

# **BUILDINGENERGY BOSTON**

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## **Moving Beyond: Leveraging Moral Imagination to Accelerate Systems Change**

**Melissa O'Mara, The Leaders Co-Lab  
Kevin Stack, Building in Nature's Image**

*Curated by Clay Tilton*

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**Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) | March 21, 2025**



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 2613 8135

Speakers: Kevin Stack and Melissa O'Mara

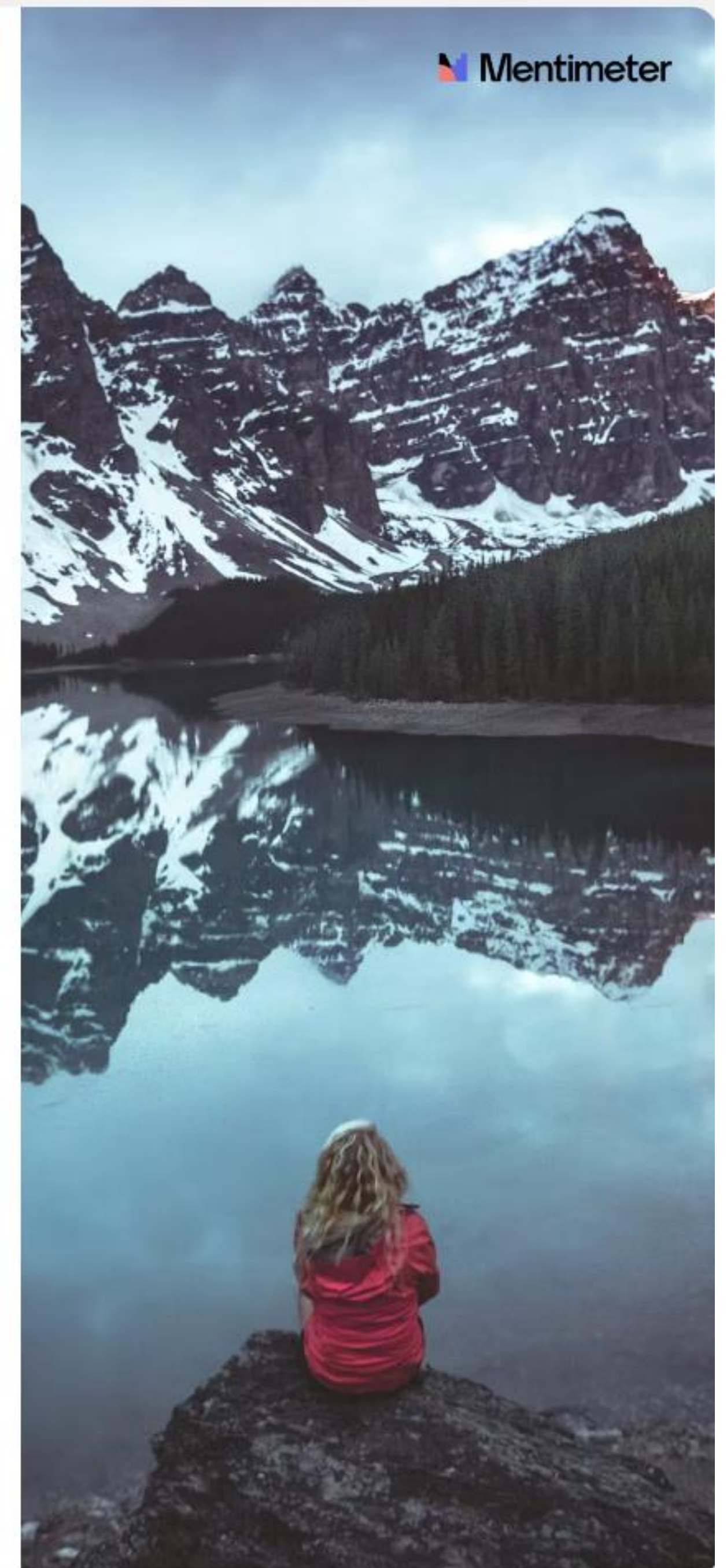
# Moving Beyond: Leveraging Moral Imagination to Accelerate Systems Change

Expanding leadership skills and perspectives is vital to breaking through "business as usual" mindsets and enacting industry-wide change.

Using an interactive moral imagination exercise, we guide participants to reflect and experience the Inner Development Goals: ways of Being, Thinking, Relating, Collaborating, and Acting.

Planning and executing an adaptation to your goals and leadership style with this exercise will help you and your team move the needle towards systemic change.

Leaders empowered with the IDGs will discover new approaches for integrative workforce development and accelerate the mindshift required to achieve a fair and resilient future for all life.

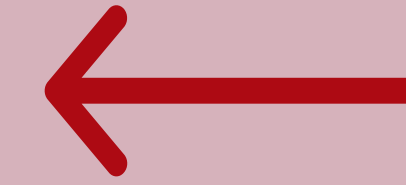






# INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Menti Poll:  
Change  
Leadership  
Challenges



2. Menti Poll:  
Acting to  
Enable  
Change



3. Self-  
Assesment:  
Personal  
IDG  
Priorities



Scan to reflect  
on your most  
important  
systemic  
change  
priorities,  
blockers, and  
reasons for  
being here in  
this session

# Learning Objectives & Agenda:

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Identify current challenges, including workforce & leadership mindsets, beliefs, and practices that contribute to “business as usual”

Share the impact of experiencing a 20-minute Moral Imagination Exercise and promote similar developmental activities in other contexts

