



# THE JOURNEY

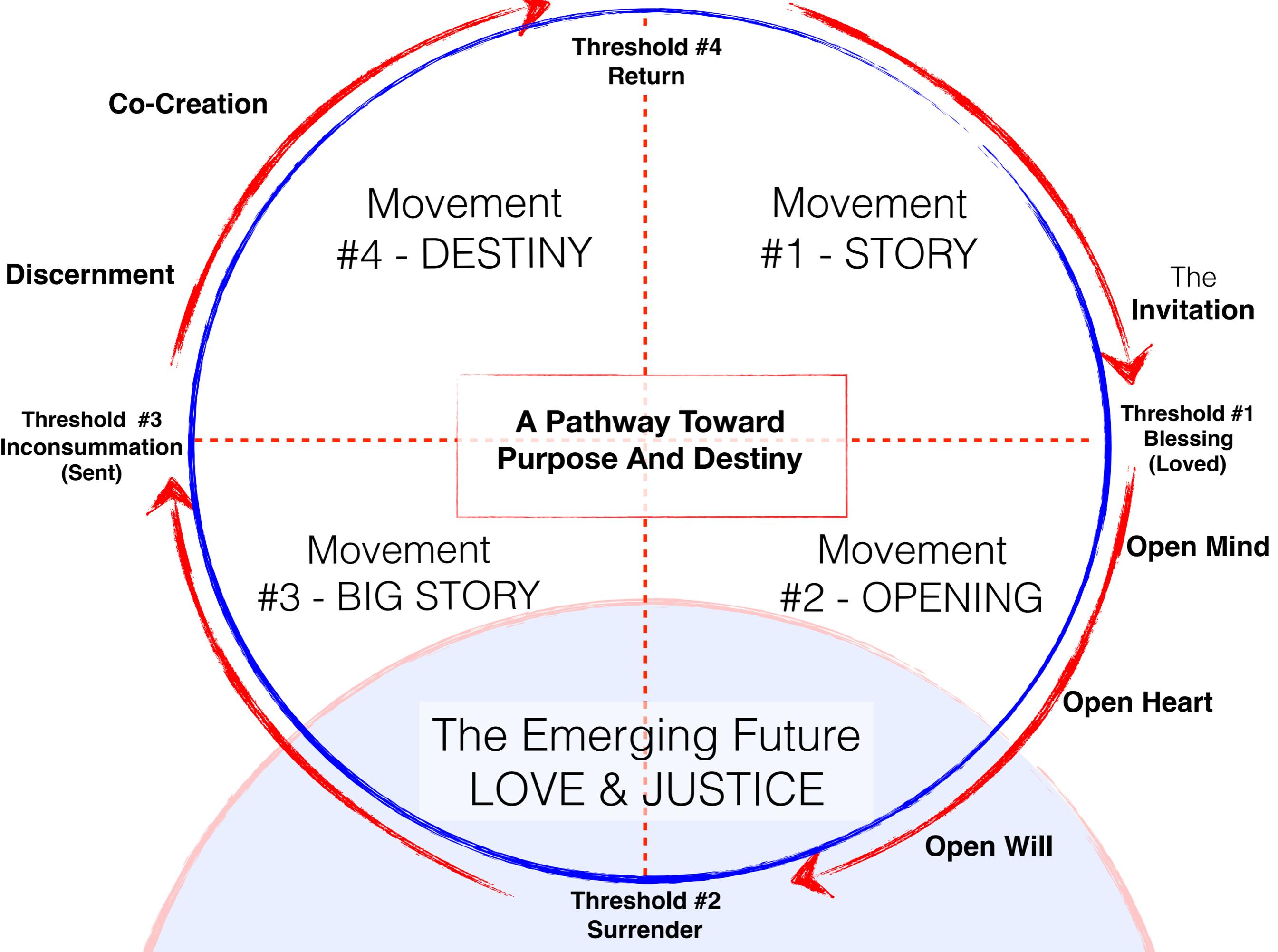
A “FIELD GUIDE” FOR  
NURTURING PURPOSE, HOPE & RESILIENCE  
IN AN AGE OF DISRUPTION

Version 1.0 - August 2017

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Threshold #4  
Return

Co-Creation

Movement  
#4 - DESTINY

Movement  
#1 - STORY

The  
Invitation

Discernment

A Pathway Toward  
Purpose And Destiny

Threshold #1  
Blessing  
(Loved)

Threshold #3  
Inconsummation  
(Sent)

Movement  
#3 - BIG STORY

Movement  
#2 - OPENING

Open Mind

The Emerging Future  
LOVE & JUSTICE

Open Heart

Threshold #2  
Surrender

Open Will

# Welcome To An Adventure

**"In the tumultuous ocean of time and toil there are islands of stillness, where upon entering their harbor you reclaim your dignity." Abraham Heschel**

This field guide is a resource for leaders who want to create and nurture communities that are 'harbors' or 'holding spaces' for people to experience resilience, wholeness, transformation and hope in complex and tumultuous times. Such holding spaces are needed to learn how to respond to the challenges we are all facing with purposeful compassion and not react in contracting fear.

Ancient practices and emerging social technologies, explored within the context of community, provide the structure of belonging needed to make transformation possible. On our journey together we will help you find your "bearings" on the "tumultuous" ocean of personal and systemic upheaval that we are all encountering.

The journey into the emerging future is challenging. There are many pitfalls, detours and temptations along the path as well as many joyful discoveries. Together, we can thrive through these challenges, nurturing hope and deepening compassion. It is essential to know we are not alone. An ancient Celtic phrase, 'Anam Cara' meaning 'soul friend' describes the heart of the matter for us. ***This field guide will be most helpful when used in conjunction with our retreats, workshops, spiritual direction and coaching.*** It is essential that we all know - ***"We are not alone!"***

# JOURNEY

We are all on a journey, awakening to something new that yearns to be born—in me—in us—in the world. And as we all sense, birthing is messy and stressful. That is why we need a field guide as well as allies, wise companions along the way, mid-wives whose skillful hands and loving presence help bring the new into the world and the world into the new.

Think of The Journey as a Field Guide or a Compass, an orienting tool to find purposeful direction and clarity during times of disruption and change. This guide is not intended to show the way to your destiny or destination. Rather, it will provide resources for you to discover the way—your way—the way your soul already knows.

The Journey - including its thresholds, twists and turns - provides a wise compass and all the travel tips you will need to unearth a deep sense of direction, even when you are most upended by the winds of change or uncertainty.

The poet Rumi wrote: *“There is nothing worse than to walk out along the street without you. I don’t know where I’m going. You are the road and the knower of roads, more than maps, more than love.”* The Journey is more like a compass than a map. While maps are helpful for any new adventure into unknown territory, our Journey is not to some place, like a fixed point on a map, or a town on some distant coast waiting for the tourist to arrive. Nor is our “destination” an immovable spot on some cosmic map toward which we make our way like the pioneers in wagon trains or pilgrims progressing on some dusty trail full of dangers along the way. Though we are both pioneers and pilgrims, It’s not as simple as that. You see, the future, towards which we are moving, is also moving toward us. We are awakening to what is already true.

# PURPOSE

This journey will lead you into an exploration of purpose and intention. We begin by painting with a broad brush language that holds big stories. Yet in the course of this adventure we will learn the art of distilling, with a finer brush, the subtleties of tangible purpose. When we can stand back and see the big picture of purpose and meaning we will be able to unpack the large concepts and experiences within the particularities of each context of our lives. This will happen in the container that we are shaping, beginning with the story rooted in the ground of a particular life in a particular context.

This poem by Rumi reminds us that the Journey is about finding the "one thing" (golden thread of purpose) that has the energy to light the fire within that can reveal a path of dignity and purpose.

## **The One Thing You Must Do, Rumi**

There is one thing in this world which you must never forget to do.  
If you forget everything else and not this, there is nothing to worry about,  
but if you remember everything else and forget this,  
then you will have done nothing in your life.  
It is as if a king has sent you to some country to do a task,  
and you perform a hundred other services,  
but not the one he sent you to do.  
So human beings come to this world to do particular work.  
That work is the purpose, and each is specific to the person.  
If you don't do it, it's as though a knife of the  
finest tempering were nailed into a wall to hang things on.  
For a penny an iron nail could be bought to serve for that.  
Remember the deep root of your being, the presence of your lord.  
Give your life to the one who already owns your breath and your moments.  
If you don't, you will be like the one who takes a  
precious dagger and hammers it into his kitchen wall  
for a peg to hold his dipper gourd.  
You will be wasting valuable keenness and  
foolishly ignoring your dignity and purpose.

# STRUCTURE

We will begin by spending time becoming **oriented** to the Journey. Here we will explore themes that will help prepare us for the adventure. We'll then embark on a Journey that, while having common movements, unfolds with the unique subtleties of each pilgrim's experience.

Each movement and threshold will be introduced with an **overview** or **summary**. Next we will have an opportunity to set the **context** for the Journey. There are four contexts that are like interwoven threads of our life experience. They are: Interior; Relational, Systemic and Environmental. It will be helpful, as we walk this Journey, to pull on one of these threads to see where it leads. **Intention:**

After setting the context for our inquiry we will pause at each movement and threshold to reflect on what we are learning and experiencing along the way. This is an **opportunity for journaling**. Think of this as a "travel log". We'll find this to be a valuable resource for more adventures as well as a tool to guide others along the way. We find it helpful to offer a structure for this inquiry. There are seven questions that will help us explore the depths of our experience. **Intention:**

We know this might feel a bit overwhelming. **Remember, this is your Journey.** You will discern what is most helpful for you and set aside that which is not. This is an adventure... one step, one movement at a time will unfold as inspiration for your transformation. Know too that we will be with you as your **Allies** and **Guides** assisting in the unfolding of your Journey. **Intention:**

Perhaps the best counsel for us here at the beginning of the Journey is from the poet Rilke:

*"I beg you, to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer."*

— Rainer Maria Rilke, Letters to a Young Poet

# OUTCOMES

## Our commitment as your Ally on the Journey:

We will learn and practice capacities to, in the face of disruption, respond from a posture of emerging wisdom and compassion rather than reacting from a constricting posture of fear.

The Journey will unfold an evolutionary and contextual framework that will guide our way forward.

We will co-create strategies that can help us function as vehicles that can bring healing to the whole.

As Allies, our team will be your guides on the journey.

## ORIENTATION

1. A Glossary of Words
2. Two energies or paths: Presencing and Absencing
3. Overview of The Journey - Movements and Thresholds
4. Seven facets to help illuminate each movement
5. The synchronistic beauty of transformation
6. Four elements: earth, water, fire and wind
7. Evolving capacities for listening
8. The Mandorla
9. An exploration into how time shifts on the Journey

## WORDS... WORDS... WORDS WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY...

**HOLDING SPACE:** We are passionate about nurturing safe spaces in which we can gather, speak what is so for us and relate at deeper levels. We call them "harbors or holding spaces." We have found that there is a deep wisdom from within each one that surfaces in such spaces. It is through our collective intention and willingness to open our hearts and minds that we can walk alongside each other and as a community of allies. Whatever journey you are on, you will feel supported and encouraged in a space of acceptance, without feeling judged, without anyone trying to fix you or even trying to impact the outcome.

