



Solidarity Economies: An Infrastructure of Dissent in a Settler- Colonial Context

Introduction

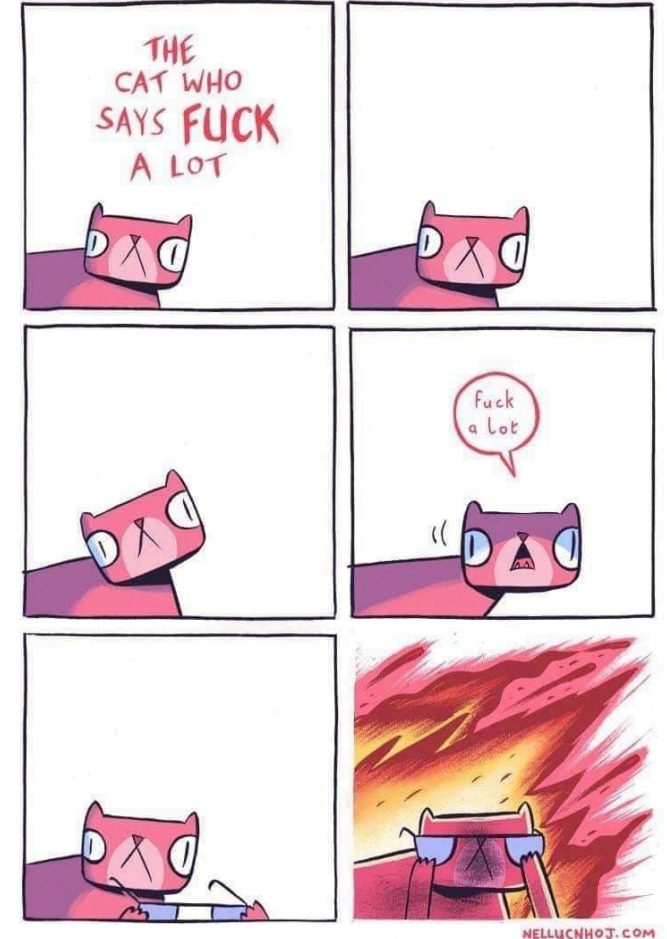
- ▶ Land acknowledgement
- ▶ Fuck KKKanada
- ▶ Fucking thank you!
- ▶ Content warning



Eco-Power Bottom
@FeelingFisky

"professionalism" is mostly just
codified racism/classism/sexism/
queerphobia/etc meant to
discredit the work & expertise of
marginalized groups

thank you for coming to my TED
Talk



Outline

- ▶ 1. Solidarity economy organizing // plurality in our livelihoods
- ▶ 2. Infrastructure of dissent // thinking about sustained mobilization
- ▶ 3. Reconcili-action and Decolonization // unsettling settler colonialism as central to movement building
- ▶ 4. Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds
- ▶ 5. Conclusion: Really fucking hope this made sense

- ▶ ... also, who the fuck am I?

- ▶ oh, and this is nothing new.

“I don’t want to be the owner of this, just a joyful conduit”

- Adrienne Maree Brown



Solidarity Economy Organizing

- ▶ *interdependent and interrelated collaborative networks of cooperative, democratic and solidarity based economic organizing*
- ▶ *Early example: 1937, during Spanish Civil War anarchists advocated for solidarity economy organizing*
- ▶ *Common theme of pushing for the co-creation of equitable, just and directly democratic societies*



Cooperation Jackson

- ▶ Cooperation Jackson is an emerging vehicle for solidarity economy organizing
- ▶ Born out of decades of radical organizing, striving for economic democracy and Black self-determination
- ▶ Long term vision: A cooperative network of 4 interconnected institutions
 - ▶ A federation of local worker cooperatives
 - ▶ A cooperative incubator
 - ▶ A cooperative education and training center
 - ▶ A cooperative credit union and Bank



Changing our story

► **Capitalocentrism** refers to the dominant representation of all economic activities being understood in terms of their relationship to capitalism. Destabilizing the hegemony of capital, it's about removing capitalism from the centre of our stories

► **Diverse economies** framework is a holistic conceptualization of the way we understand economic activity ... where economics is about how we collectively generate livelihoods in relation to each other and to the earth

– J. K. Gibson-Graham





ECONOMY + SOLIDARITY = SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

The many different ways in which we human beings collectively generate livelihoods in relation to each other and to the rest of the Earth.