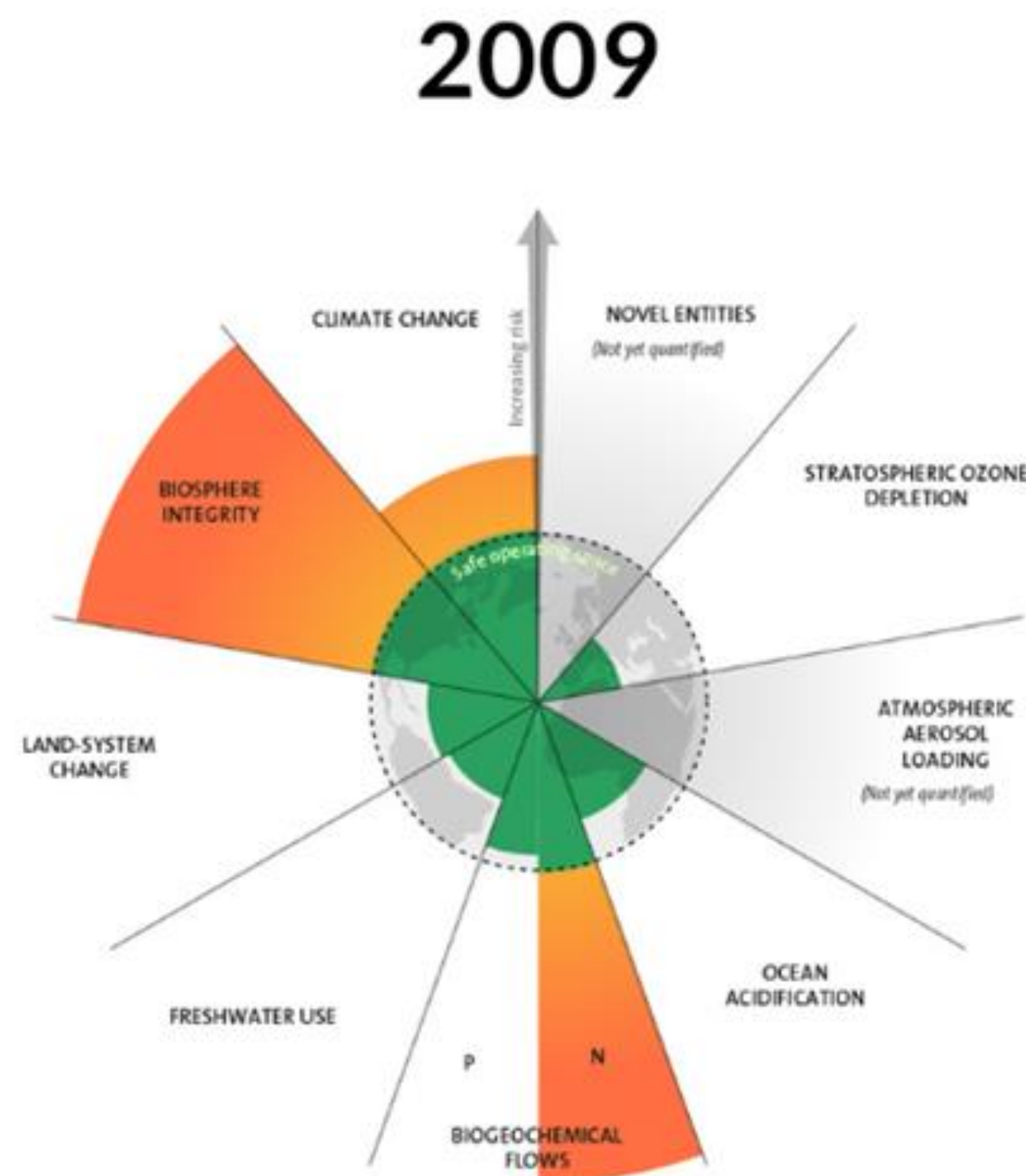
Apply the Inner Development Goals to enable more committed, collaborative teams, with leadership that drives change necessary to achieve project goals

Create a personal IDG Gap Analysis, and make one commitment to become a stronger systems change leader and intervener

