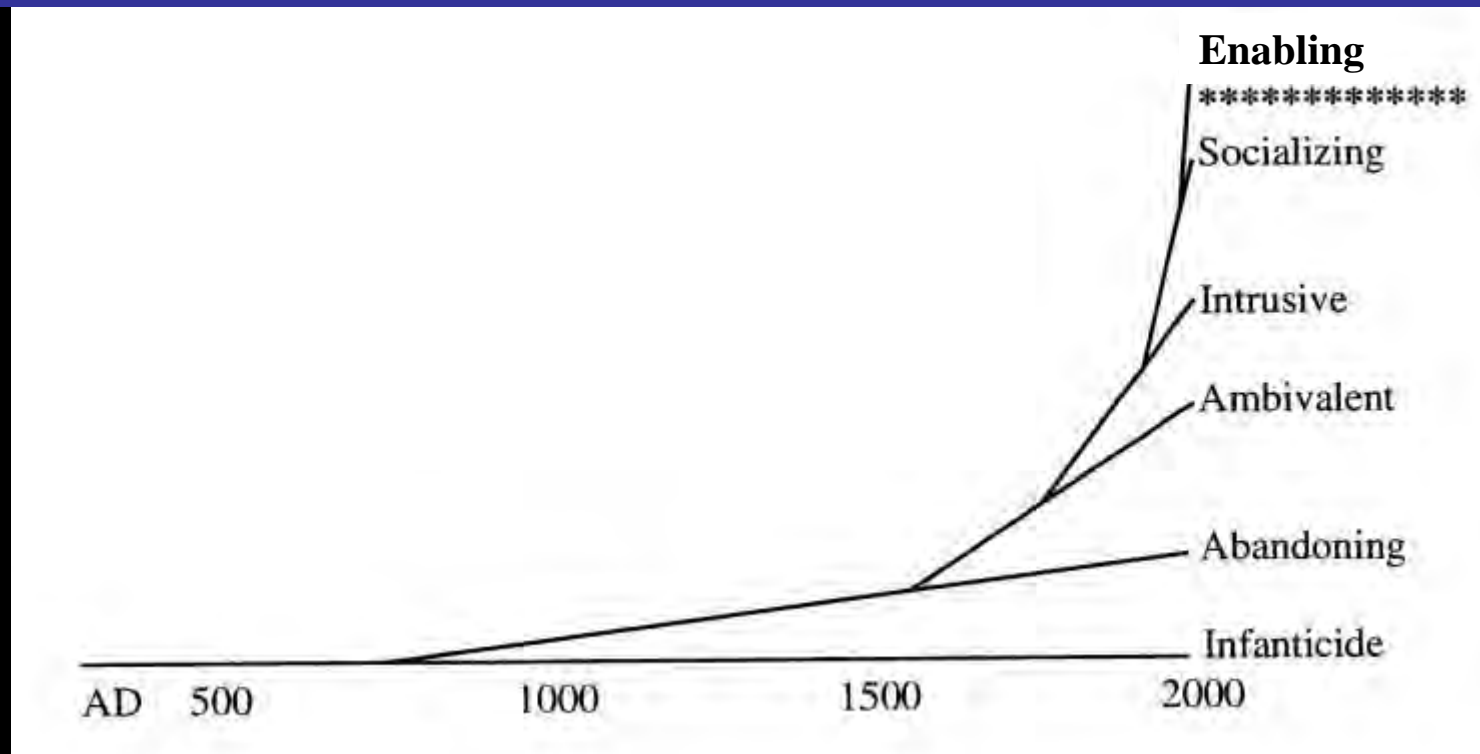
**We must recognise that we are
*evolving psychosocially***



**...& plan for better futures
rather than more efficient & controlled pasts**

Psychosocial evolution of child development

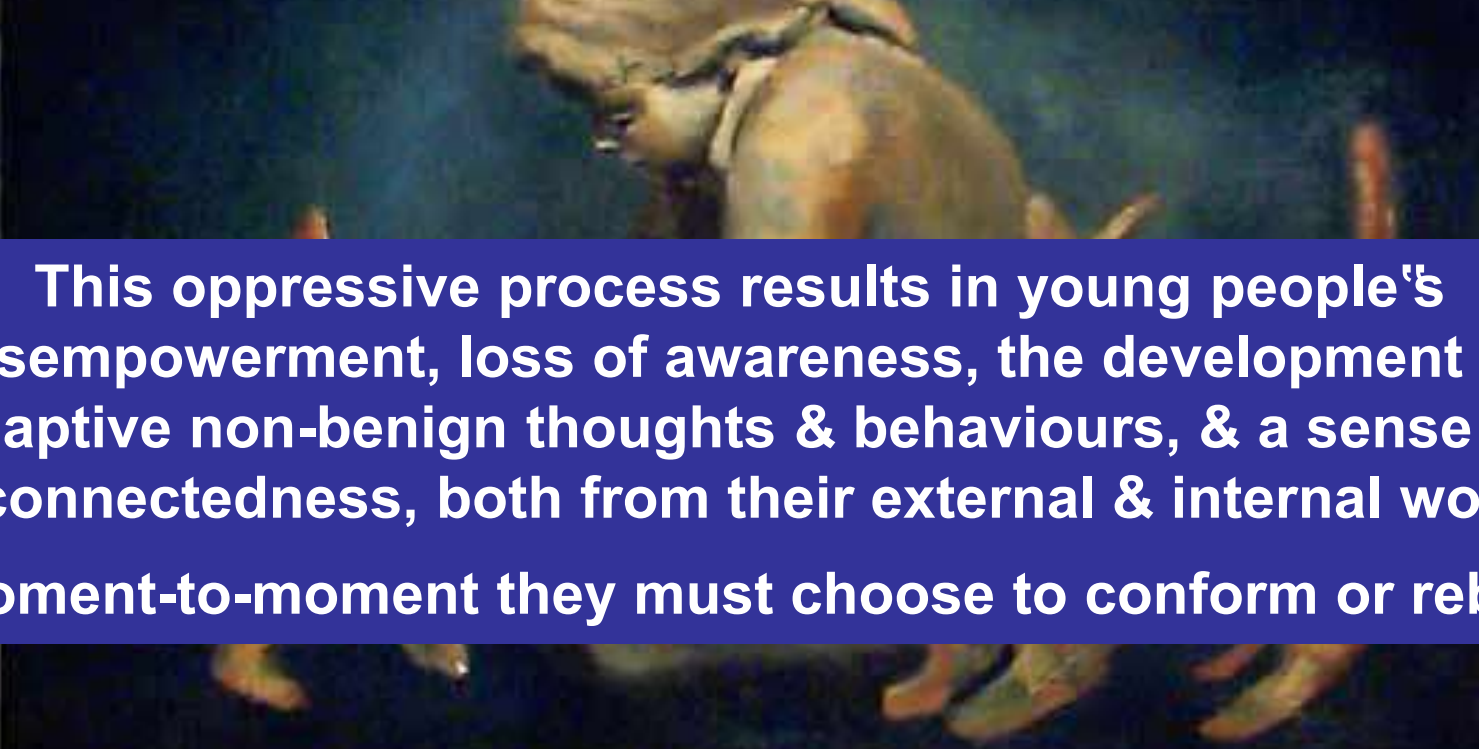
(de Mause 1982 *Foundations of Psychohistory*, Creative Roots, New York)



Enabling recognises all humans as social, potentially benign beings, capable of developing their own agendas; & it is supportive of this

All other stages impose adult agendas on children & others,
& so undermine their potential development

Socialising, like all previous stages in our psychosocial evolution, involves the excessive imposition by adults, & society in general, of foreign agendas (invariably inappropriate in content & with respect to time & space) on children & others who (if not wounded) have their own benign, uniquely personal & contextually fine-tuned agendas

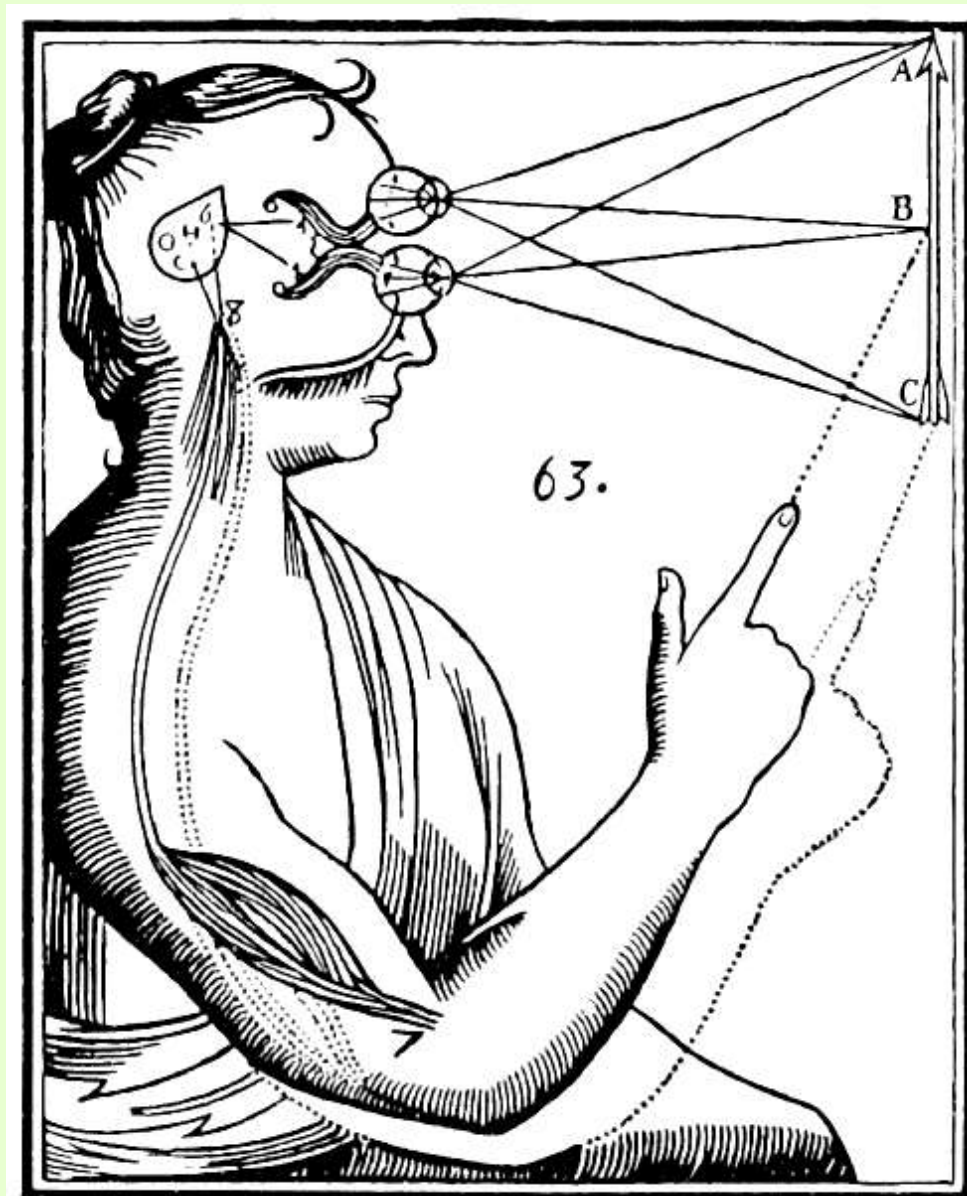


This oppressive process results in young people's disempowerment, loss of awareness, the development of adaptive non-benign thoughts & behaviours, & a sense of disconnectedness, both from their external & internal worlds moment-to-moment they must choose to conform or rebel

In contrast to this, *enabling* approaches to child-rearing & education have the potential to support the development of individuals who are empowered, aware, loving, caring, responsible, creative, visionary, knowledgeable, competent, relational, wise, & with a zest for life