**RESILIENCE:** "...the capacity of a system, enterprise, or a person to maintain its core purpose and integrity in the face of dramatically changed circumstances." (Zolli, Andrew; Healy, Ann Marie (2012-07-10). Resilience: Why Things Bounce Back) More than "bouncing back" or "holding on" resilience is seeing challenges as portals for transformation.

**TRANSFORMATION:** To move across, transverse. The act or process of forming or the state of being formed. On the Journey we will cross key thresholds and wide fields of experience to be open to new formations in every context of life. The Geek word "metanoia" often translated as repentance literally means to open to a BIG MIND. The Journey is a path of turning from a small constricted "mind" to an open, creative and collaborative "mind".

**DISRUPTION:** "Finance. Food. Fuel. Water shortage. Resource scarcity. Climate chaos. Mass poverty. Mass migration. Fundamentalism. Terrorism. Financial oligarchies. We have entered an Age of Disruption. Yet the possibility of profound personal, societal, and global renewal has never been more real. Now is our time." (Scharmer, C. Otto; Kaeufer, Katrin - Leading from the Emerging Future: From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies)

**SACRED:** There is a saying in Buddhism, "Don't confuse the finger with the moon." There are many words used to help describe or point to the ineffable, that which is beyond words. We believe everything and everyone belongs to and exists in what we call God, the Sacred, Divine Reality, or the Universe Story. This Reality informs but remains distinct from the intrinsically limited lens through which we view it. When we confuse our particular lens, or perspective, with Divine Reality we begin to lose sight and start to bump into each other. This is the source of much suffering. You may use other words to point to that Reality that is beyond words. We welcome this diversity and playfulness.

## **TWO ENERGIES OR PATHS - ABSENCING AND PRESENCING**

Illustrated With The Heart of Jesus' Teaching In Eight Sayings  
The Beatitudes  
(Matthew 5:1-12)

**“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”**

**“Blessed are those who grieve, for they will be comforted.”**

**“Blessed are the meek (non-violent), for they will inherit the earth.”**

**“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.”**

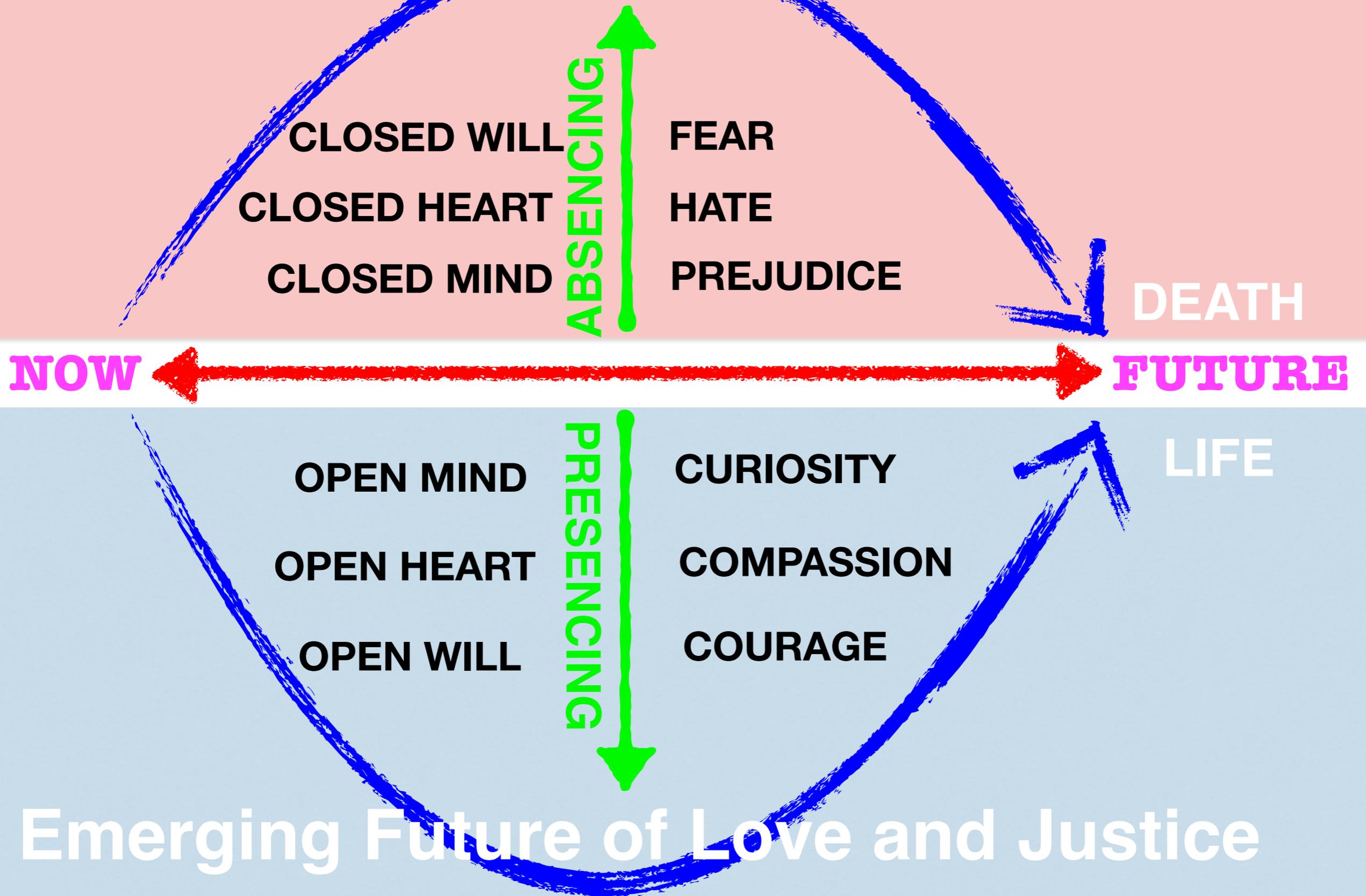
**“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.”**

**“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”**

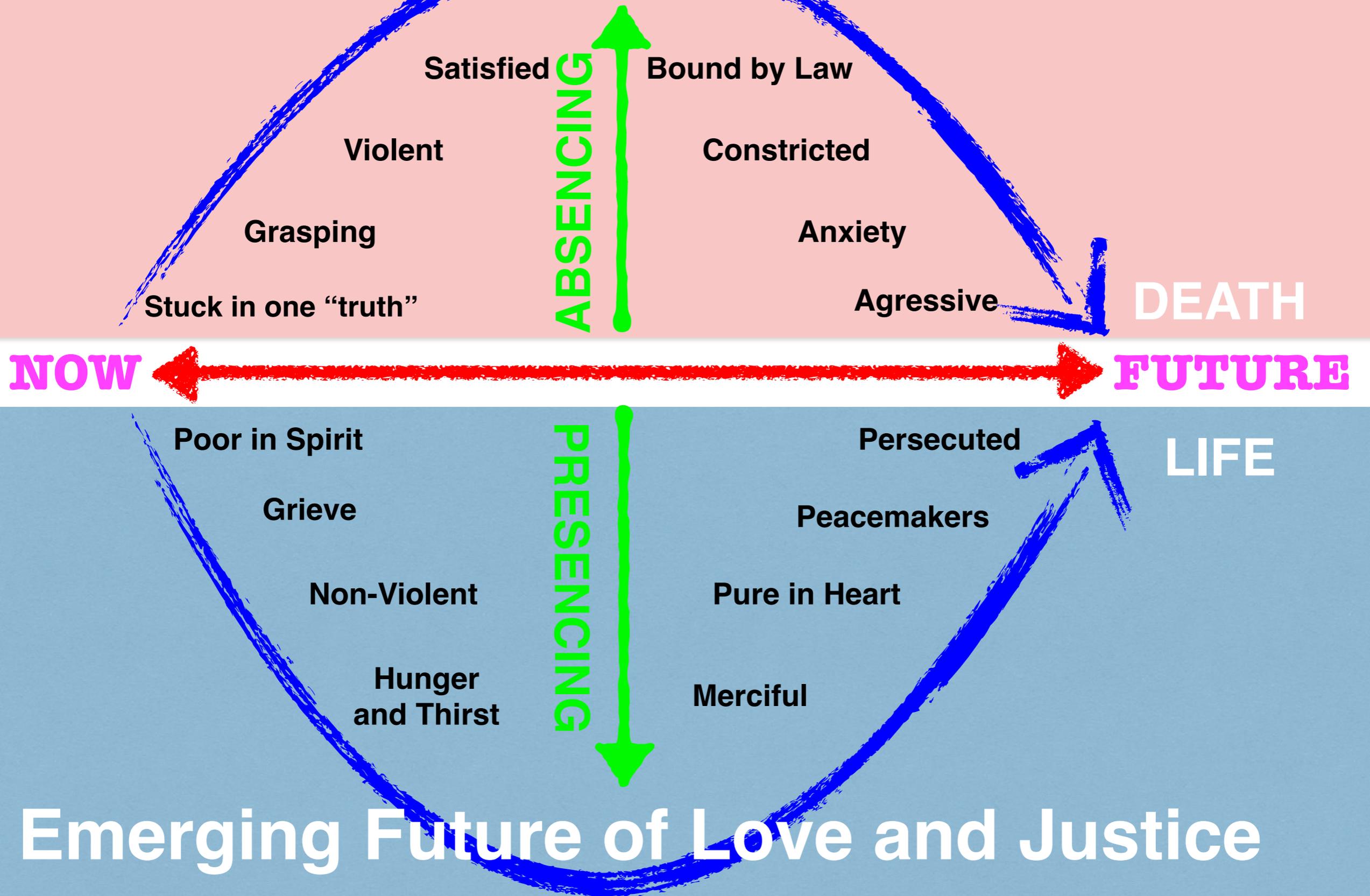
**“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called  
the children of God.”**

**“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”**

# Continued "Story" of separation



# Continued "Story" of separation



## The Journey: Four Movements & Four Thresholds

1. **Sharing** Your Story
2. The First Threshold: **Loved/Blessed** - Self Worth & Confidence
3. **Opening** to the Emerging Future
4. The Second Threshold: **Held** - Trust "Taking the Leap"
5. **Encountering** the Mystery - A Bigger Vision
6. The Third Threshold: **Sent** - Even though it feels incomplete
7. **Fulfilling** Destiny
8. The Forth Threshold: **Return** - Renewed to begin again



Tourist, Hero or *Pilgrim*  
(or likely some combination of the three “parts”)

***Tourist:*** “a person who is traveling or visiting a place for pleasure.” The meaning of life is gratification and the goal is to have exciting adventures without being exposed to risk. Though this Journey will open up to joy and even “pleasure” these and other “feelings” come and go. At times we may feel like we are visitors as we explore new territory only to discover that in some way we are coming home.

***Hero:*** Admired by the community, the hero, clad with ego’s shining armor, goes out to slay the darkness and redeem the community. The meaning of life is honor and the goal of living is self-fulfillment, the achievement of personal excellence, and the recognition and admiration that making a unique contribution to the community through one’s achievements carries with it.

***Pilgrim:*** The meaning of life is love. For the pilgrim, life does not so much have a goal, as a purpose, for which each of us is responsible, and the heart of that purpose is compassion, and the bonds of concern and care that responsibility for *ALL* creation carries with it. The Pilgrim’s journey is first down and in (cata-strophy) instead of, like the tourist, up and out into flights of fancy. The pilgrim senses the vital importance of balancing light and dark, spirit and soul. The Journey for the Pilgrim is one that does not end but unfolds against an infinite horizon.