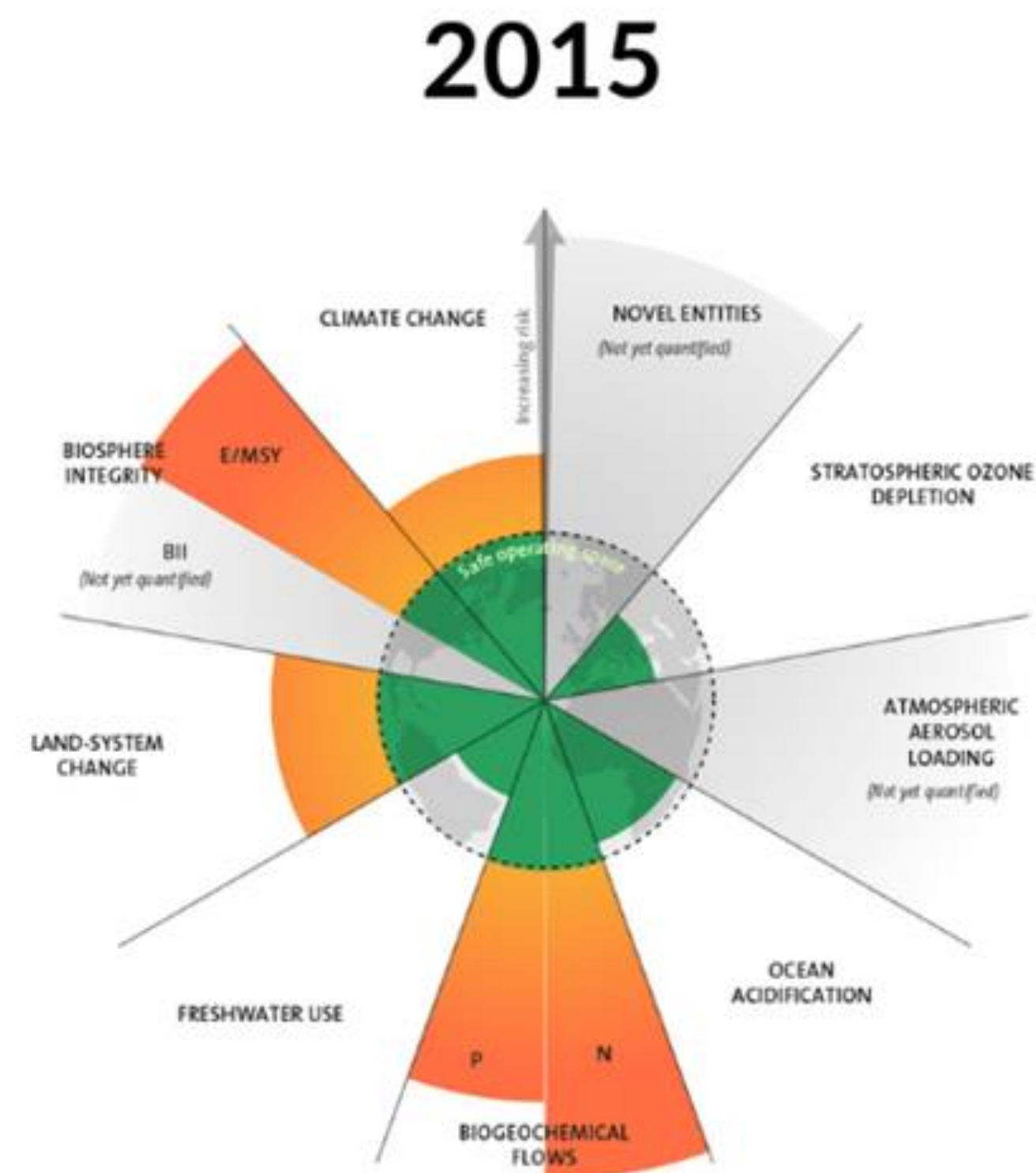




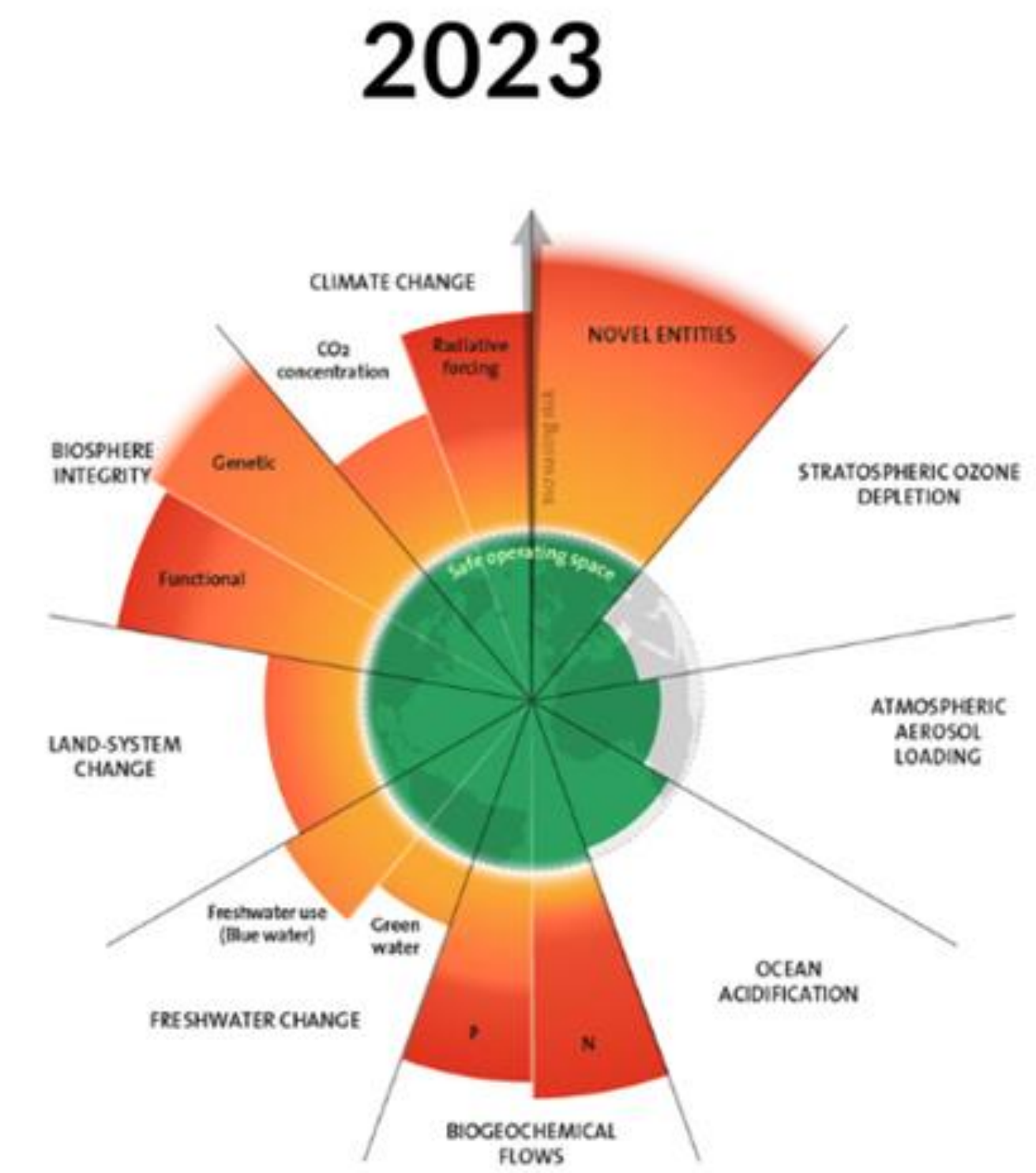
# Scientists are showing us that we are crossing tipping points – **AND** it's **MORE** than Electrification & Decarbonization.