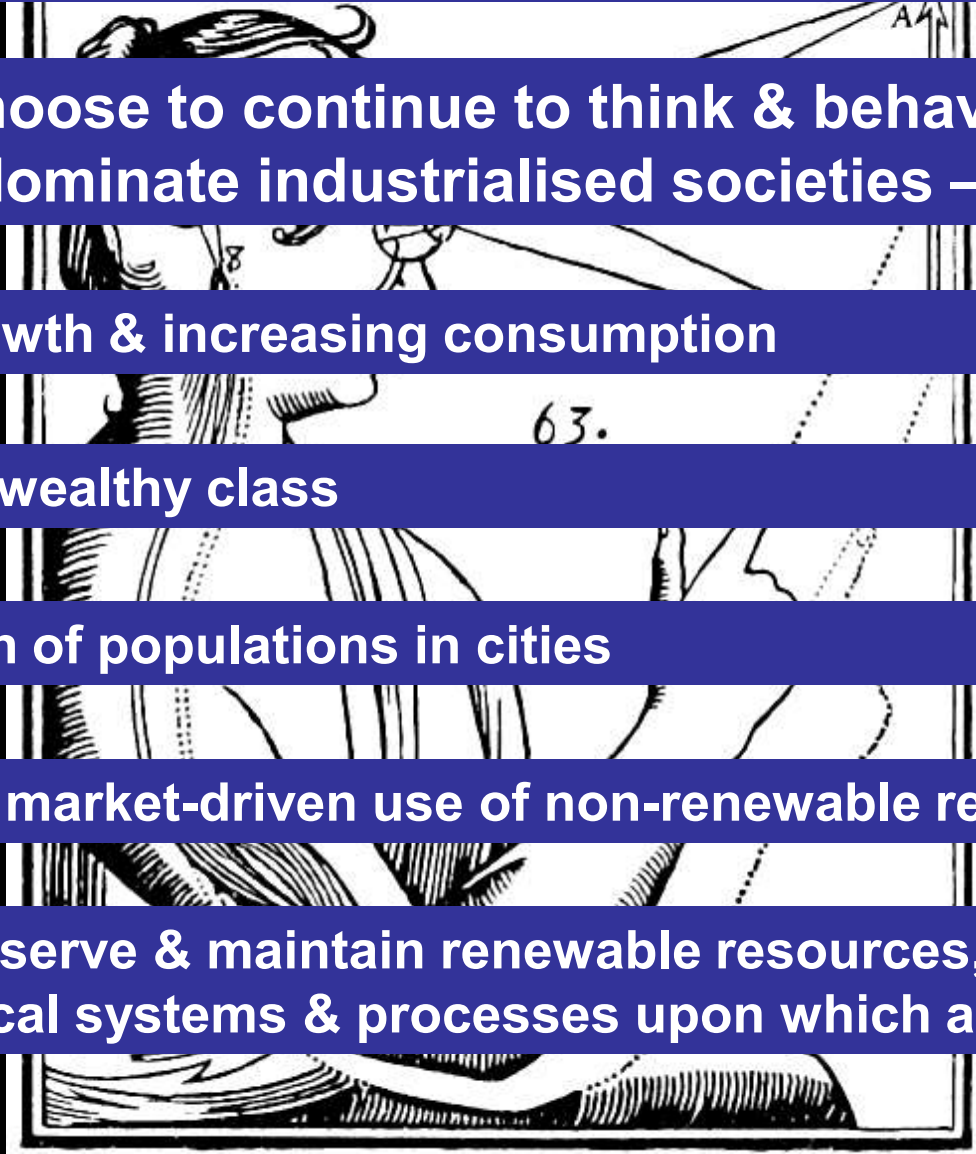
Such individuals are likely to be much more capable of acting alone, & in collaboration with others, to radically transform & redesign our institutional structures & process, & our lifestyles, to make the world a better place for all



We are at a critical threshold in the 'psychosocial' evolution of our species

We may choose to continue to think & behave in ways that currently dominate industrialised societies – perpetuating:

- unlimited growth & increasing consumption
- creation of a wealthy class
- concentration of populations in cities
- unprioritised market-driven use of non-renewable resources
- failure to conserve & maintain renewable resources, & the ecological systems & processes upon which all life depends



- **AND, by doing this, condemn future generations to having to deal with the consequences of this,**



- **Or we may choose to learn**
 - particularly from psychology & ecology –
 - how to live caring, sustainable**
 - & genuinely meaningful healthy lives**

Rewards to natural resource managers, such as farmers; re maintenance & sustainability

- Productivity yield, output



- Erodes natural capital & ecological integrity (declining productivity)

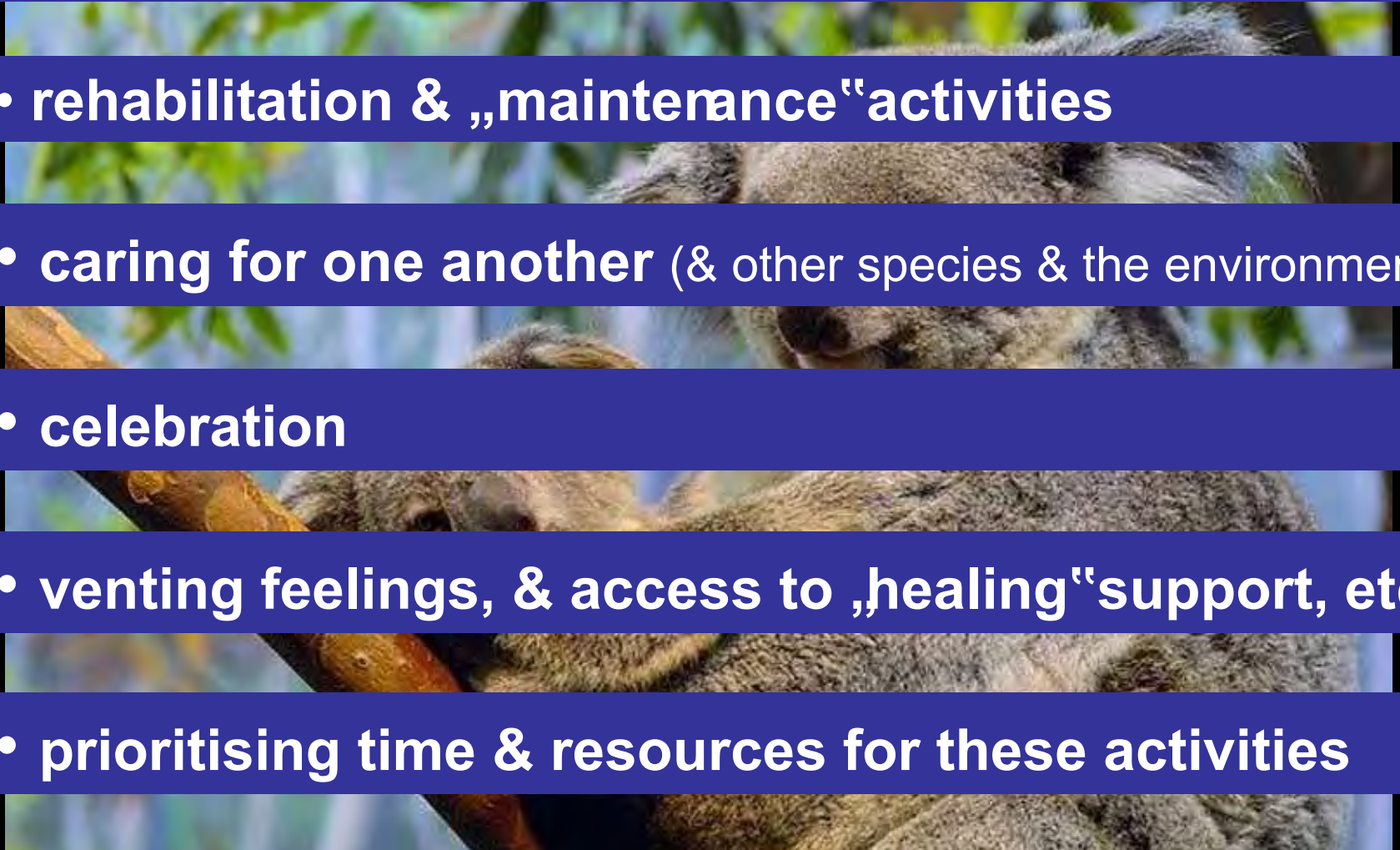
- Rehabilitation & maintenance



- Builds natural capital, ecological integrity (basis for sustained productivity)

We need to place much more focus on:

- **rehabilitation & „maintenance“ activities**
- **caring for one another** (& other species & the environment)
- **celebration**
- **venting feelings, & access to „healing“ support, etc**
- **prioritising time & resources for these activities**
- **& realising that sustained productivity is emergent from the effective maintenance of whole systems**



What might be the outcomes if the next step in our *psychosocial evolution* is:

from economics-obsessed, socializing (manipulative, controlling, problem-solving) **cultures** (compensatory, back-end/reactive patterned living)

to higher values-based, life-enabling cultures (proactive, spontaneous living)?

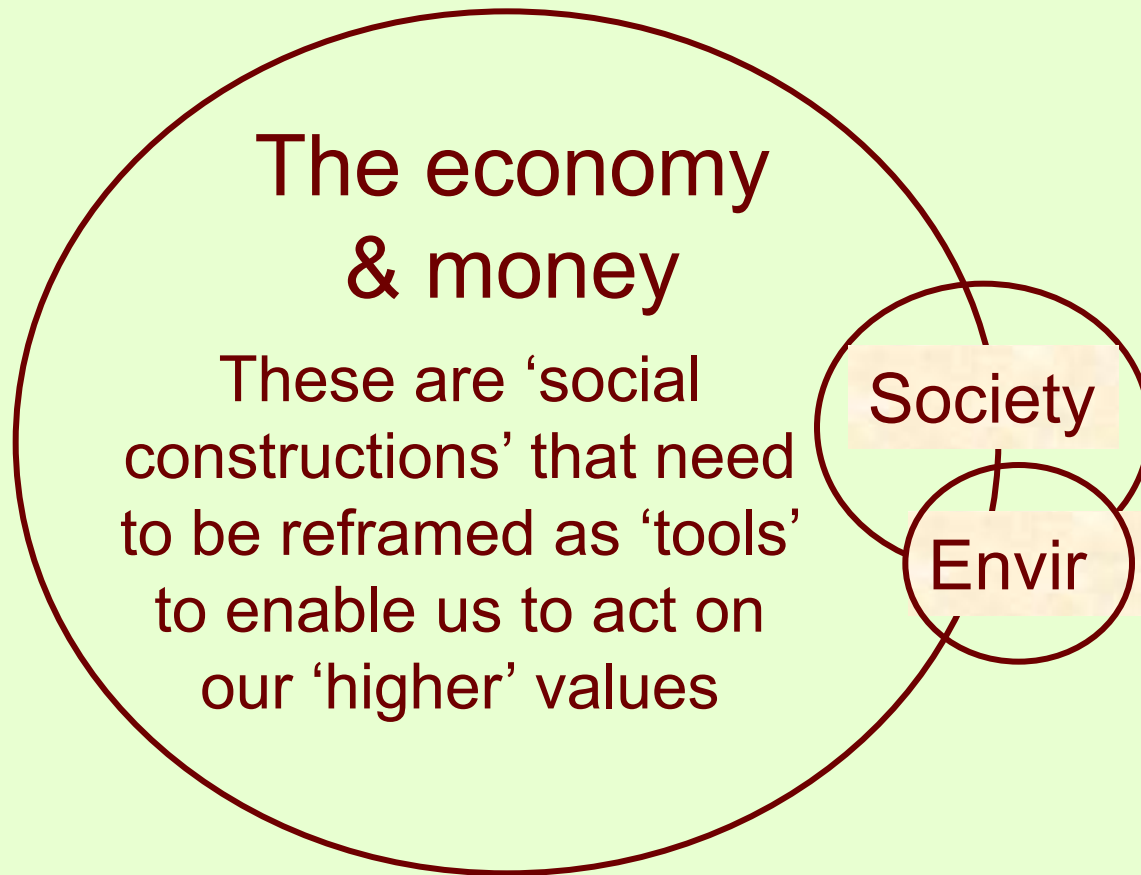


We need more paradoxical ways of understanding & acting



el pett, reprinted with special permission, north america syndicate

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) must be regarded just as a transitional decision-making framework



A „life-enabling“ triple bottom line

- **Planet, environment, ecological systems, nature**
- **Socio-cultural: institutional structures & processes in politics, economics, business, education, technology, religion...**
- **People: communities, groups, families, individuals (you & me!)**

Parallel interrelated processes involved in change



What meaningful do-able initiatives can we take in each of these areas to support „progressive“ cultural change?



...OR SOMETHING!

'THEY NEED MORE JAVA!'