## “Exploring the Journey”

Like a multifaceted diamond we will explore  
each movement through 7 inquiries.

What is the **QUESTION** that can help shine a light on each aspect?

What embodied **POSTURE** or stance is held at this place on the path?

What is the **CONVERSATION** happening here and with whom?

What **LANGUAGE** can help move toward deeper insight?

What is the **BELIEF** that opens or shuts down the possibilities?

What is the **CHALLENGE** encountered here?

What **PRACTICE** can encourage growth?

## Journey in Context

What “aspect” of your life do you feel called to explore? What is the “dilemma” (See: “between a rock and a hard place”) you are facing through which you will discern a way forward? There are four intricately woven “story lines” or contexts from which to begin the journey. Begin with whatever has your attention. Because these aspects of experience are so interwoven to may be hard to focus on one. You may even find yourself reflecting on all four at once! That’s ok. This is your journey. After we introduce each movement you will have an opportunity to explore each and all aspects.

### Interior:

*The success of any intervention is dependent upon the interior state of the intervenor.*

When you pause to look inside what do you see, feel, long for and appreciate? What, inside of you, wants your compassionate attention?

### Interpersonal:

*All transformation is relational.*

There is much to learn as we attend to the ebb and flow of our most intimate connections. When you take a long, loving, look at those closest to you what do you feel called to open up to? What is the transformation that can bring more healing and wholeness to your relationships?

### Systemic:

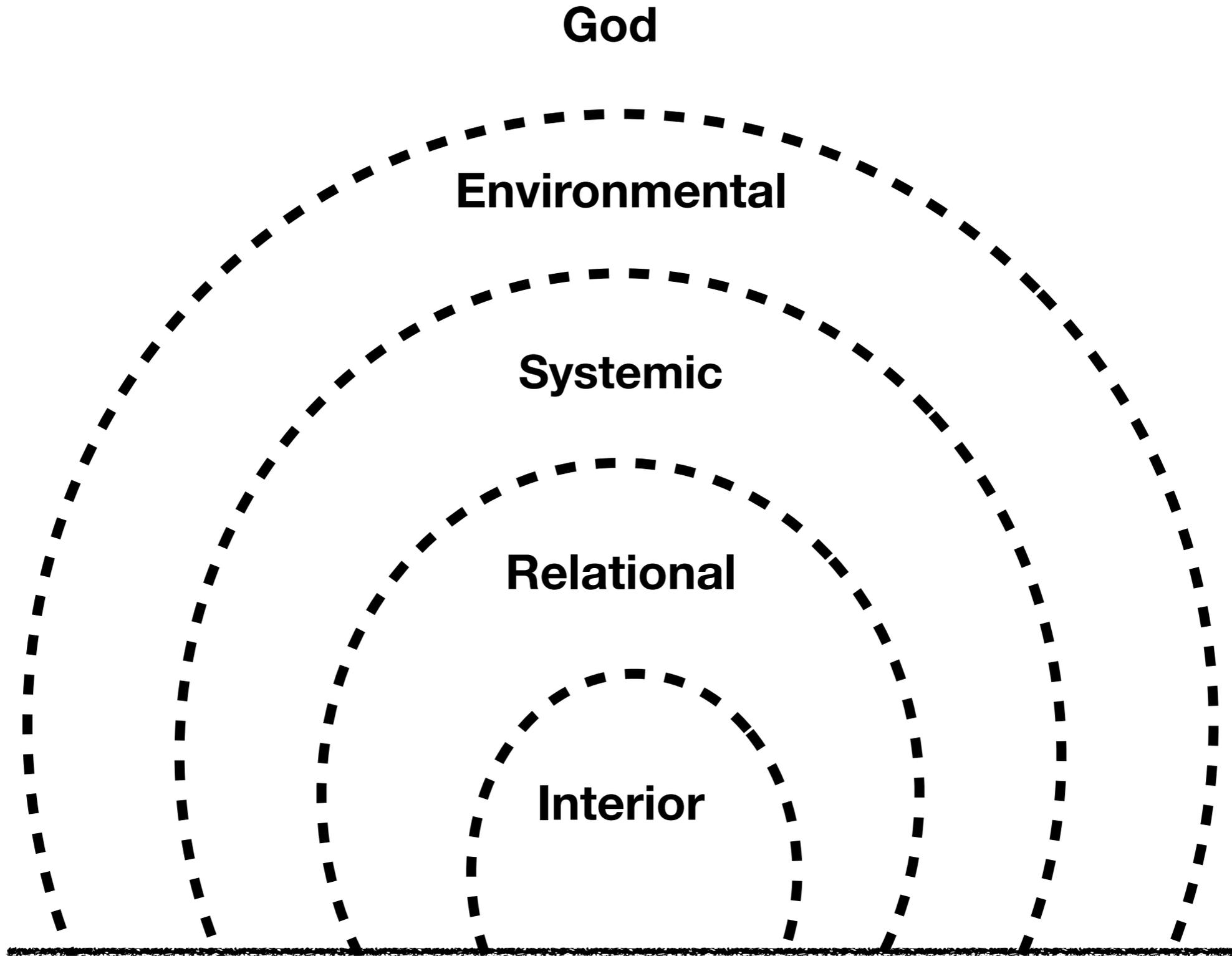
*We are all connected to groups, communities, organizations that hold possibilities for transformation.*

As you consider the wider circles of connection: church; community organizations; work place; even politics, what change would you like to be a part of?

### Environmental:

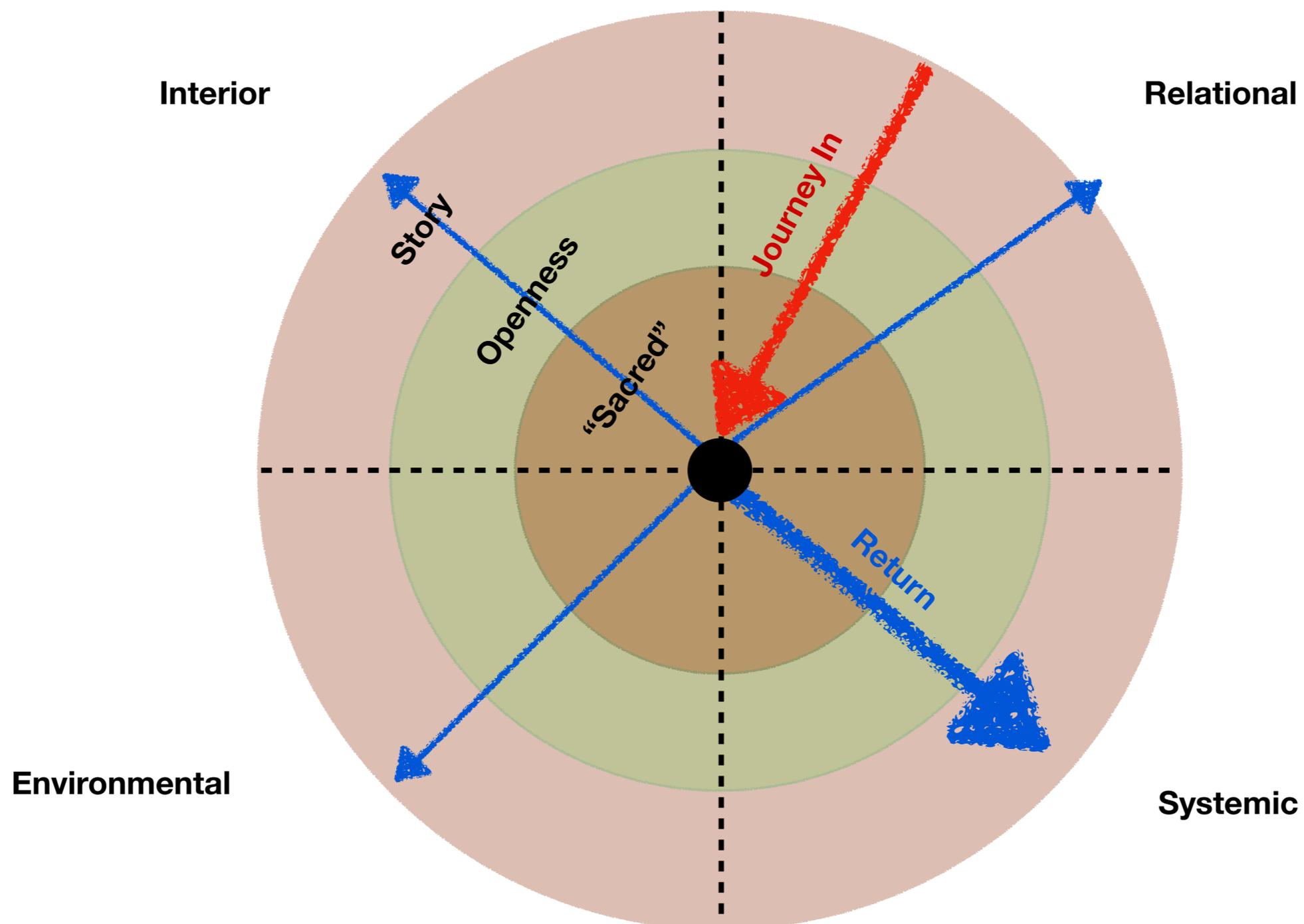
*We are not separate from the Earth and this Universe we inhabit.*

You may want to pull on this “story-thread” as you begin this Journey. When you pause to “take-in” the beauty of Nature consider how humans impact their “home”.