7 boundaries assessed,  
3 crossed



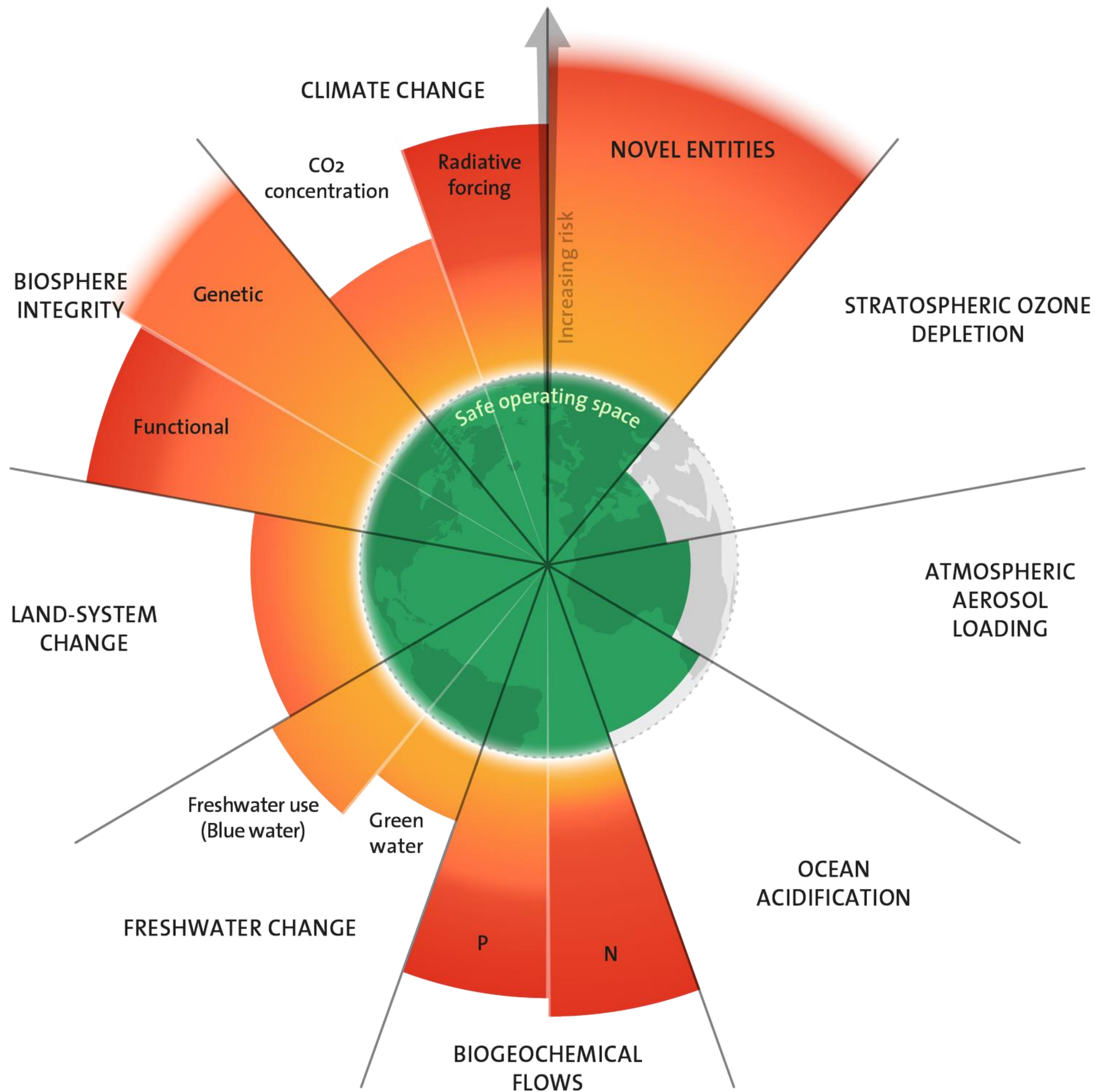
7 boundaries assessed,  
4 crossed



9 boundaries assessed,  
6 crossed

The evolution of the planetary boundaries framework. Licenced under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 (Credit: Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University. Based on Richardson et al. 2023, Steffen et al. 2015, and Rockström et al. 2009) Click on the image to download.





**"We Earth system scientists and climate scientists are getting seriously nervous. The planet is changing faster than we had expected. We are, despite years of raising the alarm, now seeing that the planet is actually in a situation where we underestimated risks. Abrupt changes are occurring in a way that is way beyond the realistic expectations in science."**

**Johan Rockström, Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research**



# Climate Change is only 1 of 6 Planetary Boundaries breached, with 3 still in a “safe zone”

**Climate Change**

**Boundary Breached**

**Novel Entities**

**Boundary Breached**

**Stratospheric Ozone  
Depletion**

**Safe Zone**

**Atmospheric Aerosol  
Loading**

**Safe Zone**

**Ocean Acidification**

**Safe Zone**

**Modification of  
Biogeochemical Flows**

**Boundary Breached**

**Freshwater Change**

**Boundary Breached**

**Land System Change**

**Boundary Breached**

**Biosphere Integrity**

**Boundary Breached**



“ There are it seems to me four main pathways to the truth;

Science , Reason, Intuition & Imagination

I also believe strongly that any world view that tries to get by without paying due respect to all four of these is bound to fail. Each on its own has its virtues and vices, its gifts and its inherent dangers: only by respecting each and all together can we learn to act wisely."