3 stages of perception



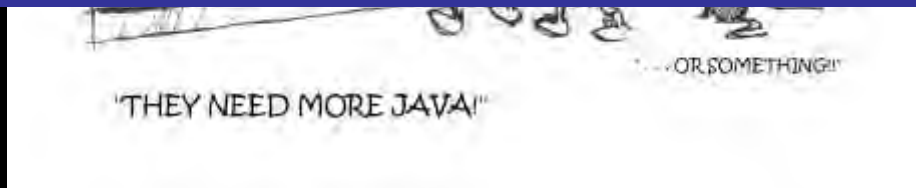
1. **deceptive simplicity:** de-contextual, heavy-handed solutions (with unexpected disbenefits)



2. **confusing (often paralysing) complexity:** puzzlement, endless studies, committees



3. **profound simplicity:** 'ahas', contextual, elegant, often paradoxical 'solutions' (with unexpected benefits)



**Engagement,
Holistic Integration**

*Observation, Study,
Problem Measurement*

**Collaborative,
Emergent, Owned,
System Redesign"**

*Curative Imposed
'Solutions'*

**Attention
& Response
to ALL Feedback**

*Ignore,
Over-rule*

Balance

*Control,
Manipulation*



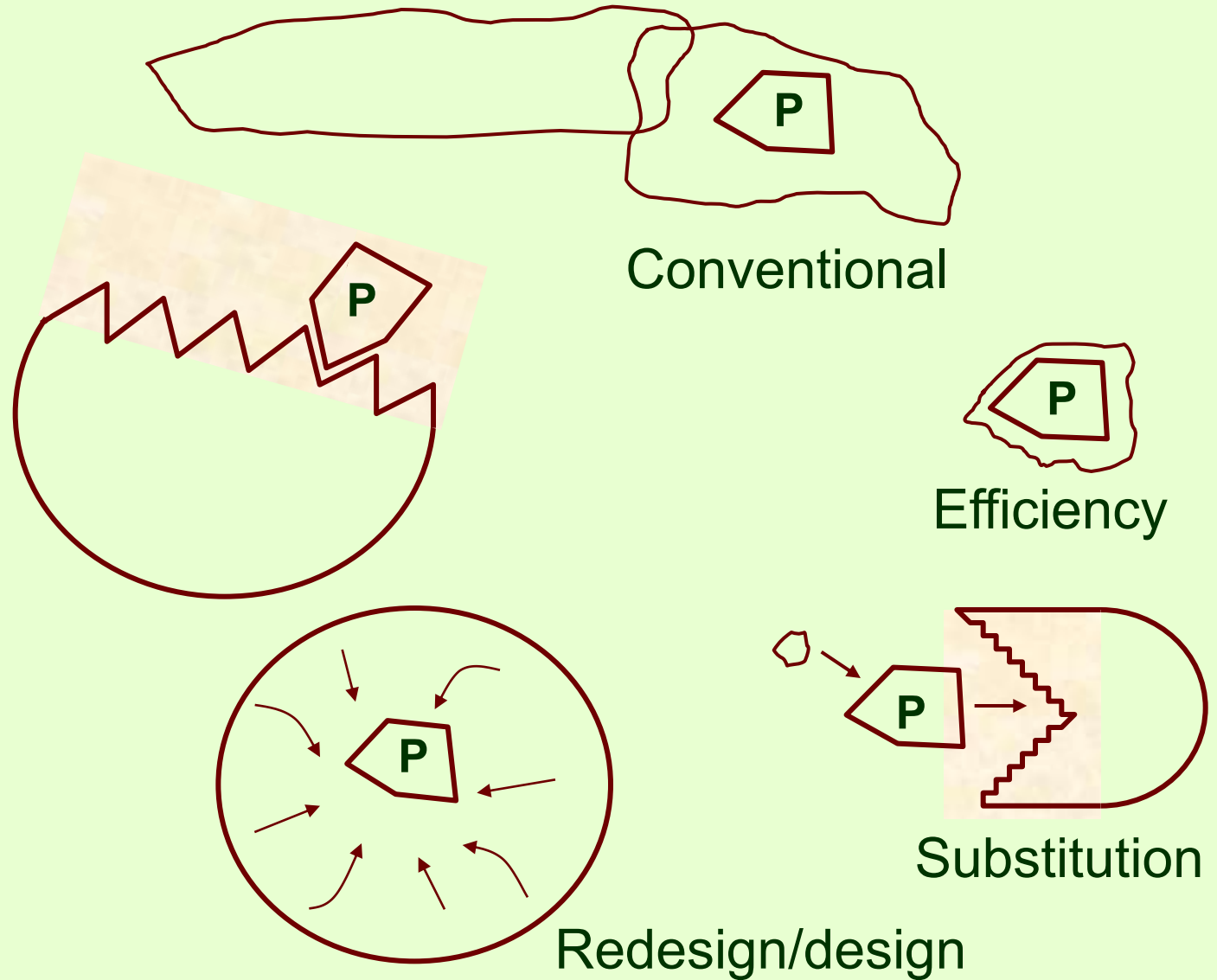
Emphasising *problem-solving* approaches

(back-end, reactive/responsive, curative 'solutions')

- makes us focus on symptom management & neglect the need to address the underlying maldesign & mismanagement roots of all problems
- **over-focus on the endless measuring of problems** (a main strategy used for postponing action - by those who benefit from the *status quo* – 'monitoring our extinction')
- **& over-focus on efficiency & substitution strategies**, e.g., in agriculture, improved application of pesticides, & on finding less disruptive (but still 'curative', purchased) substitutes, such as biological controls & genetically modified organisms

same story in all other areas: medicine, energy, etc

Hill's ESR problem-solving/proofing model



We need to:



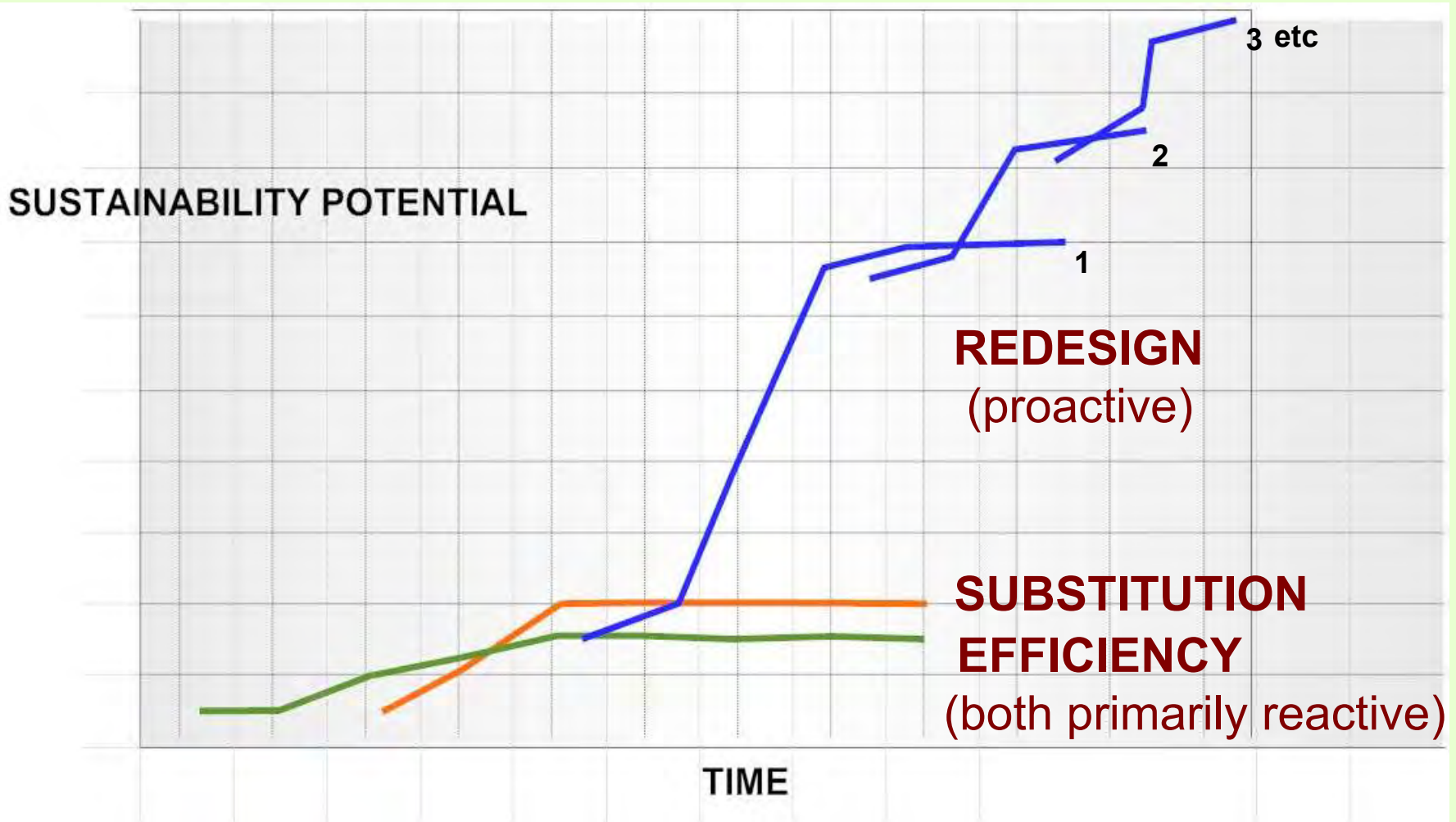
- **redesign existing systems (& design new systems) to make them as problem-proof as possible**



- **& enable effective change from flawed /defective systems to significantly more improved (sustainable, wellbeing enabling) ones**



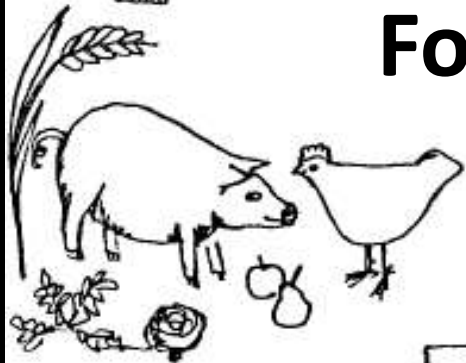
Unrealised potential of design/redesign





Consumption

Food cycle



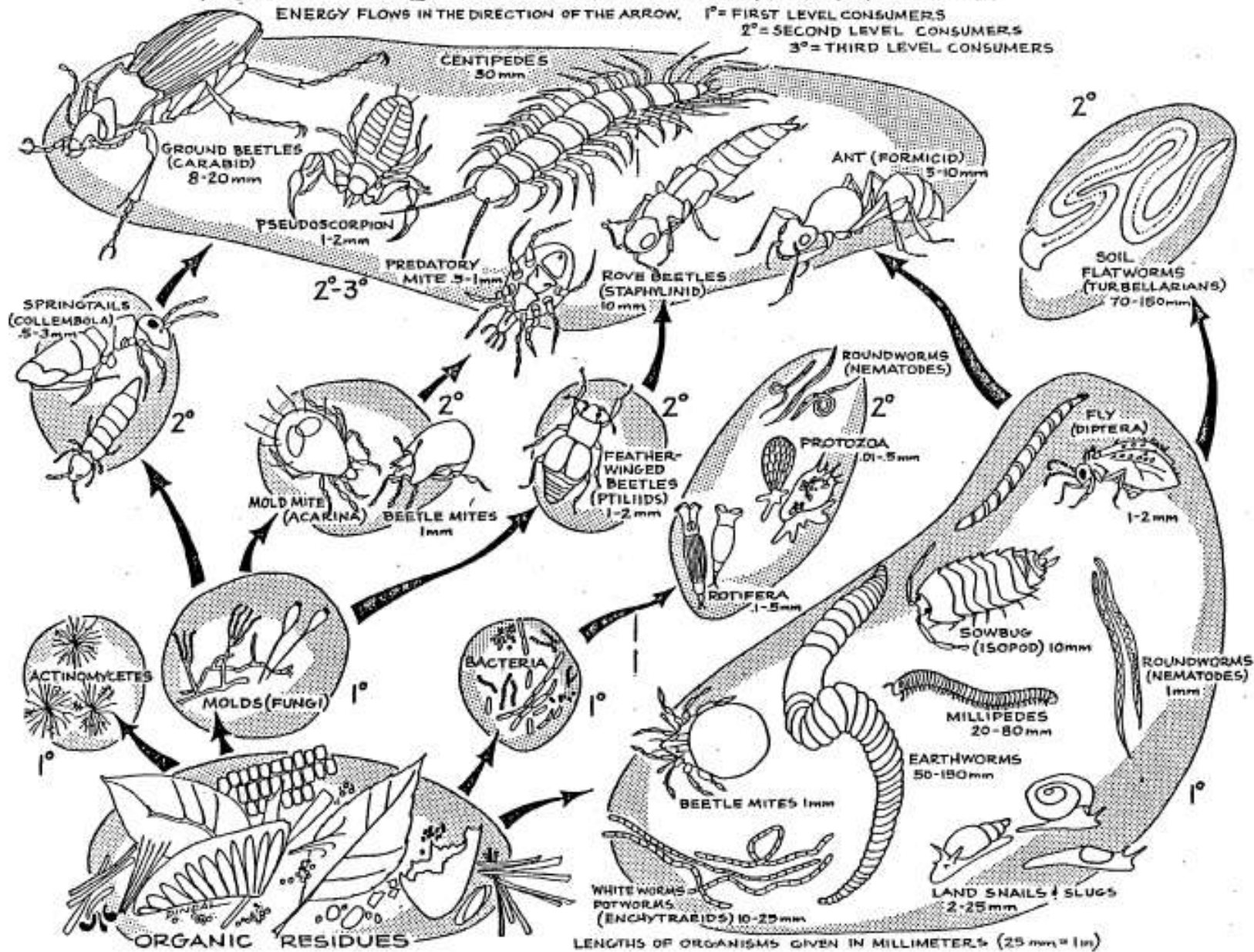
Production



Recycle
(decomposition in soil)