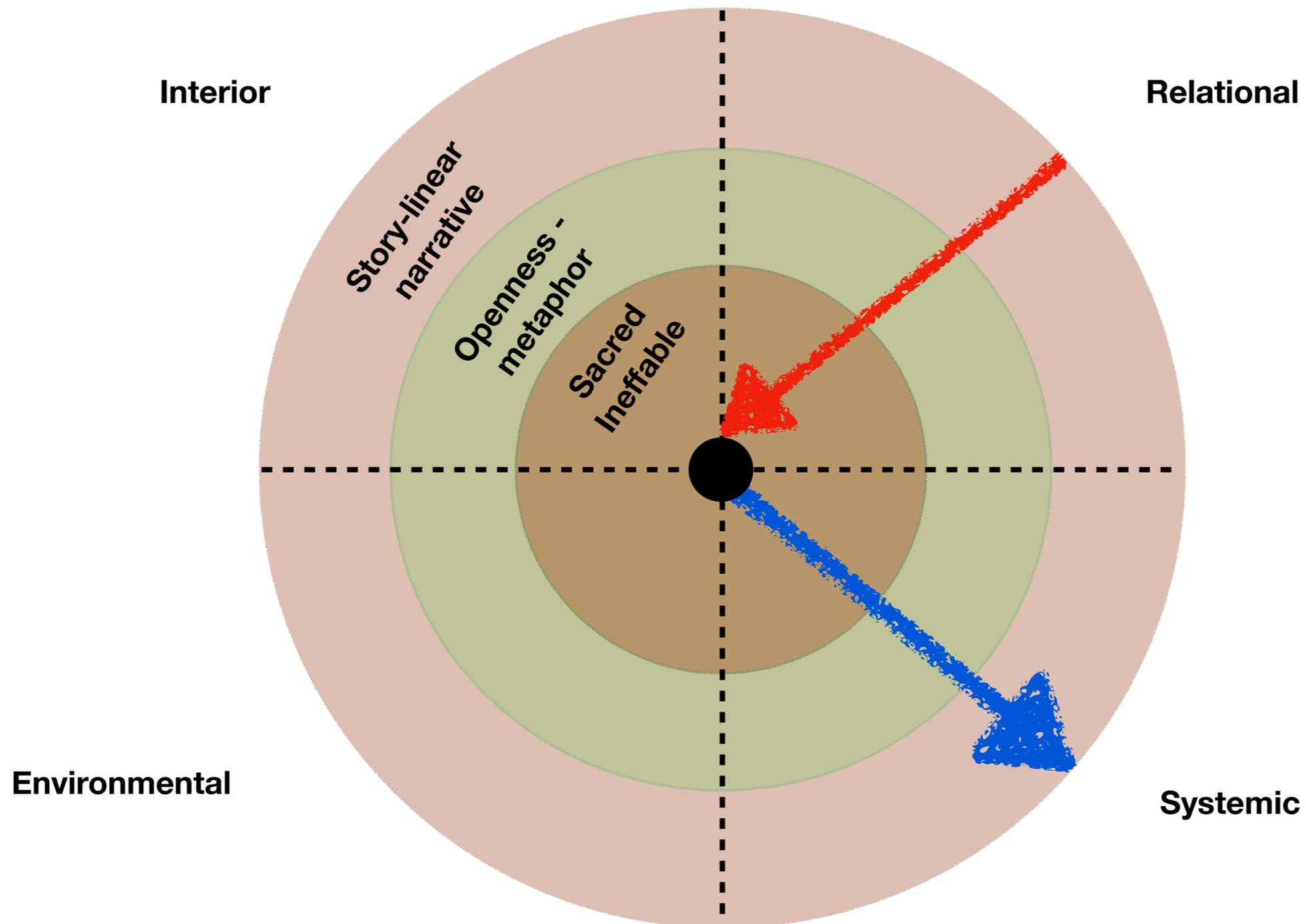


**FOUR INTERWOVEN CONTEXTS OF EXPERIENCE  
A "PANENTHEISTIC" COSMOLOGY**

Beginning with “story” (in whatever context: interior; relational; systemic; environmental) we move through the field of openness into the “sacred” and then back into a “context” with new gifts, insights and wisdom. Example below: Beginning with a story of relationship then moving into opening of mind and heart and encountering the “sacred” we find ourself propelled into the context (in this example systemic) with some creative offering. However when we move toward the center and bring the gifts back “home” everything changes in some way. We call this “synchronicity”.



It is important that we notice how language shifts as we move along the path of transformation. We begin with the narrative or story using language that is intrinsically linear. As we move through the field of openness we employ metaphor, language that “tells the truth, but on a slant” as Emily Dickinson said. Metaphor means to “carry over” from more literal narrative to open to that which cannot be spoken of directly. As we stay on the path we will find the language shifting to non-linear. Here, sighs, tears or deepening silence holds us in a powerful ineffable space to big for words. As we move back into the context of our life move back through metaphor into the narrative of co-creation.



# An “Elemental” Journey

The symbols of the four elements will appear throughout this field guide as a reminder of where we are on the path which is not lineal (not a straight line) but sequential (each movement building on the previous).



**Earth**

The journey begins by grounding ourselves in the “soil” of story. We will explore “relational technologies” that create containers for stories to be shared.



**Water**

Once the soil has been prepared and the seed of intention has been planted it will be watered by opening mind and heart, curiosity and compassion.



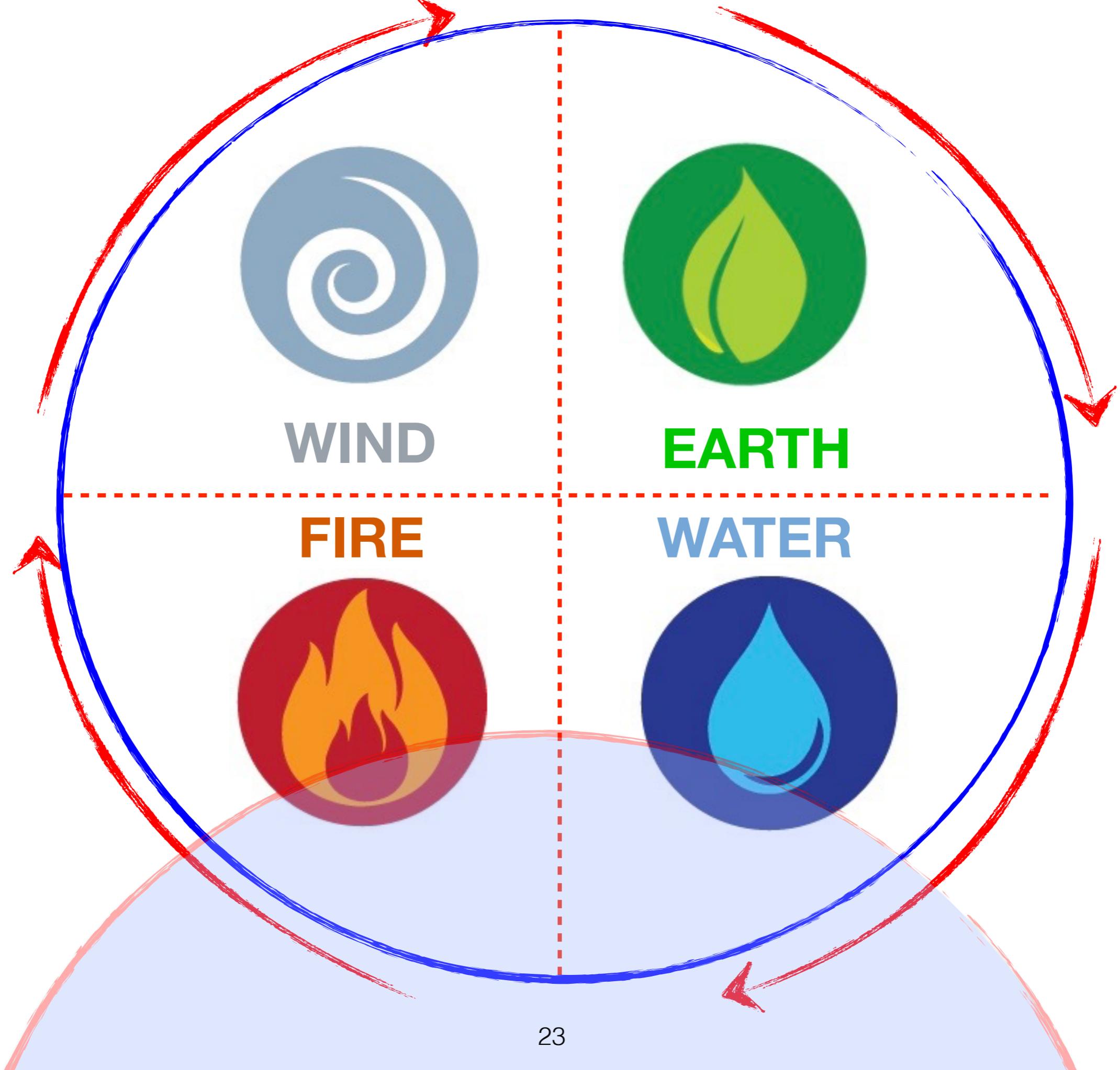
**Fire**

Now the alchemical process of transformation takes place as we brush up against the mystery that is our life. Here, the sacred fire cracks open the seed’s shell so the miracle of germination can take place.