**Dr. Ian McGilchrist**





Let's activate more "ways of knowing"



INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**AMY C. EDMONDSON**

PROFESSOR, HARVARD  
BUSINESS SCHOOL



*"Intelligence* is the ability to apprehend and perceive what is.

*Imagination* is the ability to perceive what could be.

*Creativity* is the combination of both intelligence and imagination."

Source: Scott Barry Kaufman, author of *Transcend: The New Science of Self-Actualization*, as described in Sam Harris's *Making Sense* podcast








Future

Present







Ancestor,  
I greet you...



Future

Present




---

**Present Day Person answer the question:**

**“How does it feel to be you right now, And to be living in this time?”**





Ancestor,  
I greet you...



Future

Present



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**Present Day Person answer the question:**

**“Where do you find the strength and the power to keep going - despite all of the obstacles, the challenges, the discouragement and all of the uncertainty that you're facing?”**



Future

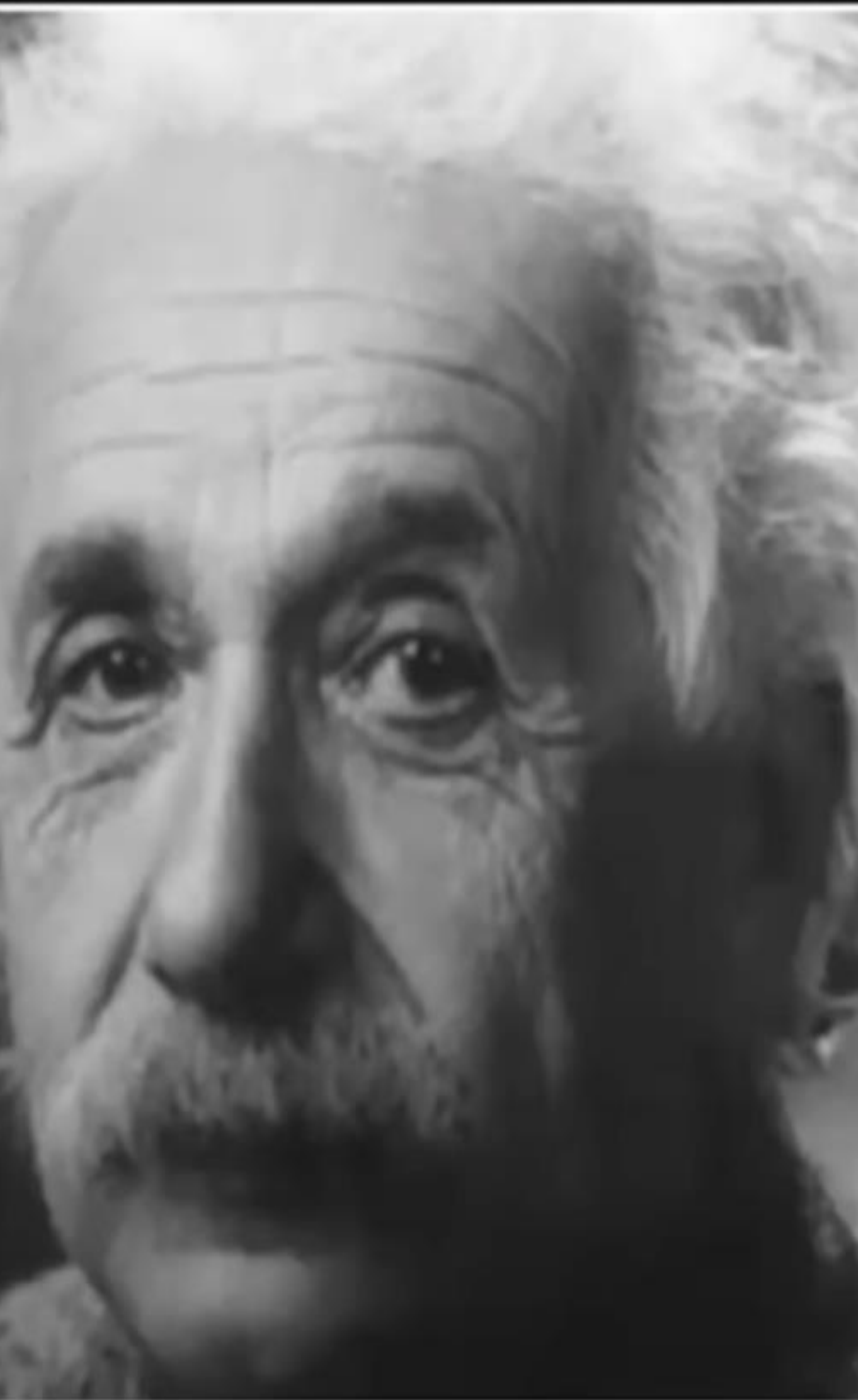
Present

**Future person speaks:**

**“What would you like to tell your ancestors before they go back to this current age of uncertainty, and challenge?”**







Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.