FOOD WEB OF THE COMPOST PILE

ENERGY FLOWS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE ARROW. 1° = FIRST LEVEL CONSUMERS
2° = SECOND LEVEL CONSUMERS
3° = THIRD LEVEL CONSUMERS



**Society tends to focus only on
the most attractive visible bits**



It's „the bits we don't see“ that enable most systems to function



We are surprised when systems predictably eventually collapse



In the 1950s Australian producer PA Yeomans

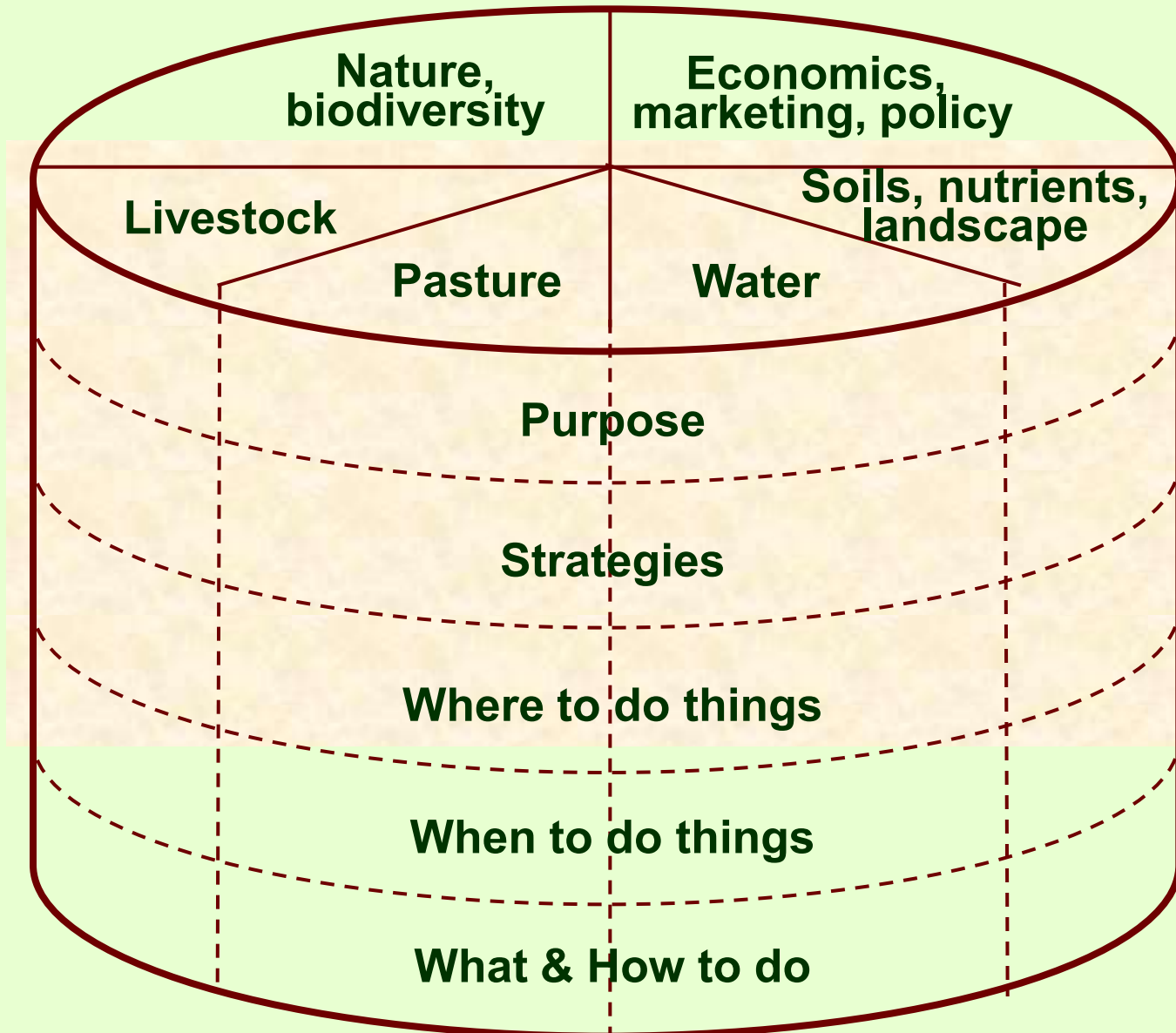


by engaging with the „bits we don“tsee“



created an inch of topsoil in three years

Odum's layer cake



Keyline scale of permanence

1. Climate

2. Landscape

3. Water

4. Roads

5. Trees

6. Buildings

7. Subdivision

8. Soil

PA Yeomans

The Challenge of Landscape, 1958

Water for Every Farm, 1965

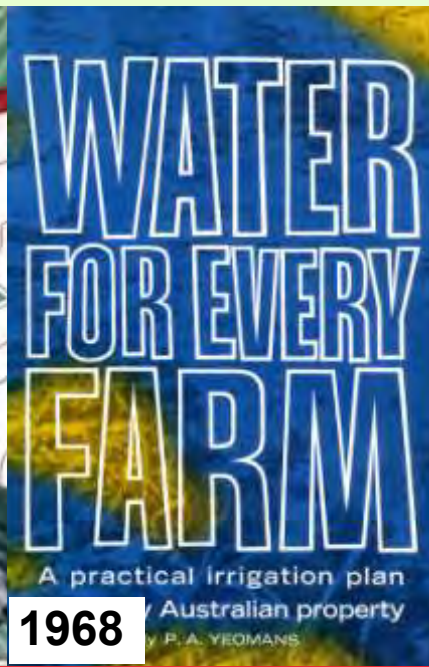
The City Forest: The Keyline Plan for the Human Environment Revolution, 1971



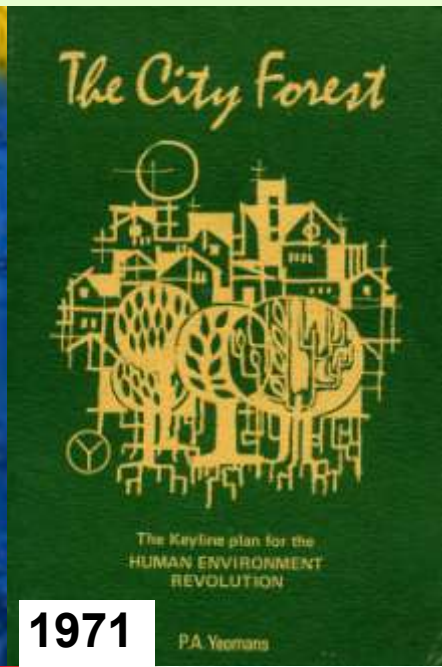
1953



1958



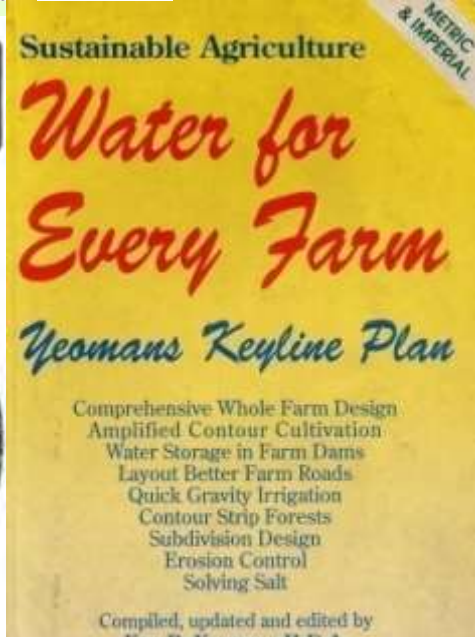
1968



1971



1974



1994



2004

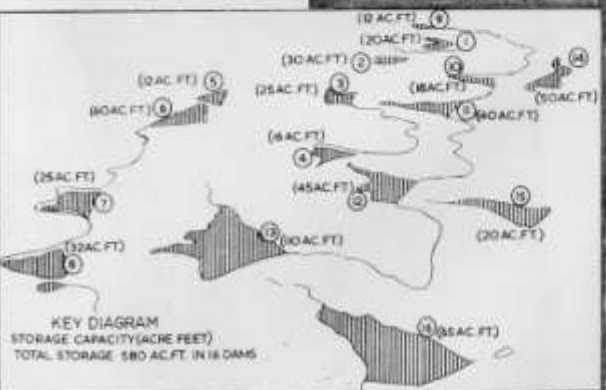
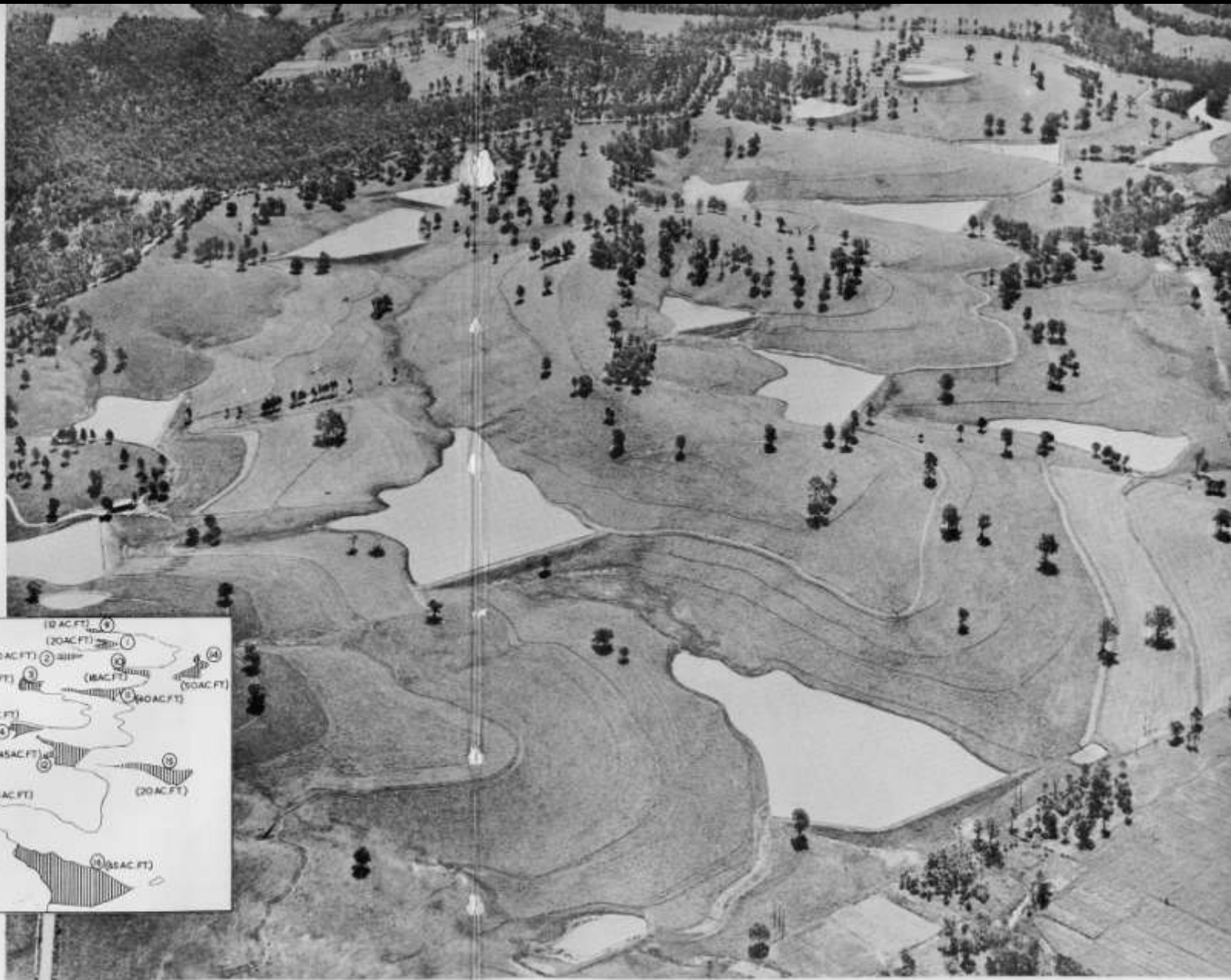