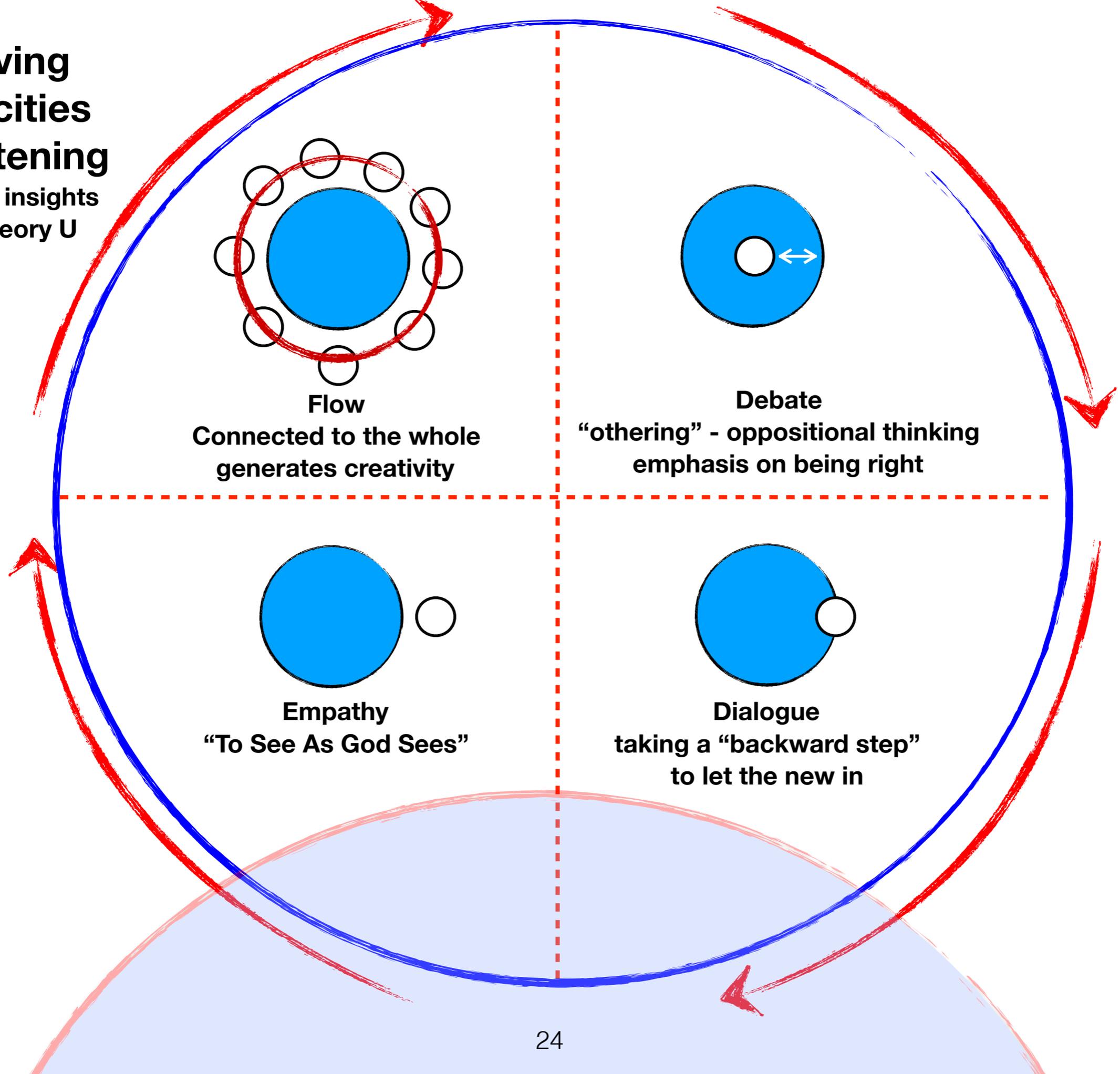
**Wind**

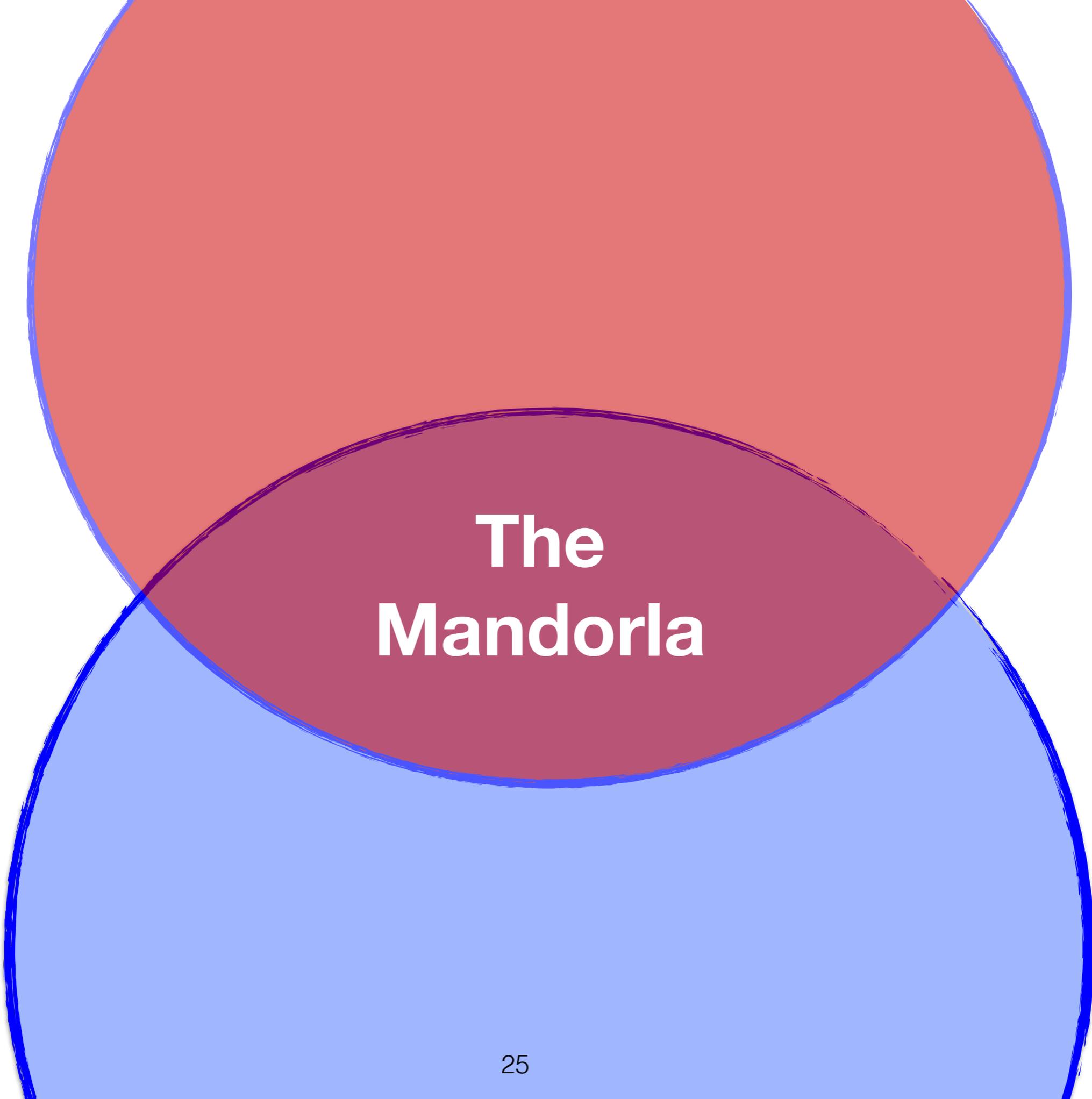
The powerful energy that is experienced in the fire of transformation will propel us into the context of our lives with clear purpose to bring wise insight and healing into our world.



# Evolving Capacities for Listening

Based on insights from Theory U





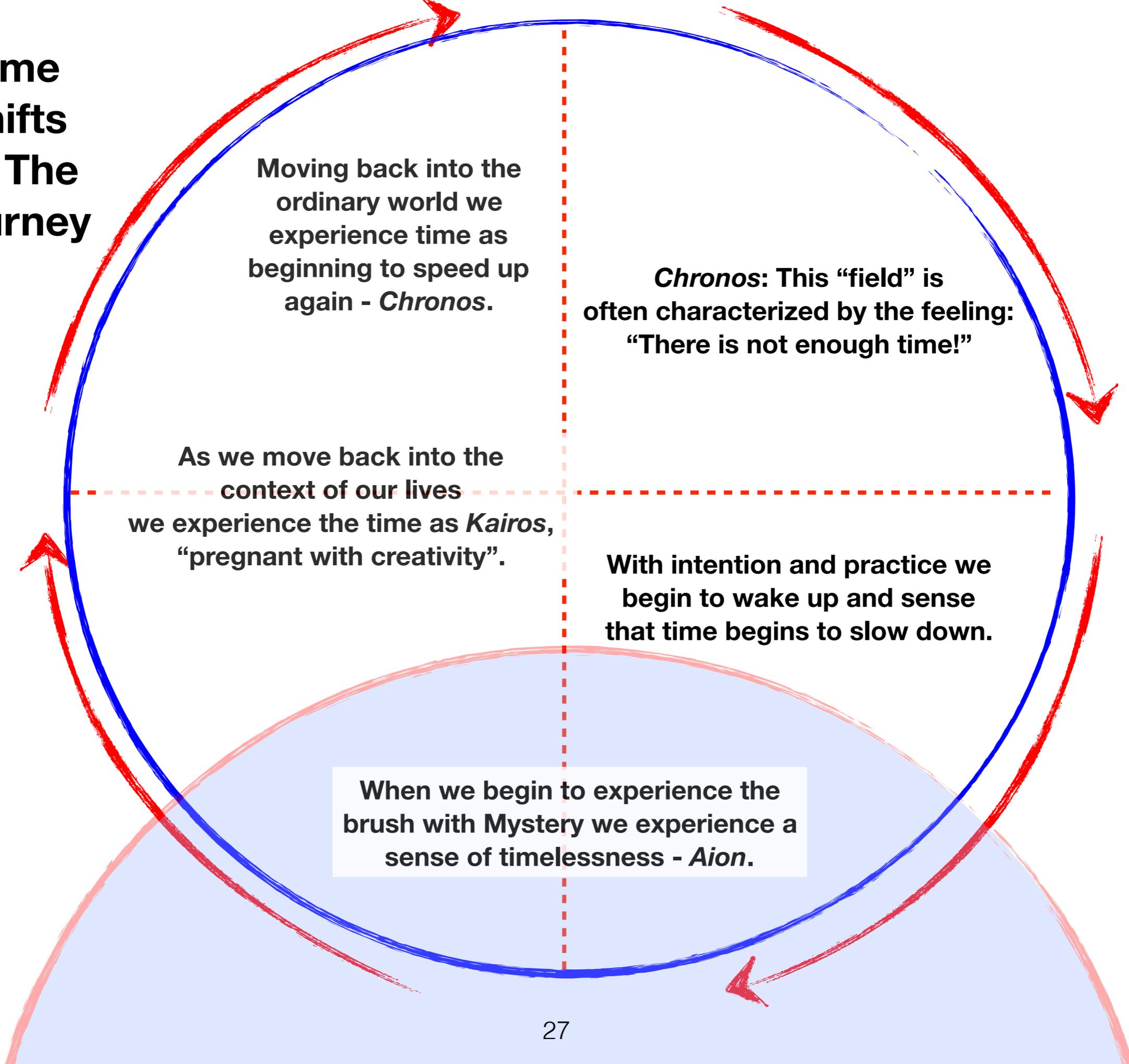
**The  
Mandorla**

**Chronos: a point in time,  
linear or sequential, orderly, quantified time**

**Kairos: the right moment,  
opportune,  
time of fulfillment or possibility**

**Aion: a long period of time, or eternity,  
the emerging future**

# Time Shifts on The Journey



# Setting Intention

I am going on this journey because...

My most important challenge is...

I am concerned with transformation at these aspects of my life:

- Internal
- Relational
- Systemic
- Environmental

This Journey be fulfilling if...

## LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

This Place Where You Are Right Now, Hafiz

*This place where you are right now  
God circled on a map for you.*

*Wherever your eyes and arms and heart can move  
against the earth and the sky,*

*The Beloved has bowed there –  
knowing you were coming.*

*I could tell you a priceless secret about  
your real worth, dear*

*But any unkindness to yourself  
any confusion about others,*

*Will keep one from accepting  
the grace, the love*

*The sublime freedom  
divine knowledge always offers to you.*



## STORY

“There's always a story. It's all stories, really. The sun coming up every day is a story.

Everything's got a story in it. Change the story, change the world.”

— Terry Pratchett, *A Hat Full of Sky*

The first movement on *The Journey* is pausing to tell/hear “Story” which Abraham Heschel describes as “Carrying for the seed of eternity planted in the soul.” When, in the telling/hearing, story breaks through fallow ground of numbing distraction and “rightness” into the light of day, having been blessed with an acknowledgment of its beauty and latent potentiality, the seed of purpose that can bring nourishment to the world begins to grow and ripen.

Beneath or inside the life we lead every day is another life that runs like a subterranean river. Beneath the ordinary world of work, family, ambition, money, pleasures and grief, there is another world to be discovered. There is a more enduring story that runs like a river that is deep and wide and carries with it abundance and healing. Bringing where we are, the soil of our story, the *Journey* opens us up to this river of life.

One of the most courageous and calming actions we can do to begin to build resilience and responsiveness in a disruptive world is to stand up and share our story and in the sharing begin to show our soul. In the sharing, a light begins to shine on our path from other stories by those who walk the way with us.

## **STORY IN CONTEXT**

Begin this Journey with whatever part of your story rises in your attention.

### **Interior:**

The success of any intervention is dependent upon the interior state of the intervenor.  
Is there something moving in you that has your attention?

### **Interpersonal:**

All transformation is relational. What “shimmers” when reflecting on your closest relationships?

### **Systemic:**

We are all connected to groups, communities, organizations that hold possibilities for transformation.  
Is there a some aspect of your connection to community that you want to explore?

### **Environmental:**

We are not separate from the Earth. What do you notice when you step outside and take a long,  
loving look at the space we inhabit together?

## EXPLORING STORY

We like to say that in the sharing of our story we are “listened into being”.  
When, in a safe place, we share our joys and fears, our longings and vulnerabilities,  
the journey of transformation begins.

**Questions:** Can you describe that part of you that longs to wake up and be heard? Imagine your life-story is a book. What pages or chapters are missing? What is the plot that is unfolding? What remains to be written?