— *Albert Einstein* —

AZ QUOTES

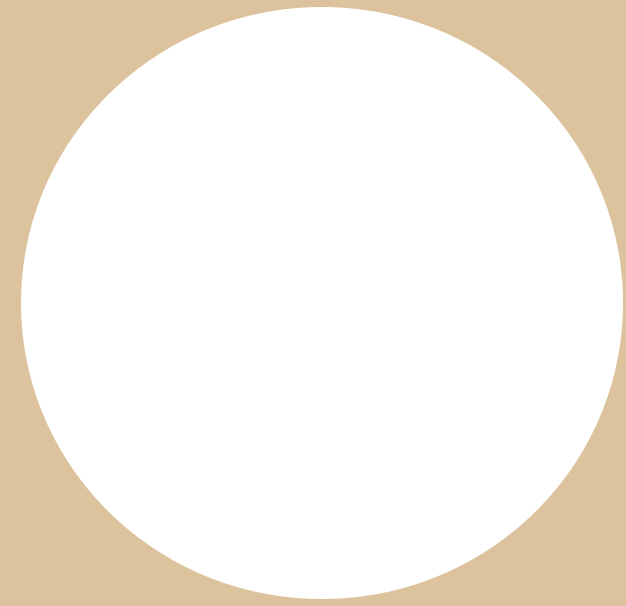


# Guided Reflection (3 minutes)

- How did this exercise impact you personally?
  - What are you feeling?
  - What insights/thoughts do you have?
  - What got activated?
- What is the new that is emerging for you?
- What might you want to let go of?



Change doesn't happen until we change ourselves.  
The IDGs point us in the right direction.



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**1 Being**  
Relationship to Self

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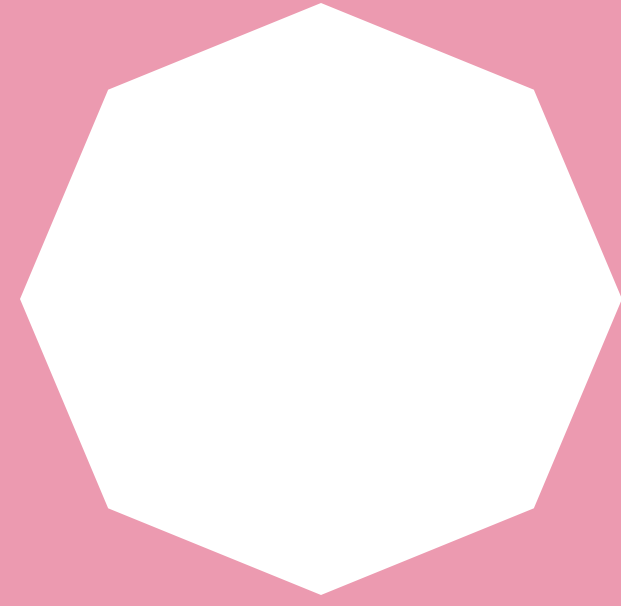
Inner Compass

Integrity and  
Authenticity

Openness and  
Learning Mindset

Self-awareness

Presence



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**2 Thinking**  
Cognitive Skills

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Critical Thinking

Complexity  
Awareness

Perspective Skills

Sense-making

Long-term  
Orientation and  
Visioning



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**3 Relating**  
Caring for Others  
and the World

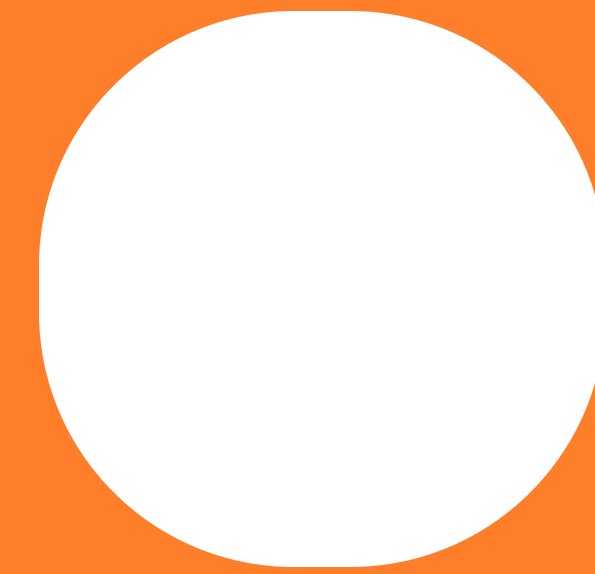
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Appreciation

Connectedness

Humility

Empathy and  
Compassion



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**4 Collaborating**  
Social Skills

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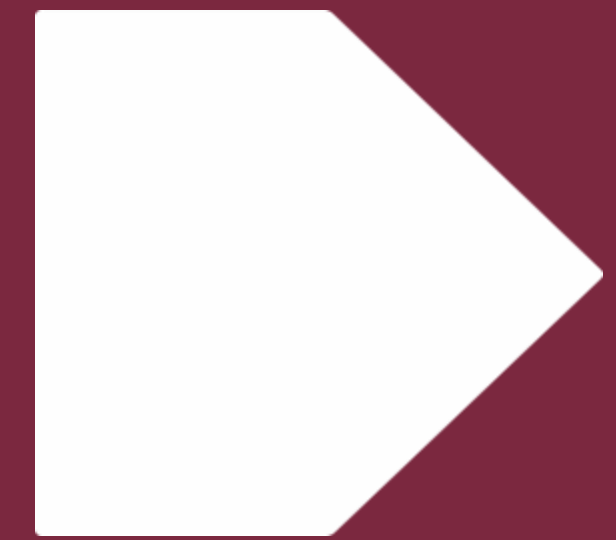
Communication  
Skills

Co-Creation Skills

Inclusive Mindset  
And Intercultural  
Competence

Trust

Mobilization Skills



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**5 Acting**  
Driving Change

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Courage

Creativity

Optimism

Perseverance



# Just imagine...

- What might be possible if we practiced these IDGs of Being, Thinking, Relating, Collaborating and Acting in every conversation?
- How might we integrate the IDGs into every project and initiative in the Buildings industry?