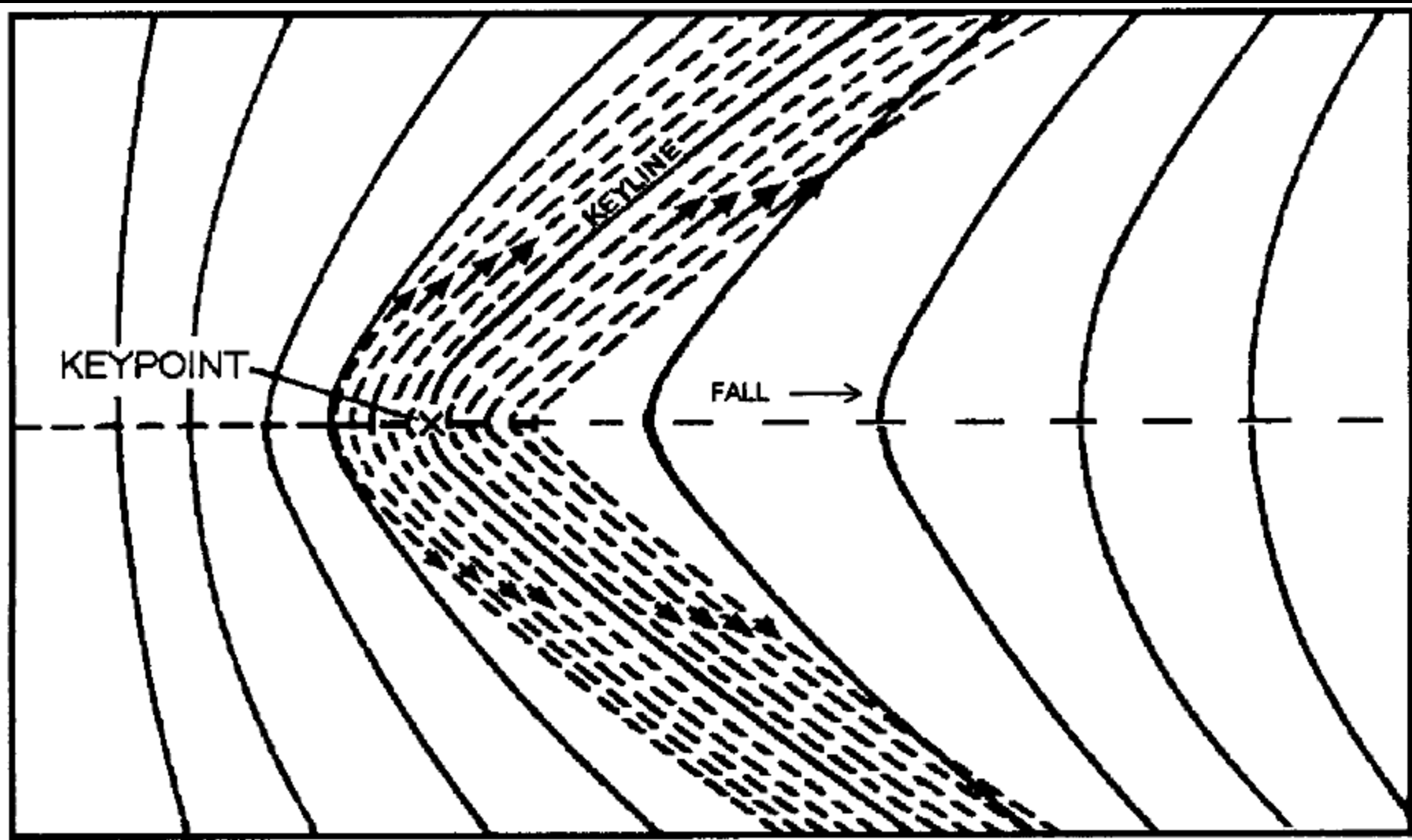
2005

Yobarnie, West Richmond, 1968

PLATE 5

"Yobarnie" photographed from the air, after 17 years of Keyline irrigation development. The property covers about 760 acres and fifteen full farm irrigation dams are visible in this picture. (Photographed by Douglass Baglin.)

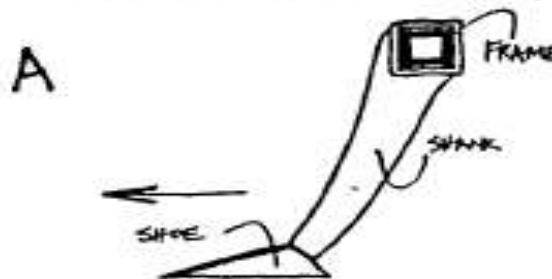
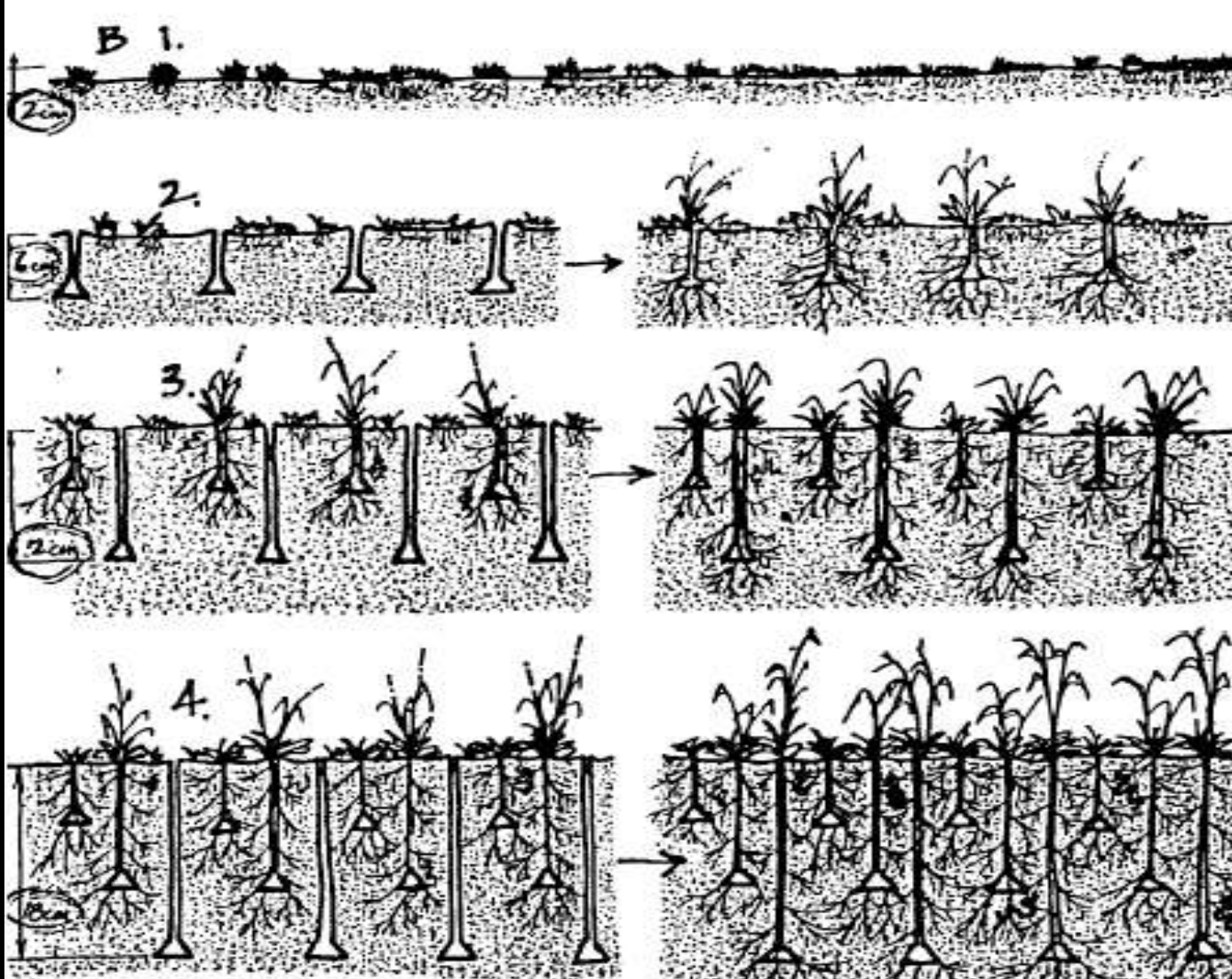








**Allan Yeomans 2005. *Priority One: Together We Can Beat Global Warming*
Keyline Publ., Arundal, QLD**



Keyline ploughing
3 successive depths/years

Key features of Yeomans' *Keyline* design/redesign initiatives

Conceptual

- **Learn from nature, one's own & others' experiences** (indigenous, immigrant & organic farming cultures)
- **Create, as well as conserve, soil** (& natural capital in general)
- ***Hierarchy of Permanence* as basis for strategic decision making**
- **Support & effective use of ecosystem processes & 'services'** (through careful choice of the nature, time & place of all structures & processes, eg. *Keylines* & *Key Points*)
- **Use of inputs & processes to build natural capital & 'prime' systems**

Strengths & driving forces affecting Yeomans' *Keyline* initiatives (cont.)

Ecological

- **Capitalizing on forces & 'services' of nature** (natural water flows, gravity, carbon capture, soil formation, windbreaks, grazing management, working effectively with place & time)

- **Using nature as a model & source of inspiration**

Overlapping stages in change (Hill 2005)