The process of taking active responsibility for our relationships in ways that foster justice, equality and equity, accountability, autonomy (both individual and collective), cooperation and mutual aid, horizontal communication, healing, and shared-power

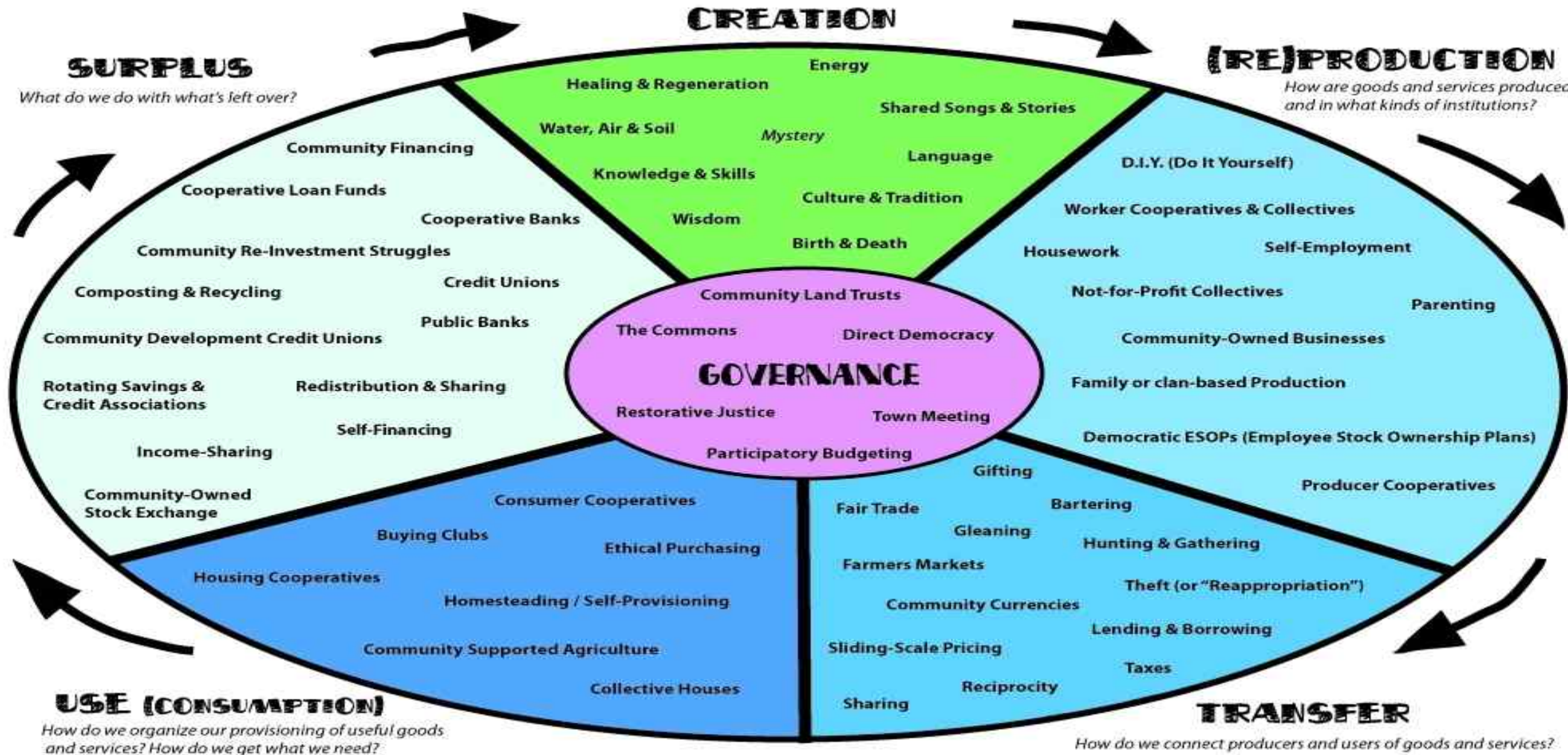
Interconnected and diverse ways of generating our livelihoods that encourage and embody practices of solidarity.

An "economy of economies" that resists the colonizing power of the individualistic, competitive, and exploitative economy of empire.

Solidarity, direct democracy, and the fucking state

- ▶ Normalizing direct democracy, autonomy and mutual aid
- ▶ Engaging with the state to dismantle its colonial rationality while organizing on the basis of local and regional autonomies
- ▶ Dual power rooted in the collectivity
- ▶ Everything is context-specific

Overall...