# Table Discussion & Report Out

- Focus on one Dimension – based on the table you are sitting at. What is crucial about this inner dimension and skillset?
- What might be possible if for you and this movement if we practiced these skills consistently?
- How might we integrate these IDG skills into every project and initiative in the Buildings industry? What's one key insight or idea?
- Appoint a spokesperson to share one key insight back into the room (30 seconds max – 1 – 2 sentences)





# INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Menti Poll:  
Change  
Leadership  
Challenges



2. Menti Poll:  
Acting to  
Enable  
Change



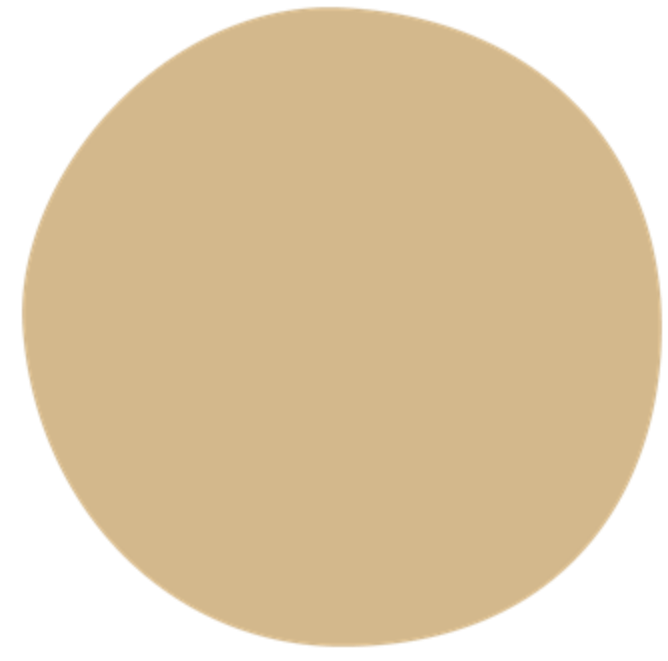
3. Self-  
Assesment:  
Personal  
IDG  
Priorities



Instructions:

Please complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> Menti Poll (you can scan here, or at your table).

Make sure you pick the one on Acting to Enable Change!



# Being

## Relationship to Self

Cultivating our inner life and developing and deepening our relationship to our thoughts, feelings and body help us be present, intentional and non-reactive when we face complexity.



### **Inner Compass**

Having a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values and purposes relating to the good of the whole.



### **Integrity and Authenticity**

A commitment and ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity.



### **Openness and Learning Mindset**

Having a basic mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable and embrace change & grow.



### **Self-awareness**

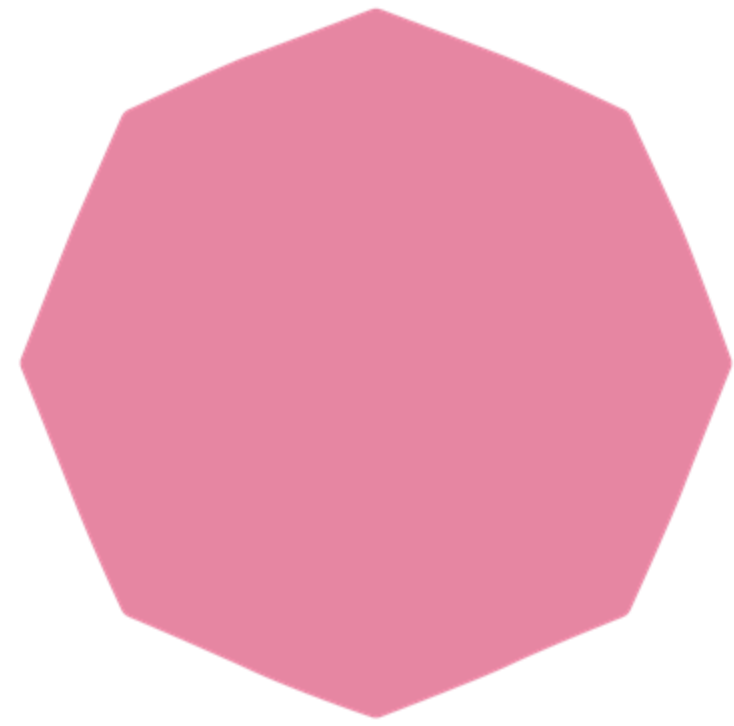
Ability to be in reflective contact with own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself.



### **Presence**

Ability to be in the here and now, without judgement & in a state of open-ended presence.





# Thinking

## Cognitive Skills

Developing our cognitive skills by taking different perspectives, evaluating information and making sense of the world as an interconnected whole is essential for wise decision-making.



### **Critical Thinking**

Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans.



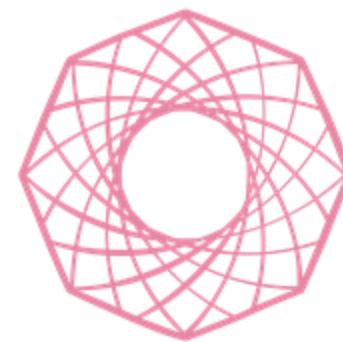
### **Complexity Awareness**

Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities.



### **Perspective Skills**

Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.



### **Sense-making**

Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories.



### **Long-term Orientation and Visioning**

Long-term orientation and ability to formulate & sustain commitment to visions relating to the larger context.



# Relating

## Caring for Others & The World

Appreciating, caring for and feeling connected to others, such as neighbors, future generations or the biosphere, helps us create more just and sustainable systems and societies for everyone.