**Posture:** How do you feel in your body when sharing your story? “In a world that lives like a fist, mercy is no more than waking with your hands open.” Mark Nepo

**Conversation:** Where and with whom in your everyday life can you share your story and feel heard?

**Language:** If you could create a “word cloud” of your story what words stand out?

**Belief:** What BIG beliefs do you tend to hold on to when the going gets tough? Do they serve you well on the path of discovery?

**Challenge:** Is the story you are living big enough to hold your soul’s longing?

**Practice:** Journaling, Spiritual direction, intentional community



## THE INVITATION

“And suddenly you know: It's time to start something new  
and trust the magic of beginnings.”

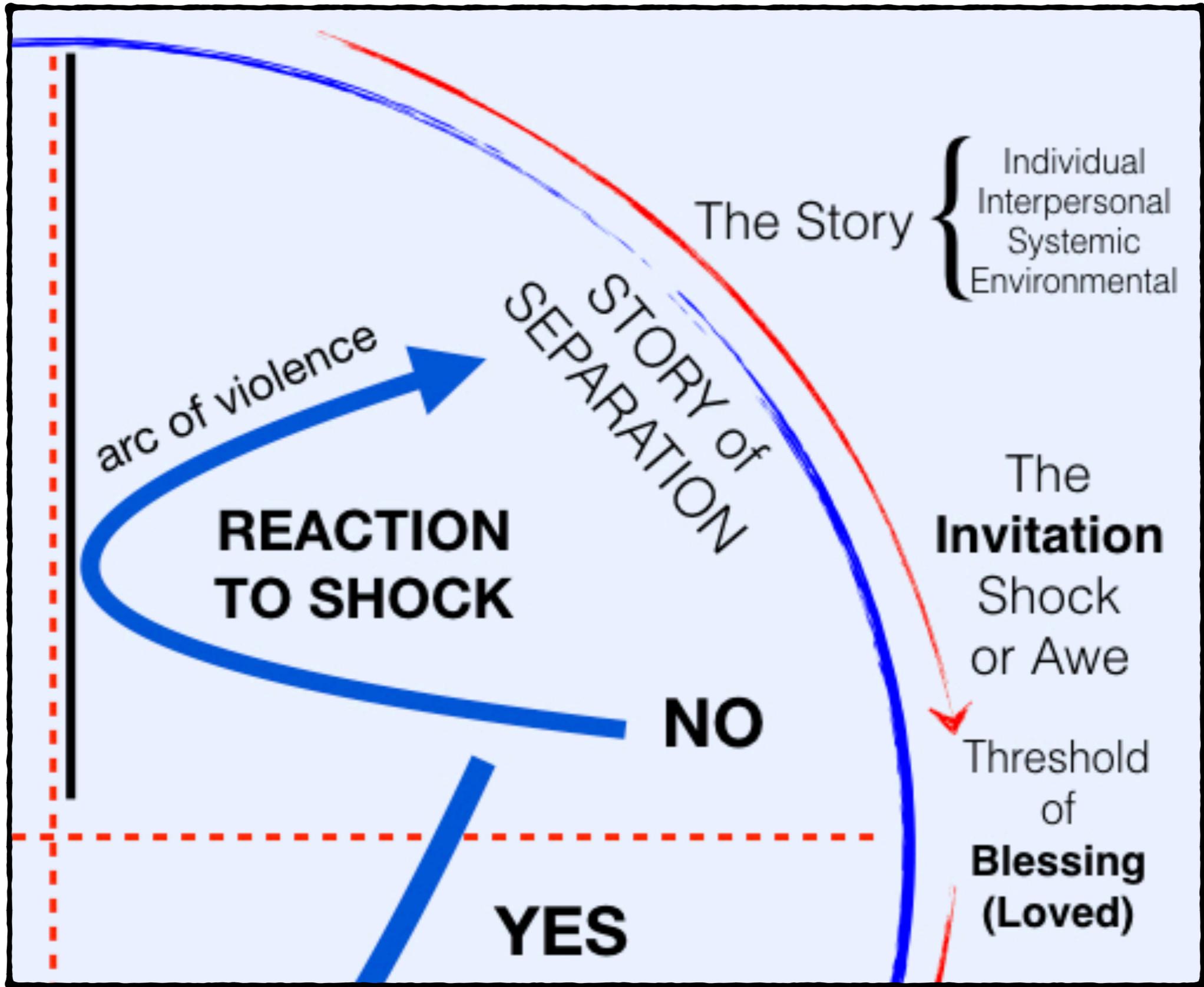
Meister Eckhart

There are two ways, it seems, the invitation to grow comes to us: crisis and intention. Usually it takes an unexpected and unwanted jarring of our familiar ways to awaken us to the gifts of Life. Sometimes it is a faint whisper. Other times the urgent pounding at our heart's door is loud enough to wake the dead. The Universe knows that without an invitation strong enough to penetrate the ego or small self, few of us open willingly to the Journey of transformation. The plug has to be pulled out from our “game” so we begin to rethink what it is all about. There is a “necessary suffering” to human life, and if we keep putting it off, we remain perpetually stuck in a story that is just too small for our soul.

Waking up to life begins with a crisis of legitimacy. The story that we are living is not big enough. The old rules just aren't helpful anymore.

Often the focus here is on maintaining patterns of the past: familiar emotions, old habits and settled judgments. C. Otto Scharmer, Senior Lecturer at MIT, uses a computer metaphor of... “downloading: reenacting habitual patterns of action, conversation, and thought” to describe the state of being from which the journey of transformation leads. Buddhist teacher Tara Brach calls this way of living “a trance of separation.” Don't take this personally. Living in this place of exile or in a trance is a very normal way of being human. However, it is the degree of exile or the depth of our trance that can lead to suffering, our's and the world's.

# React or Respond



## MOVING FROM NO! TO YES!

We are hard-wired to react when we encounter a SHOCK or DISRUPTION. Reaction, rooted in the survival mechanisms seated in the most primitive part of our brains, often contribute to the disruption or violence.

The journey is about moving from the initial reactive “NO” to a wise and generative “YES”.

**React**

**Respond**

## INVITATION IN CONTEXT

**The Journey will help you develop a capacity to shift from *reacting* against a disruption (NO! a natural and appropriate move against shock) to leaning into an emerging future (YES!). This is probably the single most important leadership capacity today.**

**Use this space to reflect on one disruption in your life and your initial response.**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING INVITATION

**Questions:** What is it that stands between life as you currently experience it and the life you long for? What is the question for which if you had the answer would bring more joy into your life?

**Posture:** Our attention is sharpened as we strain to see and hear the invitation. Coming face to face with Reality we look down at our hands, once clenched in fear of losing whatever life we have, as they begin to open in a relaxed anticipation of holding the new life for which we long. We are stirred to an awareness of the confines of a life lived in trance. Now we begin to lean forward with a deep curiosity, as if we are standing on tip-toe to see over the habitual self imposed limitations of our life.

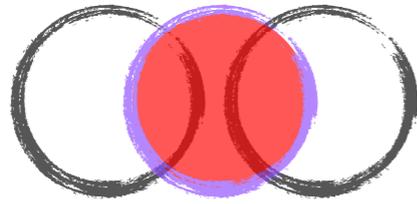
**Conversation:** What are we talking about now on the path? What has got our attention? “Genius is a crisis that joins the buried self, for certain moments, to our daily mind.” -William Butler Yeats Often it takes an unexpected and unwanted jarring of our habitual ways to awaken us to the gifts of Life.

**Language:** The invitation might come in a dream or in a chance encounter with a friend. Somehow, somehow, along the way, we all stumble upon Grace. Through a crisis or intentional practice, the Universe is determined to invite us to notice, to wake up to life. Somehow, in ways beyond knowing, a crack opens in our consciousness through which the invitation to wakeup is heard.

**Belief:** One meaning of the word belief is “that which we give our heart to”. Have you given your heart to a story-line or system of belief that is too small? As you begin to open up what can you let go of and what can you hold lightly?

**Challenge:** It is easy, and natural, to confuse our small story, made up of habits and beliefs, with our the BIG story that wants to be lived as your life. It is hard to let go of life defined by this familiar narrative for that which you cannot quite see. What aspect of your story are you reticent to let go of?

**Practice:** Prayer: May whatever arises in my life serve the awakening of compassion and wisdom in my life and in the world. How might “this” serve to awaken? Prayer of Examen. Now is the time to find a wise Ally for the Journey.



## INTRODUCTION TO THRESHOLDS

On The Journey we will encounter four thresholds. Because thresholds are places of great potential we'll explore them in depth as we move along the path.

1. Between the story and the field of openness: WE ARE **LOVED**
2. Between the opening place and the sacred: WE ARE **HELD**
3. Between the sacred and the co-creation: WE ARE **SENT**
4. Between co-creation and return: THERE IS ALWAYS **MORE**

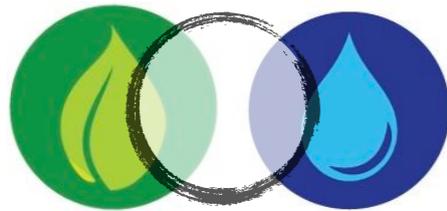
**“Sit, be still, and listen, because you're drunk and we're at the edge of the roof.” Rumi**

The word threshold comes from the age-old practice of threshing or beating the husks away to reveal the kernel of grain. What is revealed at these liminal or in-between places is what lies at the heart of the matter.

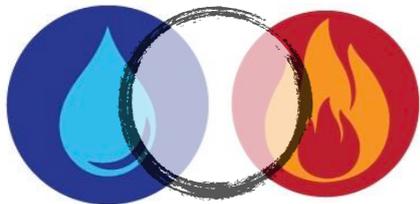
Throughout history human beings have considered threshold places to be places of danger and opportunity where caution should be exercised. Fear of the unknown, uncertainty and questions regarding the way feel threatening to the would-be pilgrim.

## LETTING GO TO LET COME

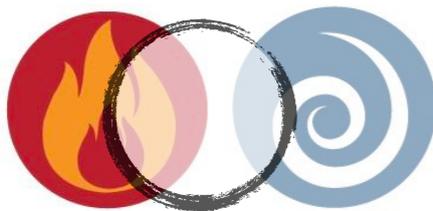
Transformation is hard because it always brings with it the possibility of loss. None of us likes loss. It is part of our evolutionary survival mechanisms. But loss is the necessary portal into the emerging future. It's the felt experience of loss, and the apprehension, fear, and anxiety associated with that possibility of loss that generates resistance and at the same time invites us to grieve. We will attend to our encounters with grief at each of the four thresholds.



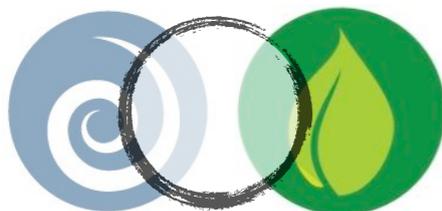
T1: **Blessed**: Letting go of shame and a contracting story of a small self entering into a field of openness



T2: **Held**: Letting go of well practiced capacities in order to surrender to the Divine



T3: **Sent**: Letting go of a powerful experience of the sacred to take a gift into the world



T4: **Return**: Letting go of a sense of completeness to begin the journey again but from a new “place”

## ‘MILLING AROUND AT THE THRESHOLD’

### The Breeze at Dawn

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.  
Don't go back to sleep.  
You must ask for what you really want.  
Don't go back to sleep.  
People are going back and forth  
across the doorsill where the two worlds touch.  
The door is round and open.  
Don't go back to sleep  
Rumi

### Restorationists



Maybe we should go back  
to the “good -ole” days  
when life was \_\_\_\_\_.