- ignorance & denial

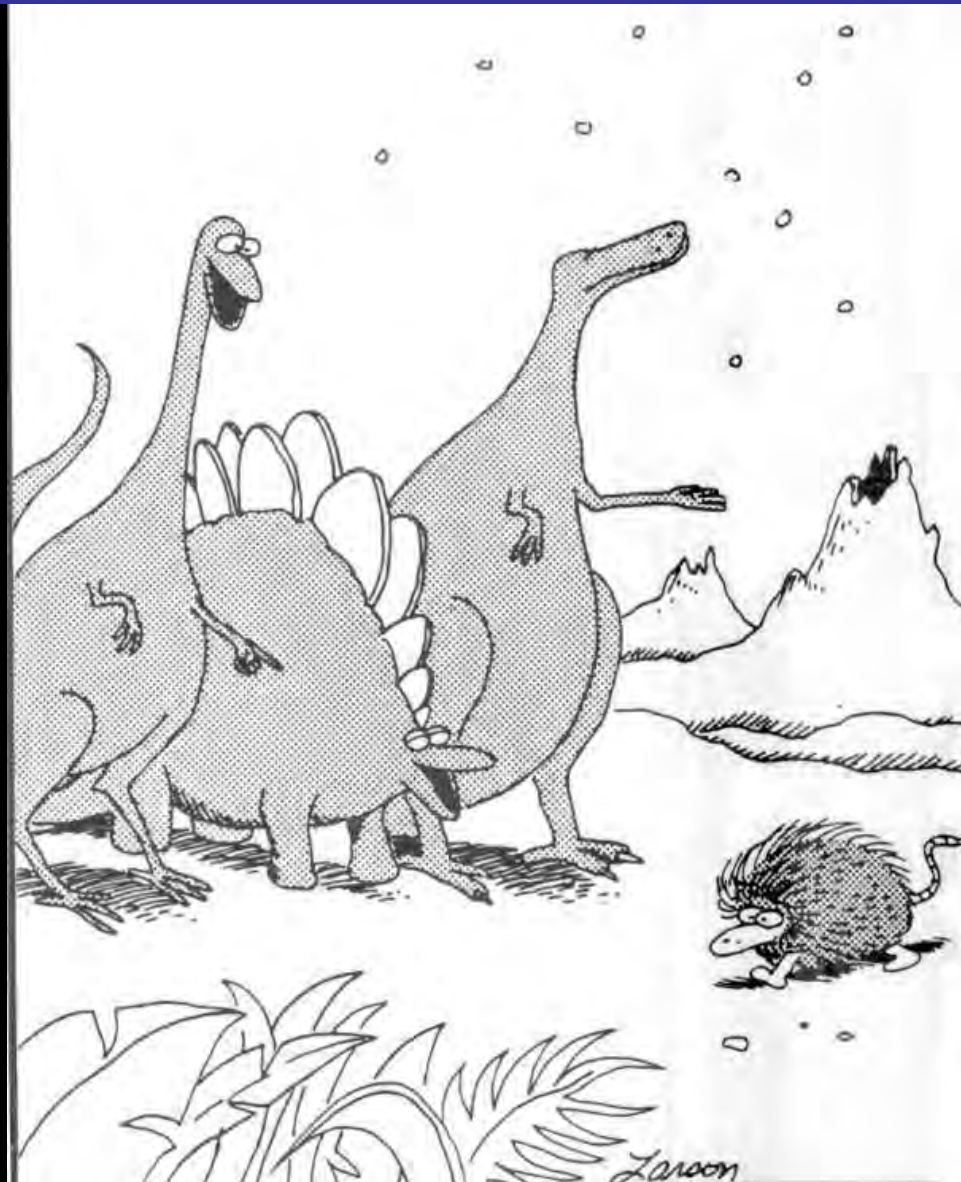
- awareness & acknowledgement

- understanding & competence

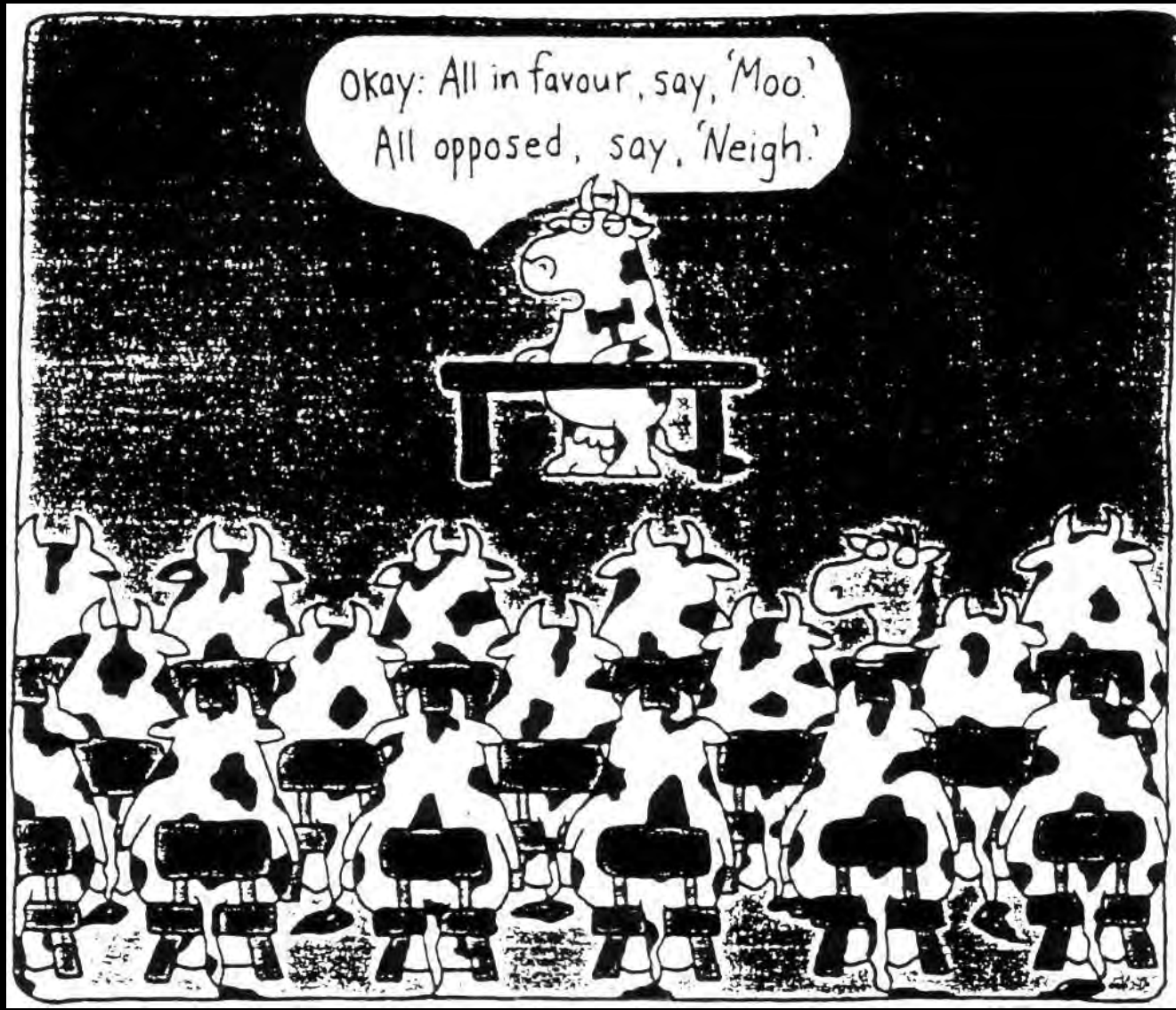
- effective action & project-based initiatives

- ongoing co-evolution of responsible
life-affirming practices (how we now live)

Progressive change is often first ridiculed



Just because you're outnumbered
doesn't mean you're wrong



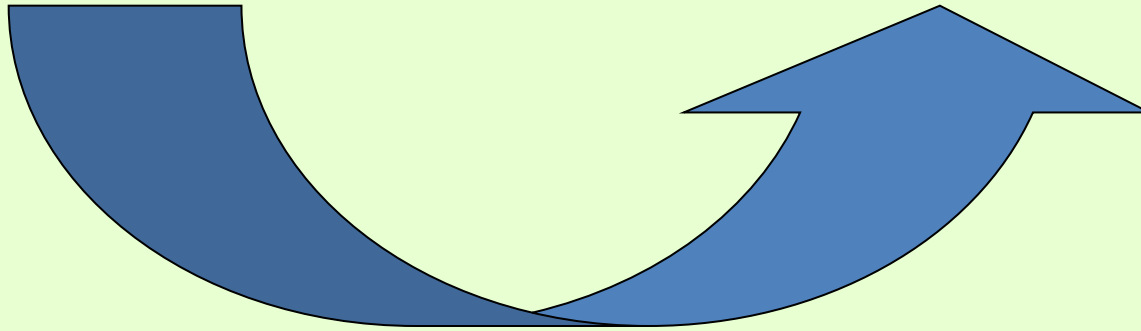
The challenge of „letting go“ of the fateful familiar



...& of „letting come“ the emerging new unfamiliar

Letting go

Letting come

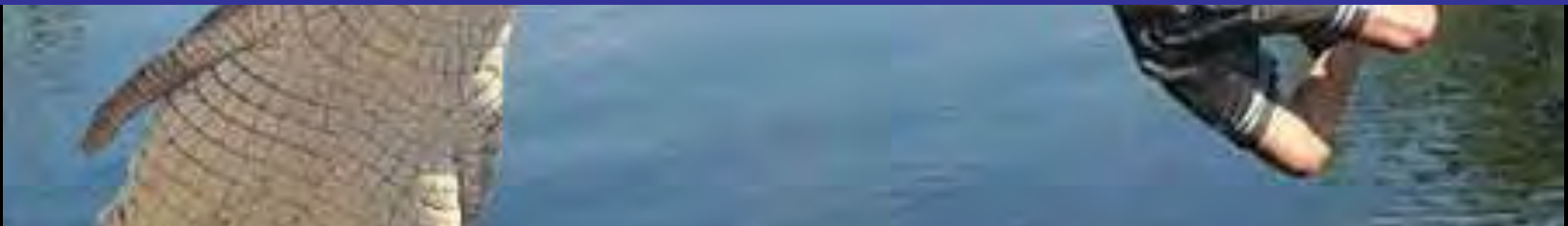




One radical way to progress our thinking & action is paradoxically (in a workshop context) to boldly 'lie' about changes that you have already brought about (that you have actually not brought about!)



This enables us to vision in relation to our benign potential, rather than settle for tinkering with the *status quo*



By daring to engage in such 'deep' reflection & implementation of meaningful doable initiatives, we can significantly contribute to changing the world for the better



Appropriate next steps are:

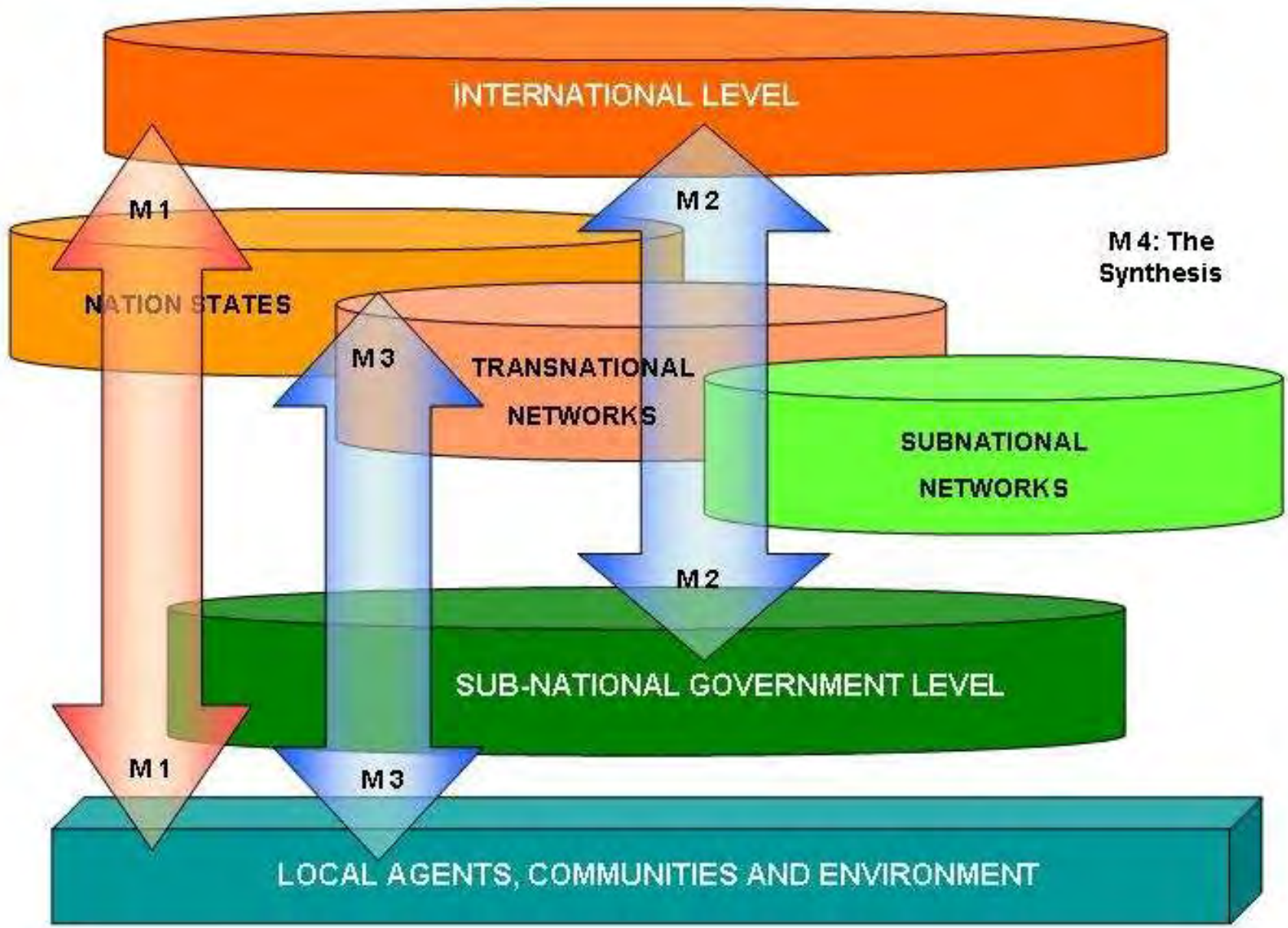
- deeply personal &
- highly context specific

This is why:

- formulaic,
- centrally-directed &
- imposed change

➤ always fails to achieve its stated aims &

➤ invariably causes more problems than it solves



Limiting factors for change

(the commonly mentioned 'barriers')

- **information** & access to it, misinformation, knowledge, skills, competencies...

- **resources**: renewable, non-renewable, technologies, money, time...

- **institutional supports**: policies, programs, structures, services, legislation, regulations...

LOCAL AGENTS, COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT

SUB-NATIONAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

SUB-NATIONAL

TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS

M3

Forms of political action

Supports (need to be ongoing)

- education, demonstration & models
- extension & other services
- research & development
- legislation & regulation

Rewards

(only available during transition period to prevent development of dependence)

- tax incentives
- subsidies
- low interest loans

Penalties (for those who act irresponsibly)

- monitoring programs
- legislation & its implementation



THIS MAY TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO.