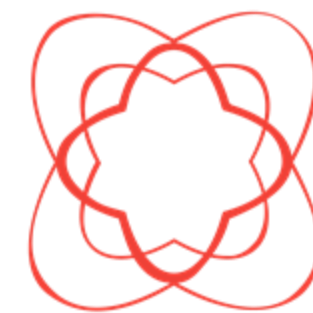
### **Appreciation**

Relating to others and to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.



### **Connectedness**

Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being a part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem



### **Humility**

Being able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for one's own importance.



### **Empathy and Compassion**

Ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy and compassion and address related suffering.





# Collaborating

## Social Skills

To make progress on shared concerns, we need to develop our abilities to include, hold space and communicate with stakeholders with different values, skills and competencies.



### **Communication skills**

Ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skillfully, to manage conflicts constructively & to adapt communication to diverse groups.



### **Co-creation skills**

Skills and motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation.



### **Inclusive mindset and intercultural competence**

Willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people and collectives with different views and backgrounds.



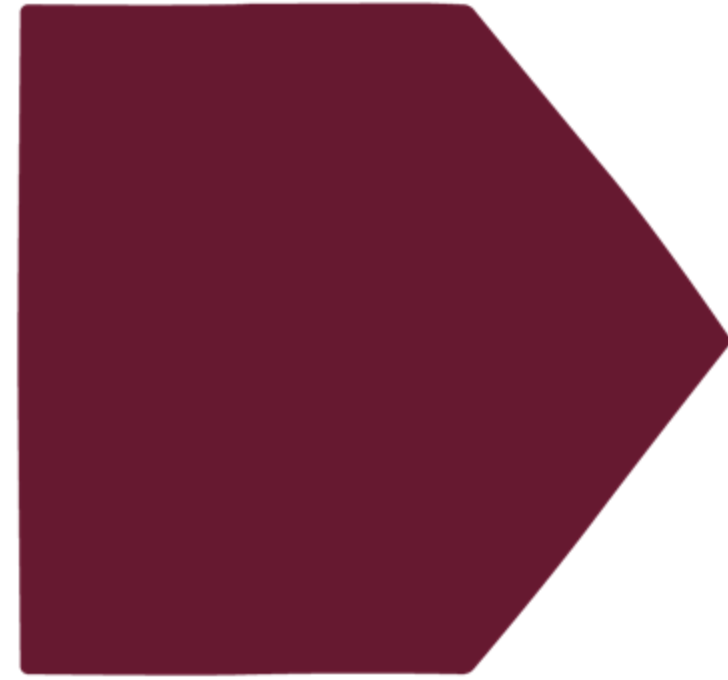
### **Trust**

Ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships.



### **Mobilization skills**

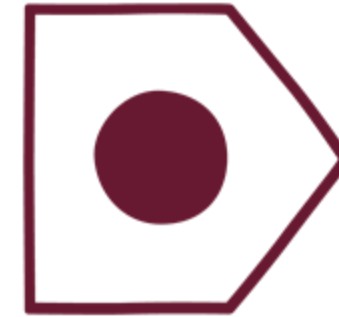
Skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes.



# Acting

## Enabling Change

Qualities such as courage and optimism help us acquire true agency, break old patterns, generate original ideas and act with persistence in uncertain times.



### **Courage**

Ability to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and, if need be, challenge and disrupt existing structures and views..



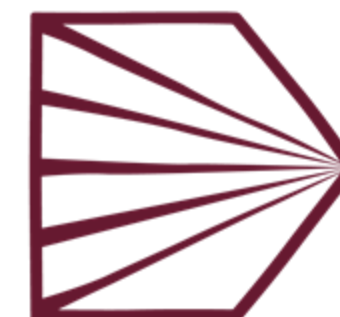
### **Creativity**

Ability to generate and develop original ideas, innovate and being willing to disrupt conventional patterns.



### **Optimism**

Ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.



### **Perseverance**

Ability to sustain engagement and remain determined and patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit.



“Change doesn’t happen until we change ourselves.”

-Kevin Stack

“We just don’t know how, and we can do something about that.”

- Melissa O’Mara

(inspired by Laura Whitworth)





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3. Self-  
Assesment:  
Personal  
IDG  
Priorities



Scan to access  
a Personal IDG  
Self-  
Assessment  
and plan your  
professional  
development  
priorities





# INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Transformational Skills for Sustainable Development

## Personal IDG Development Priorities

**B** *I* U ↻ ✕

Thank you for your contributions with our opening survey, with your seventh generation partner, and with other participants today.

Please complete this form to assess which IDG skills you would like to further develop and apply to accelerate change in the next 3 - 6 months. You will receive your IDG Development Priorities immediately. Aggregate participant data will also be shared, along with the slide presentation, and additional learning resources.

Please give us your feedback on the session, so that we can continue our own inner development, and grow our capacity to unleash change leadership through sessions like these.

Email \*

Valid email

This form is collecting emails. [Change settings](#)





## Resource List:

IDG Personal Development Priorities: <https://forms.gle/onCxUEnJ74yHNeoz7>

The IDG Framework: <https://www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org/framework>

The IDG Toolkit: <https://idg.tools/#explore>

IDG Resources: <https://innerdevelopmentgoals.org/about/resources/>

Planetary Boundaries: <https://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/planetary-boundaries.html>

Planetary Health Check: <https://www.planetaryhealthcheck.org/>

Dr. Iain McGilchrist Quote/Lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/clip/Ugkx0tmT-Uy2j4VbGKhKAp25Q6cAlQu3dZSi>





Thank you! Let's stay connected.

Contact us to collaborate on the IDGs

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