Infrastructure of Dissent

- ▶ The means of analysis, communication, organization and sustenance that nurtures the capacity for collective action that goes beyond spontaneous expressions of protest to building sustained mobilization and dissent. Based on four dimensions:
- ▶ 1. Collective memory
- ▶ 2. Capacity for analysis together, accessibly and inclusively
- ▶ 3. Own channels of communication
- ▶ 4. Forms of solidarity for taking action

Centring decolonization throughout

Reconciliation and Decolonization

- ▶ Accountability and settler privilege
- ▶ Reconciliation under a settler-colonial framework is about rescuing settler normalcy, about rescuing a settler future
- ▶ Decolonization involves the dismantling of settler-colonialism and the co-creation of post-capitalist societies through place-based practices

Reconciliation and Decolonization

- ▶ “Decoloniality necessarily follows, derives from, and responds to coloniality and the ongoing colonial process and condition. It is a form of struggle and survival, an epistemic and existence-based response and practice—most especially by colonized and racialized subjects—against the colonial matrix of power in all of its dimensions, and for the possibilities of an otherwise.”
- ▶ - “Decoloniality denotes ways of thinking, knowing, being, and doing that began with, but also precede, the colonial enterprise and invasion. It implies the recognition and undoing of the hierarchical structures of race, gender, heteropatriarchy, and class that continue to control life, knowledge, spirituality, and thought, structures that are clearly intertwined with and constitutive of global capitalism and Western modernity. Moreover, it is indicative of the ongoing nature of struggles, constructions, and creations that continue to work within coloniality’s margins and fissures to affirm that which coloniality has attempted to negate [...] Decoloniality, without a doubt, is contextual, relational, practice based, and lived ... it is intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and existentially entangled and interwoven”
- ▶ - Catherine E. Walsh and Walter D. Mignolo

Reconciliation and Decolonization

- ▶ Settler accountability and disrupting settler comfort
- ▶ Stages of unsettling: (Elizabeth Fast)
- ▶ 1. Learning // about KKKanada
- ▶ 2. Shame and guilt
- ▶ 3. Help // solidarity not charity
- ▶ 4. Balance // between need and giving help
- ▶ 5. Humility

Moving forward guided by respect and reciprocity, relevance, relationships and responsibility