NOTICE

SMOKE FREE FACILITY

NOTICE

WEAPON FREE FACILITY

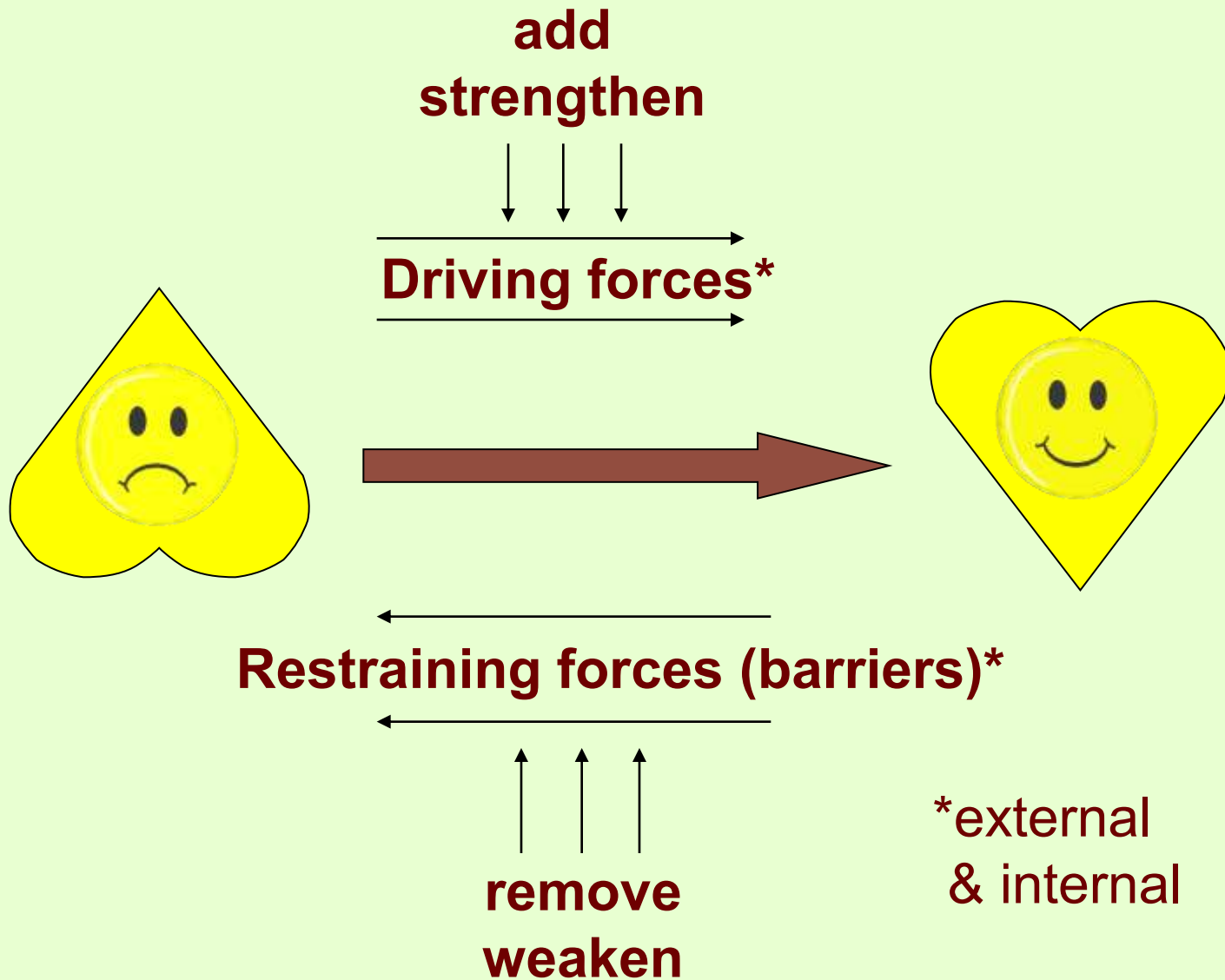


Limiting factors for change

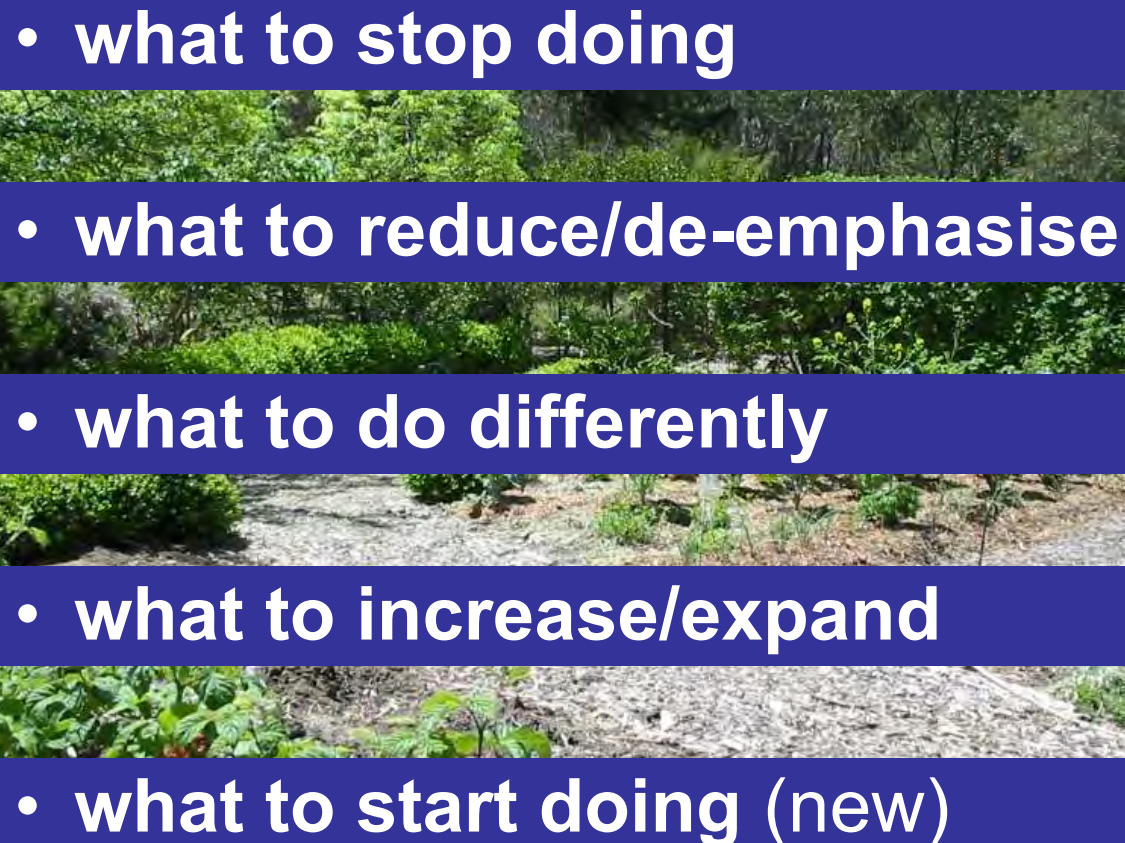
(usually the more important ones)

- 
- family & community support
 - **empowerment**/disempowerment
(feelings of helplessness/hopelessness)
 - **awareness**
 - **vision** & imagination
 - **values**, worldviews, paradigms, beliefs
 - persistent denial, procrastination & distractive/compensatory activities

Kurt Lewin's „Force Field Analysis“



Decisions to make re change

- 
- what to stop doing
 - what to reduce/de-emphasise
 - what to do differently
 - what to increase/expand
 - what to start doing (new)

Framework for planning change

	Beyond average lifetime	Average lifetime	5-10 years	1 year	2 months	1 week	Before going to bed tonight
Self							
Family							
Work/Enterprise/ Business							
Local community							
Local landscape/ Environment							

Strategic questions: What would it take to.....?

What gets in the way & what would remove these „barriers“?

Testing questions for
evaluating all „progressive“ initiatives





Does it support?

Personal (capital & sustainability)

- spontaneity, curiosity & engagement
- empowerment, awareness, respect of the unknown
- creative visioning, values & worldviews clarification
- acquisition of essential literacies & competencies
- building & maintaining vitality, health & wellbeing
- caring, loving, responsible, *negentropic* relationships
- lifelong personal development & responsibility

Does it support?

Socio-political/cultural (capital & sustainability)

- **building & maintaining trust, access, collaborative, life-affirming community structures & processes**
 - **reflexive, critical, imaginative, celebrational attitudes**
 - **cultural diversity & respectful, caring, mutualistic relationships**
 - **cultural development & psychosocial co-evolution**
- 
- A group of diverse people, including men and women of various ages, are gathered on a rocky shore. They are all smiling and raising their hands in the air, suggesting a celebratory or joyful event. The background shows a body of water and a clear sky.

A photograph of a man with a beard and a green shirt speaking to a group of people in front of a house. The house has a gabled roof and is surrounded by lush greenery. The scene is outdoors on a sunny day.

Does it support?

Environmental/natural (capital & sustainability)

- **life-supporting ecological** (maintenance & developmental) processes that enable wellbeing & resilience

- **conserving habitats & „functional“ high biodiversity**

- **ecosystem development & co-evolutionary change**



Does it support?

General foci

- **proactive, whole system design/redesign for enabling wellbeing & problem prevention**
- **small/doable, meaningful, collaborative initiatives**
- **windows of change & use of integrator-indicators**
- **attentive to all outcomes & feedback**

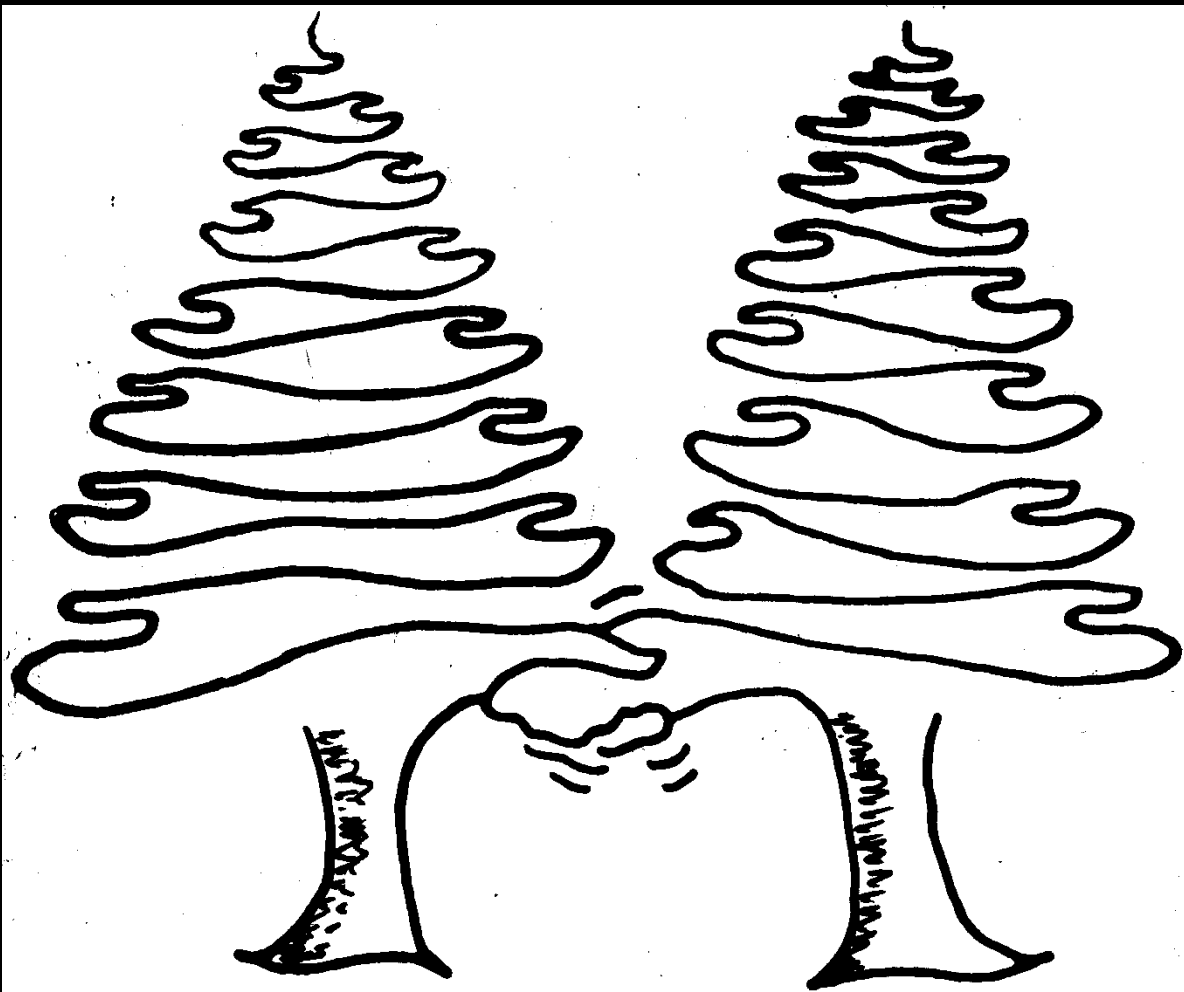


Key points



• we are at a **critical threshold**
– a moment of profound choice –
in the ‘psychosocial’ development of our species