### Status Quo



Life is “good enough” and hard  
enough. Why bother with  
transformation?

### Adventurers



There must be more. What "is"  
is no longer working.  
Let's move into an emerging future  
of love and justice.

**Note: The pilgrim will find these “postures” in each context of experience: Interior, relational, systemic and environmental.  
It is essential to hold each with awareness and compassion.**

## THRESHOLDS & GRIEF

**“The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason for hope.”**

**PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN**

Grief is always, in some way, accompanying us on The Journey. Grief opens the possibility of finding hope. There are times when grief is razor sharp, cutting to the bone: a partner dies; a career ends abruptly, a marriage dissolves and we find ourselves alone. Times like these require our full attention so that over time our soul can find what it needs to thrive. And sorrow, the felt sense of grief, appears in more subtle forms along the way. On this path of transformation we will encounter grief in its many forms. Each crossing of a threshold from one way of living to another we encounter some grief, some letting go to let come. Remember, thresholds, like grief are both full of challenges and opportunities. Becoming aquatinted with grief and the feelings of loss will help us find gifts that will sustain us on this adventure of transformation.

To speak of sorrow  
works upon, moves it  
from its crouched place  
barring the way to and  
from the soul's hall.

Denise Levertov

Cry Easily  
Keep your intelligence  
white-hot and  
your grief glistening,  
so your life will stay fresh.  
Cry easily like a little child.

Rumi

As we explore the FOUR THRESHOLDS on  
The Journey we will pause to attend to how we experience grief.

## **The Well Of Grief**

**by David Whyte**

**Those who will not slip beneath  
the still surface on the well of grief,  
turning down through its black water  
to the place we cannot breathe,  
will never know the source from which we drink,  
the secret water, cold and clear,  
nor find in the darkness glimmering,  
the small round coins,  
thrown by those who wished for something else.**

## **Five Gateways to Grief**

**Francis Weller**

- 1. Death**
- 2. Loss of a dream**
- 3. Loss of physical capacities**
- 4. Ancestral Grief**
- 5. The Grief of the Earth**

## For Reflection

- How can I let go of my need for fixed answers in favor of aliveness?
- What feels essential and what feels expendable?
- What is my next challenge in daring to be fully awake?
- What do I FEEL when I stand at the precipice of change?
- How can I open myself to the beauty of nature and human nature?
- Who or what do I need to learn to love next? And next? And next?
- What is the new creation that wants to be born in and through me?

## Exposed

**If you are planted close to a path  
where friends can wander freely  
and not in some isolated grove  
removed from pedestrian inquiry**

**you will notice that a well  
travelled path bears evidence  
of wear and tear**

**torrents of tears wash soil away  
freeze and thaw of life and death  
heave even the densest earth  
and the Spirit Wind exposes**

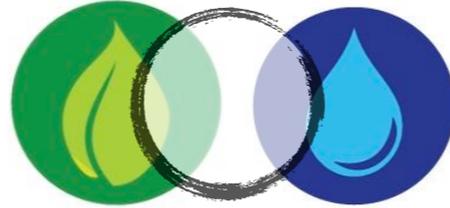
**roots once hidden beneath  
layers of accumulated ideas  
roots that now lie exposed for all to see**

**Here is the question,  
THE Cardinal question  
the hinge upon which  
all good intentions swing**

**Will the roots of your life  
no longer hidden become a  
tripping point or a tipping point?**

**It depends on this one  
further question:  
Are you rooted and  
grounded in Love?**

**To which the universe  
responds with a  
resounding  
and eternal  
Yes.**



## THE FIRST THRESHOLD

### BETWEEN STORY AND FIELD OF OPENNESS - **BLESSED**

Before we cross over into the field of openness we must know we are blessed, that we in our most essential nature, are worthy of the Journey. Without a blessing it is far too easy to continue to find false refuge in a story that is too small to hold our soul's longing and deep purpose.

“There are many tenets of Wholeheartedness, but at its very core is vulnerability and worthiness; facing uncertainty, exposure, and emotional risks, and knowing that I am enough.”

BRENÉ BROWN

"A blessing: beatitude, prayer, a cry of joy, the description of reality present and to be fervently expected, and expression of life that at its fullest is a startling reminder of eternity, and acknowledgment of innate goodness and well-being, and affirmation that draws us into a charmed intimate circle of people, the telling of a truth that honors our deepest realities."

MEGAN MCKENNA

“A blessing evokes a privileged intimacy. It touches that tender membrane where the human heart cries out to its divine ground. In the ecstasy and loneliness of one's life, there are certain times when blessing is nearer to us than any other person or thing. A blessing is not a sentiment or a question; it is a gracious invocation where the human heart pleads with the divine heart. There is nothing more intimate in a life than the secret under-territory where it anchors. Regardless of our differences in religion, language, or concept, there is no heart that is without this inner divine reference. It is the modest wish of this book to illuminate the gift that a blessing can be, the doors it can open, the healing and transfiguration it can bring. Our times are desperate for meaning and belonging.”

JOHN O'DONOHUE

## **BLESSING IN CONTEXT**

**When you consider the four aspects of your life where can you feel the touch of blessing?**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING BEING BLESSED - THE FIRST THRESHOLD

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

***Conversation:***

***Language:***

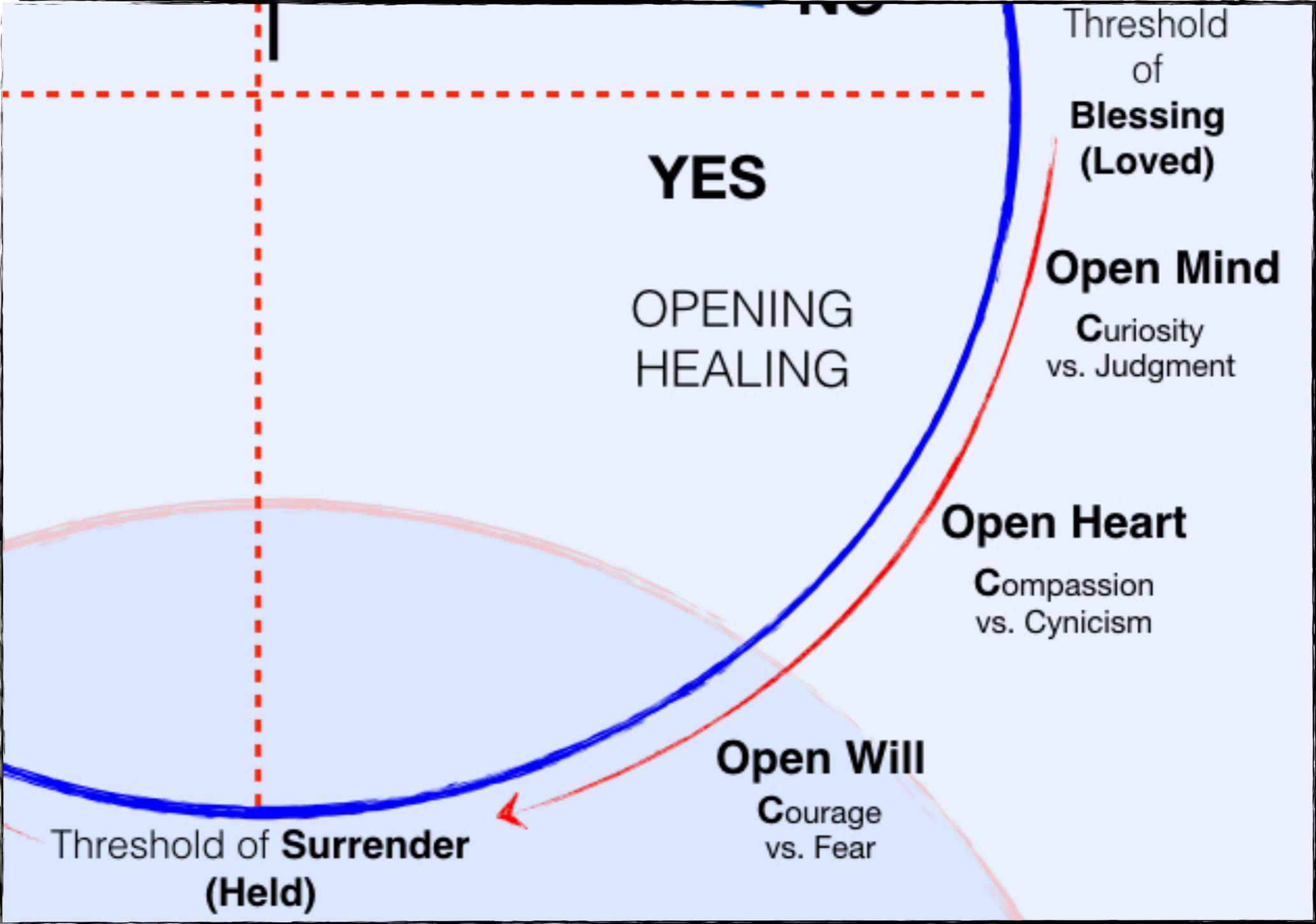
***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***

# The Field of Openness

## Mind - Heart - Will





## OPEN MIND

The conversations we have and the words we use shape our perception of what is real. What we habitually tell ourselves and others about the nature of reality profoundly influences the quality of our lives and relationships.

The recital of our script or personal narratives happens often at an unconscious level. It is time to open up our minds to consider replacing outmoded ways of thinking with inspiring, fresh ideas that have the power to hold the Wind of change that is sweeping our lives.

Sometimes referred to as “Beginner’s mind” we respect the gift of thinking, using the wonderful resources of our mind, but then letting go of it a bit and for awhile. At this place on the path we practice suspending judgement, holding our thoughts and ideas lightly, not trusting our perspective too much to be the whole picture. Here we loosen our grasping so there’s room for a larger mind to get in. Beginner’s mind is an opening to what might just be—and surely is—something larger than our thinking capacity. Here we open to what might be called a growing spiritual cognition which is essentially a re-cognition, of the capacities that we each have to open to a deeper reality. Be patient and compassionate to that part of you that wants to hold on to more narrow perspectives. Beginner’s mind is a non-grasping, patient, and compassionate holding of thinking so that we can be open to other ideas and perspectives. Open Mind is mind is an increasingly humble mind, always knowing that it does not yet fully know.

“It may be that when we no longer know which way to go we have come to our real journey.  
The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings.”

WENDELL BERRY

# **OPEN MIND IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING OPEN MIND

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

***Conversation:***

***Language:***

***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***



## OPEN HEART

In our culture we are well trained in how to use our minds. Here we pause to see how we can become overly reliant on the mind, while we forget the powerful intuition and wisdom that resides in our hearts and in our body, which is the gateway to the heart. Here we will explore more than surface feeling and emotion. We will discover that the heart can be, and in fact is intended to be, an open channel through which love and compassion can flow.

Tilden Edwards, founder of the Shalem Institute, describes the spiritual faculty of heart as "a quality of intuitive awareness...a sense of inclusive, compassionate, undefended, direct in-touch-ness". This "undefended knowing" (aka vulnerability) allows us to drop beneath the surface of our thoughts, below even the waves of emotion, to touch a deeper Source: real, uninterpreted (by ego) experience, the waters of healing in every context of life.