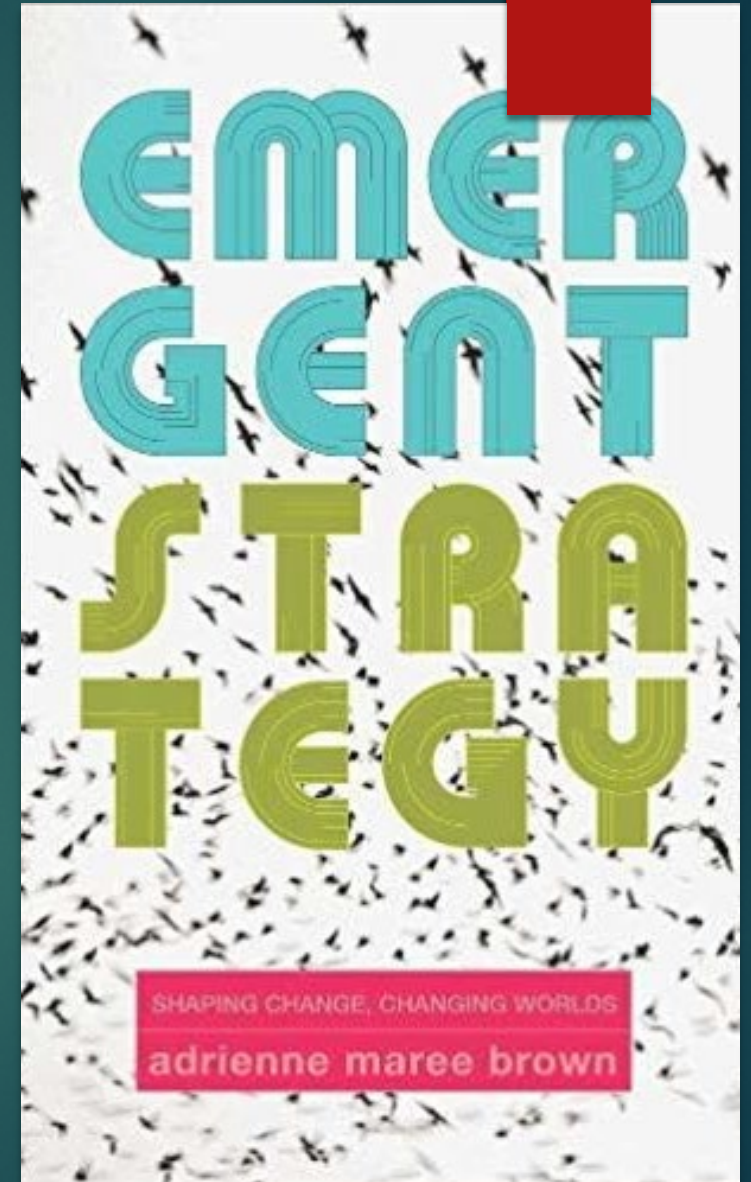
Reconciliation and Decolonization

- ▶ Solidarity economy organizing embodying decolonial processes:
 - ▶ Reciprocity
 - ▶ Mutual aid
 - ▶ Fluid, non-linear ways of thinking, being and doing
 - ▶ Place-based practices
 - ▶ And so on...
- Departing from a place of settler accountability and decolonization, solidarity economy organizing represents a meaningful and viable framework for unsettling settler-colonialism
- Arturo Escobar's book *Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*

Not a perfect solution

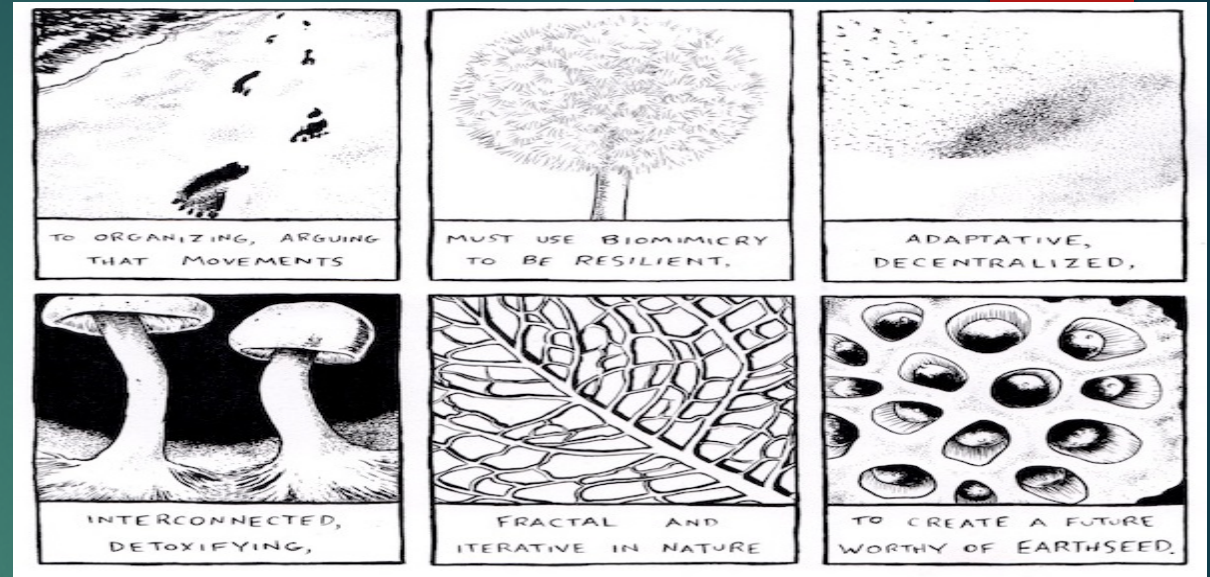
Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds

- ▶ The way complex systems and patterns arise out of a multiplicity of relatively simple interactions
- ▶ Principles of emergent strategy:
 - ▶ Small is good, small is all (the large is a reflection of the small)
 - ▶ Change is constant
 - ▶ There is always enough time for the right work
 - ▶ There is a conversation in the room only these people at this moment can have
 - ▶ Never a failure, always a lesson
 - ▶ Trust the people (if you trust the people, they become trustworthy)
 - ▶ Focus on critical connections more than critical mass
 - ▶ What you pay attention to grows



Emergent Strategy

- We know this... this is not new
 - **Leading not from right to left, or from minority to majority, but from spirit towards liberation**