• all of us have **already started** changing
& have wondered about what to do next;
how to dare to do it; &
how to find allies & resources to help us



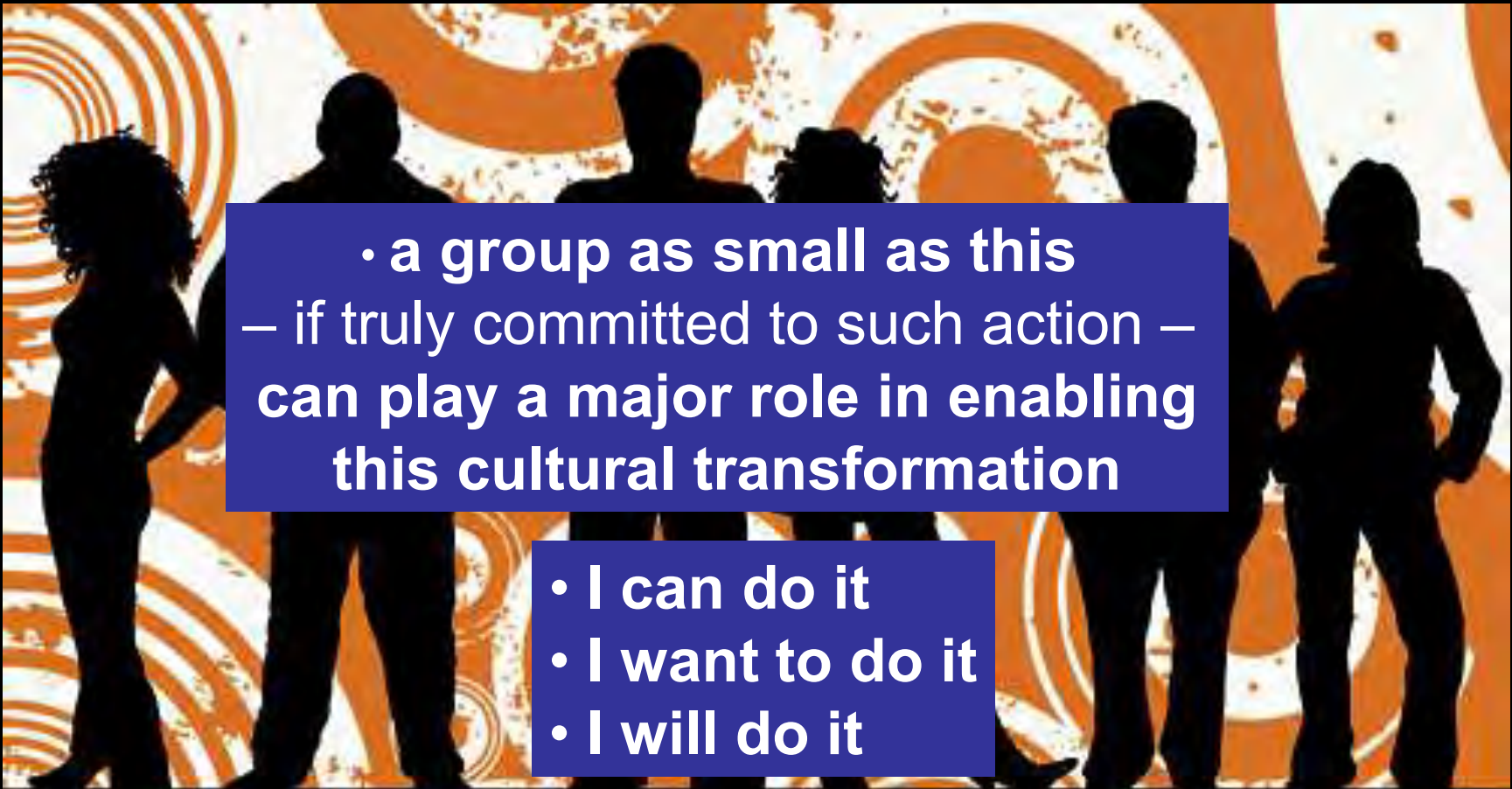
collaboration!

Key points (cont.)



- further sustainable change will be achieved not through mega-projects, but by each of us individually & in small mutually supportive & collaborative groups, taking **small meaningful, locally relevant actions**, & by sharing the processes involved; & publicly celebrating the outcomes to make them available to others

Key points (cont.)



• a group as small as this
– if truly committed to such action –
can play a major role in enabling
this cultural transformation

- I can do it
- I want to do it
- I will do it

What are you waiting for? It's time to lead the change...

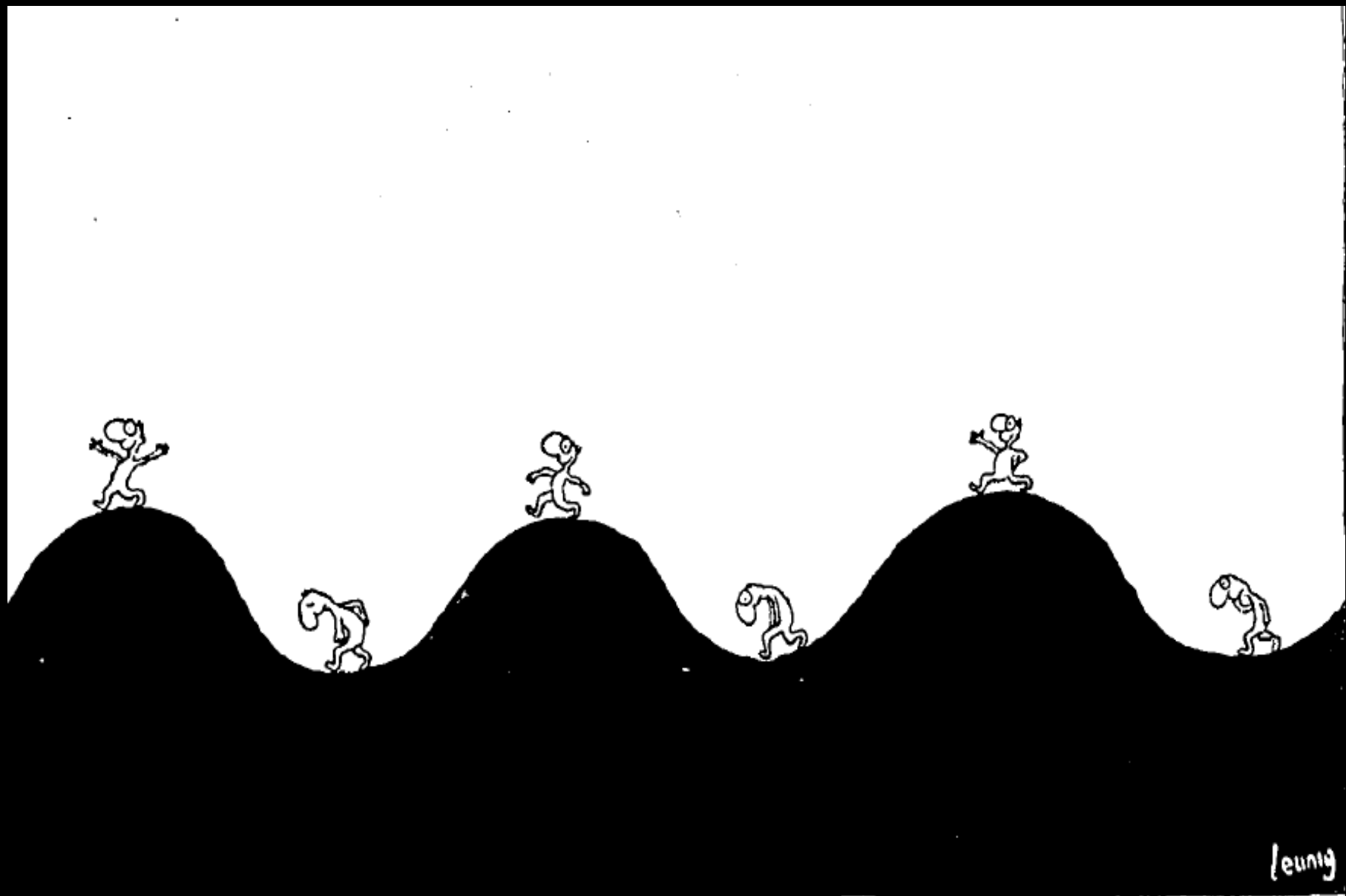












leung

*F*lat outstretched upon a mound of earth I lie; I Press my ear against its surface and I hear far off and deep, the measured sound of heart that beats within the ground. And with it pounds in harmony with the swift, familiar heart in me. They pulse as one, together swell, together fall: I cannot tell my sound from Earth's, for I am part of rhythmic, universal heart.

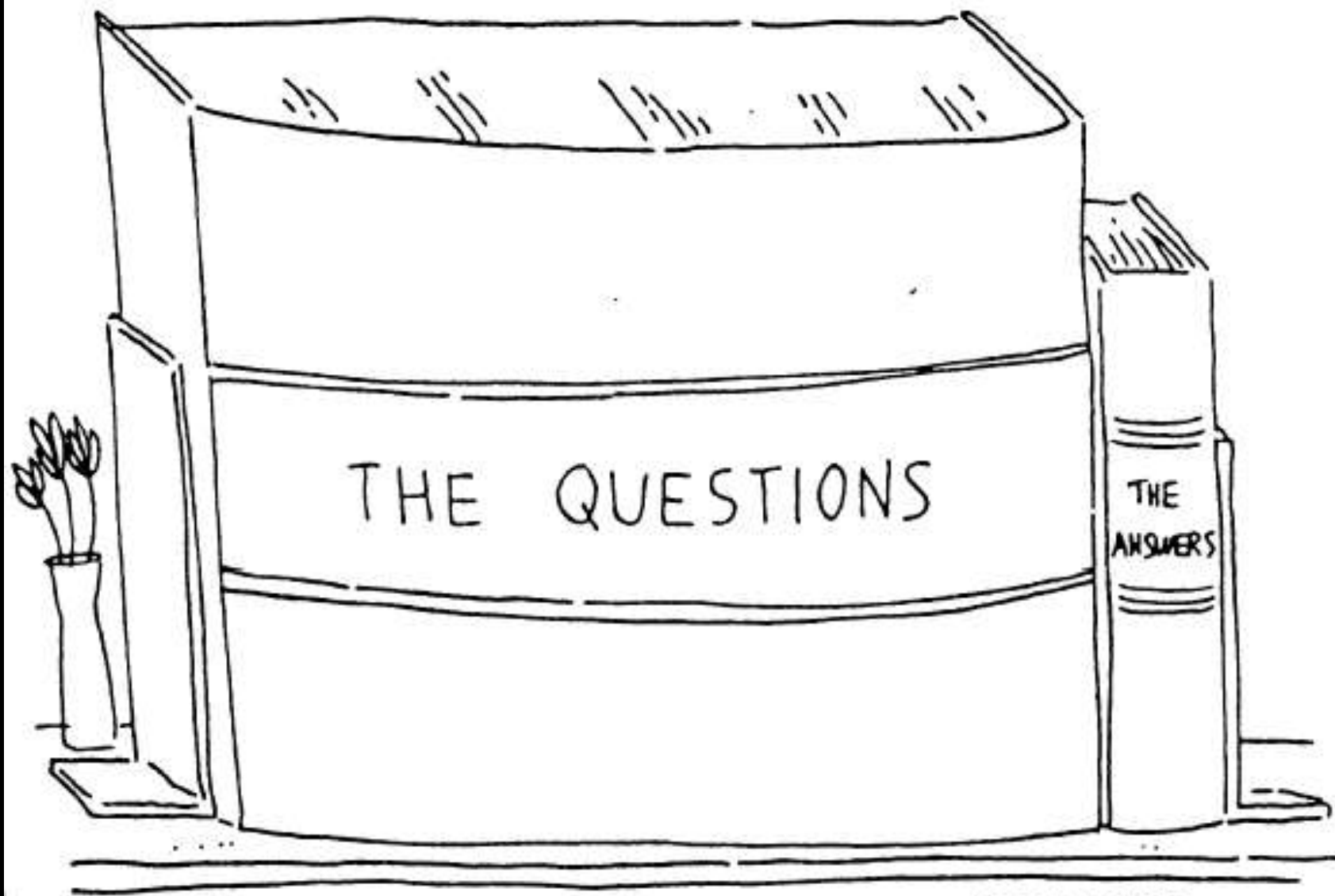
- Elizabeth Odell

WELL, YOU'VE BEEN A
PRETTY GOOD HOSS, I GUESS.
HARDWORKIN'. NOT THE
FASTEST CRITTER I EVER
COME ACROST, BUT...



NO, STUPID, NOT
FEEDBACK. I
SAID I WANTED
A FEEDBAG.





SCHWAD Pm