"We cannot live in a world that is not our own, in a world that is interpreted for us by others. An interpreted world is not a home. Part of the terror is to take back our own listening, to use our own voice, to see our own light."

Hildegarde of Bingen

The challenge at this place on the path is to gently and compassionately allow the mind and heart and body to work as one. This walloped up whole new horizons on the Journey.

"The concentration of attention in the heart-this is the starting point of prayer."

St. Theophane the Recluse, nineteenth-century Russian mystic.

The work that brings us joy isn't necessary to survive, but it's necessary if we're to fully come alive. The path we cut helps us survive, but the heart with which we walk that path enables us to thrive. This kind of work—when the heart and mind and body conspire to completely enter the world—is the effort that opens us to grace.

Mark Nepo

# **OPEN HEART IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING OPEN HEART

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

***Conversation:***

***Language:***

***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***



OPEN WILL

## **OPEN WILL IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING OPEN WILL

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

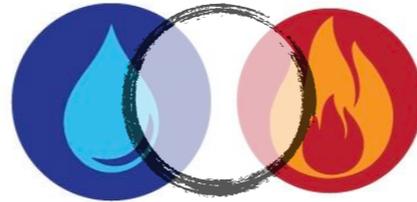
***Conversation:***

***Language:***

***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***



THE SECOND THRESHOLD  
BETWEEN STORY AND OPENNESS AND THE SACRED - **HELD**

THEMES TO EXPLORE

IMPASSE

KENOSIS

IMPERMANENCE - DEATH

MOVING BEYOND CAPACITIES

THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE

LIFE-DEATH-RESURRECTION (ORIENTATION-DISORIENTATION-NEW ORIENTATION)

## **HELD IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING BEING HELD - THE SECOND THRESHOLD

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

***Conversation:***

***Language:***

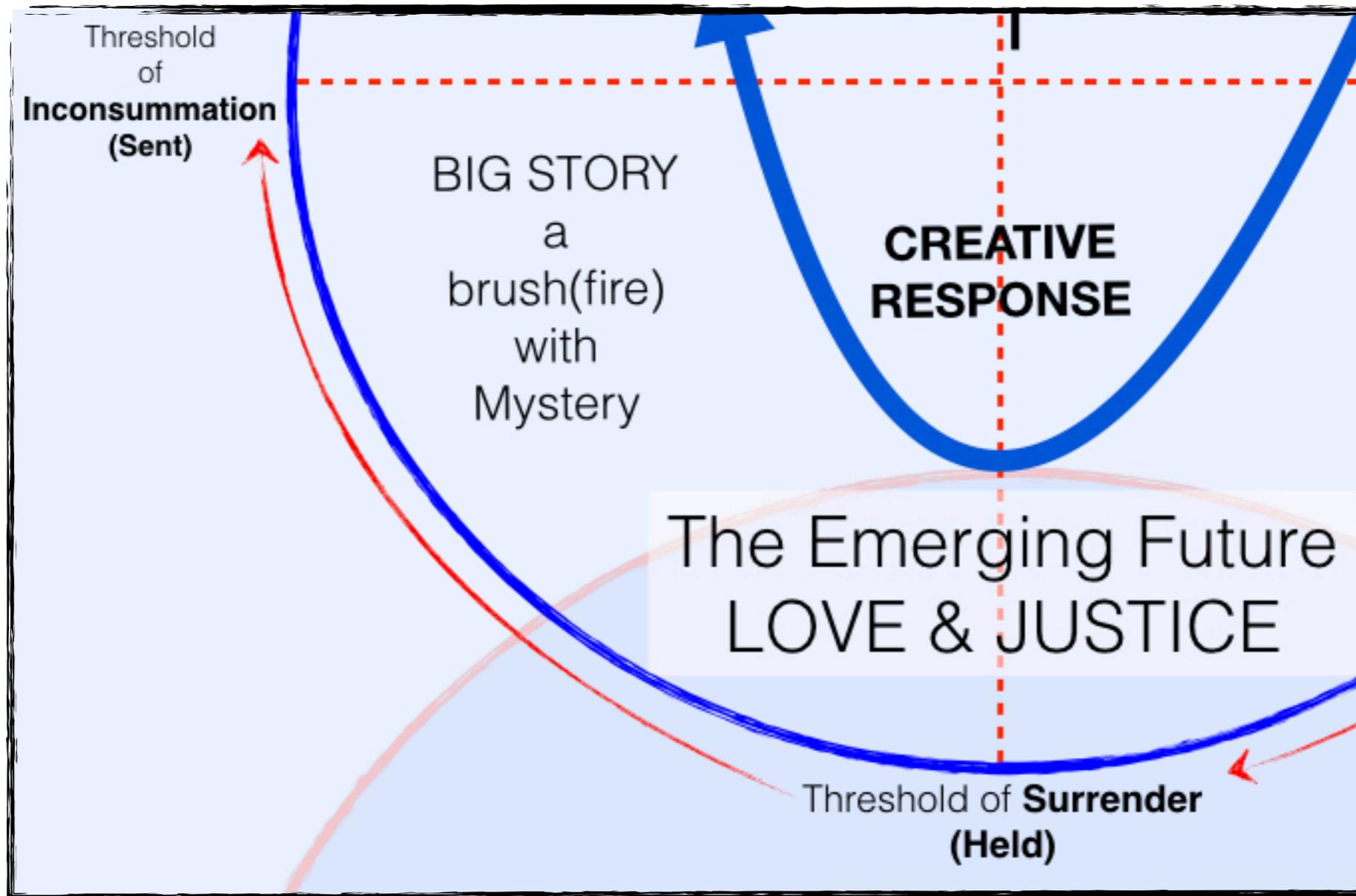
***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***



## EXPERIENCING THE SACRED (THE BIG STORY)





## EXPERIENCING THE SACRED

The Alchemical Fire

# **THE SACRED IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE SACRED

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

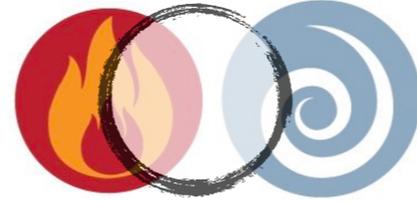
***Conversation:***

***Language:***

***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***



THE THIRD THRESHOLD  
BETWEEN SACRED AND CO-CREATION - ***SENT***

INCONSUMMATION

## EXPLORING BEING SENT - THE THIRD THRESHOLD

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

***Conversation:***

***Language:***

***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***

## **SENT IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

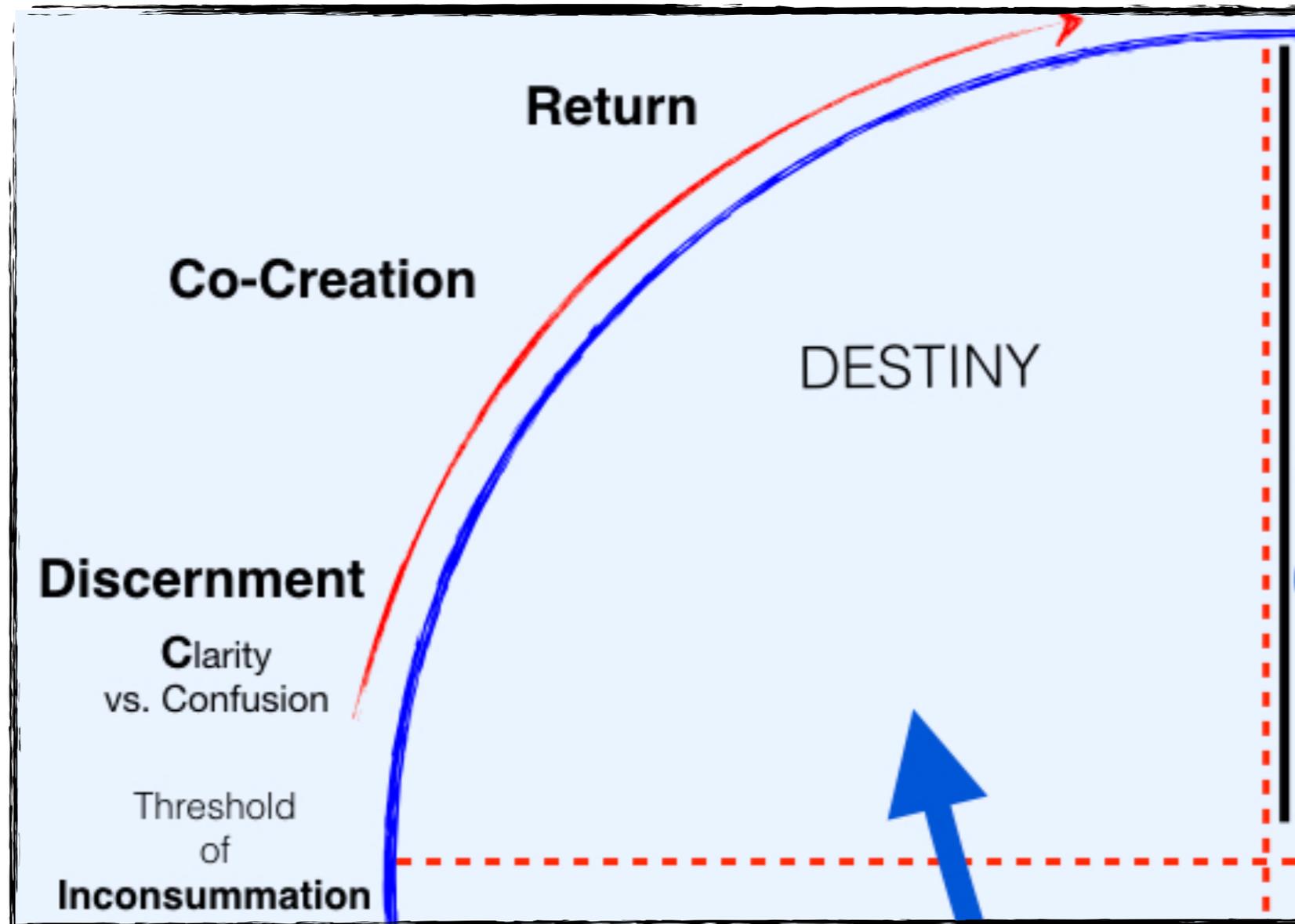
**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**



## CO-CREATION





DISCERNMENT



CO-CREATION

# **CO-CREATION IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## EXPLORING CO-CREATION

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

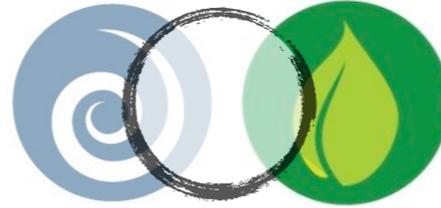
***Conversation:***

***Language:***

***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***



THE FORTH THRESHOLD  
BETWEEN CO-CREATION AND STORY - ***RETURN***

## **THE RETURN IN CONTEXT**

**Interior:**

**Interpersonal:**

**Systemic:**

**Environmental:**

## **EXPLORING THE RETURN - THE FORTH THRESHOLD**

***Questions:***

***Posture:***

***Conversation:***

***Language:***

***Belief:***

***Challenge:***

***Practice:***