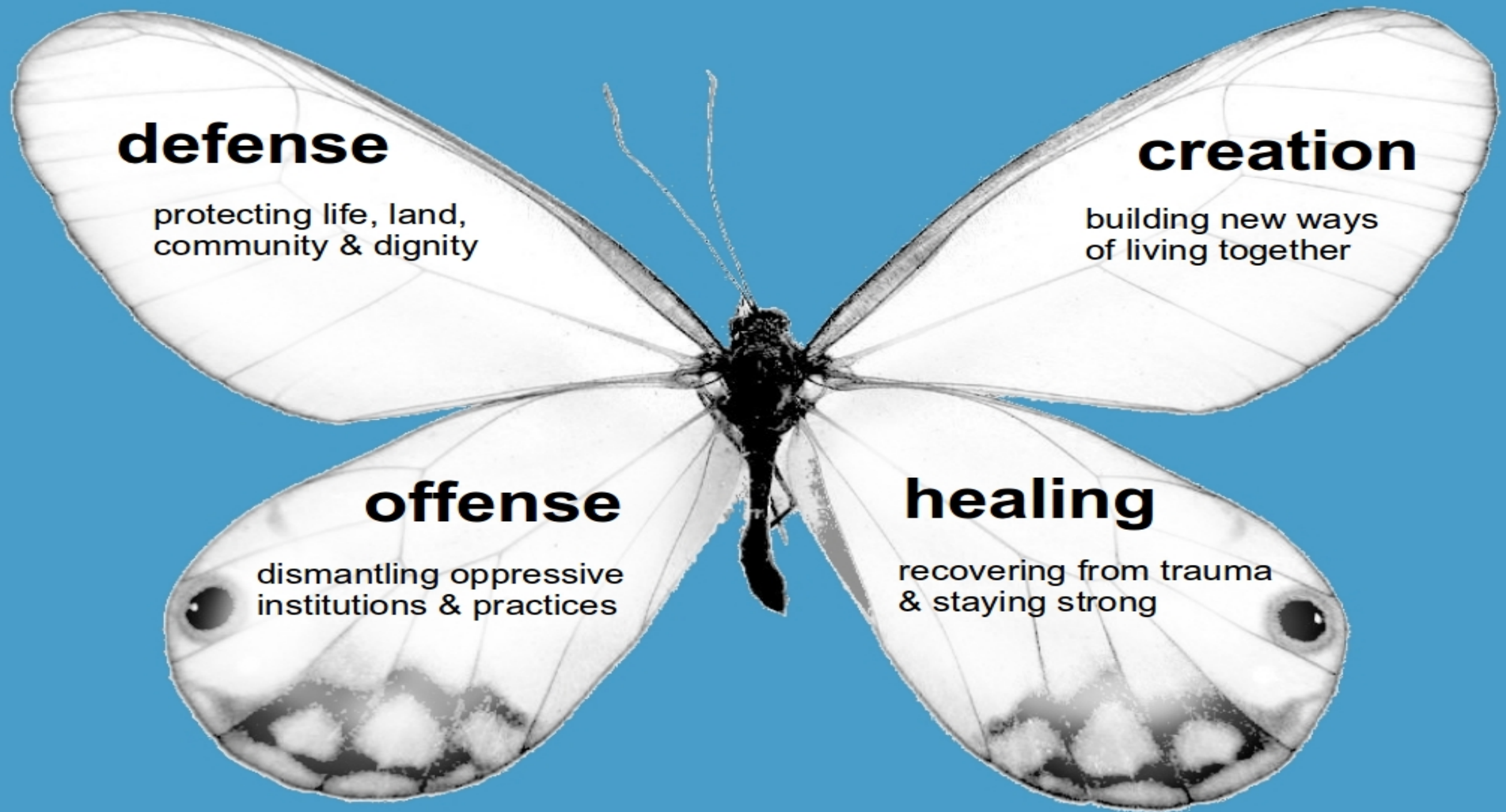
Element	Nature of Element
Fractal	The Relationship Between Small and Large
Adaptive	How We Change
Interdependence and Decentralization	Who We Are and How We Share
Non-linear and Iterative	The Pace and Pathways of Change
Resilience and Transformative justice	How We Recover and Transform
Creating More Possibilities	How We Move Towards Life

Conclusion

- ▶ Thinking about decolonial infrastructures of dissent with solidarity economy organizing as one vehicle for helping us to emerge shaping our change, and changing the world as is
- ▶ Really fucking hope this all makes sense



four wings of a transformative social movement



defense

protecting life, land,
community & dignity

creation

building new ways
of living together

offense

dismantling oppressive
institutions & practices

healing

recovering from trauma
& staying strong



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Thank you so fucking much for listening!