



How to Collaborate to Transform Social Systems

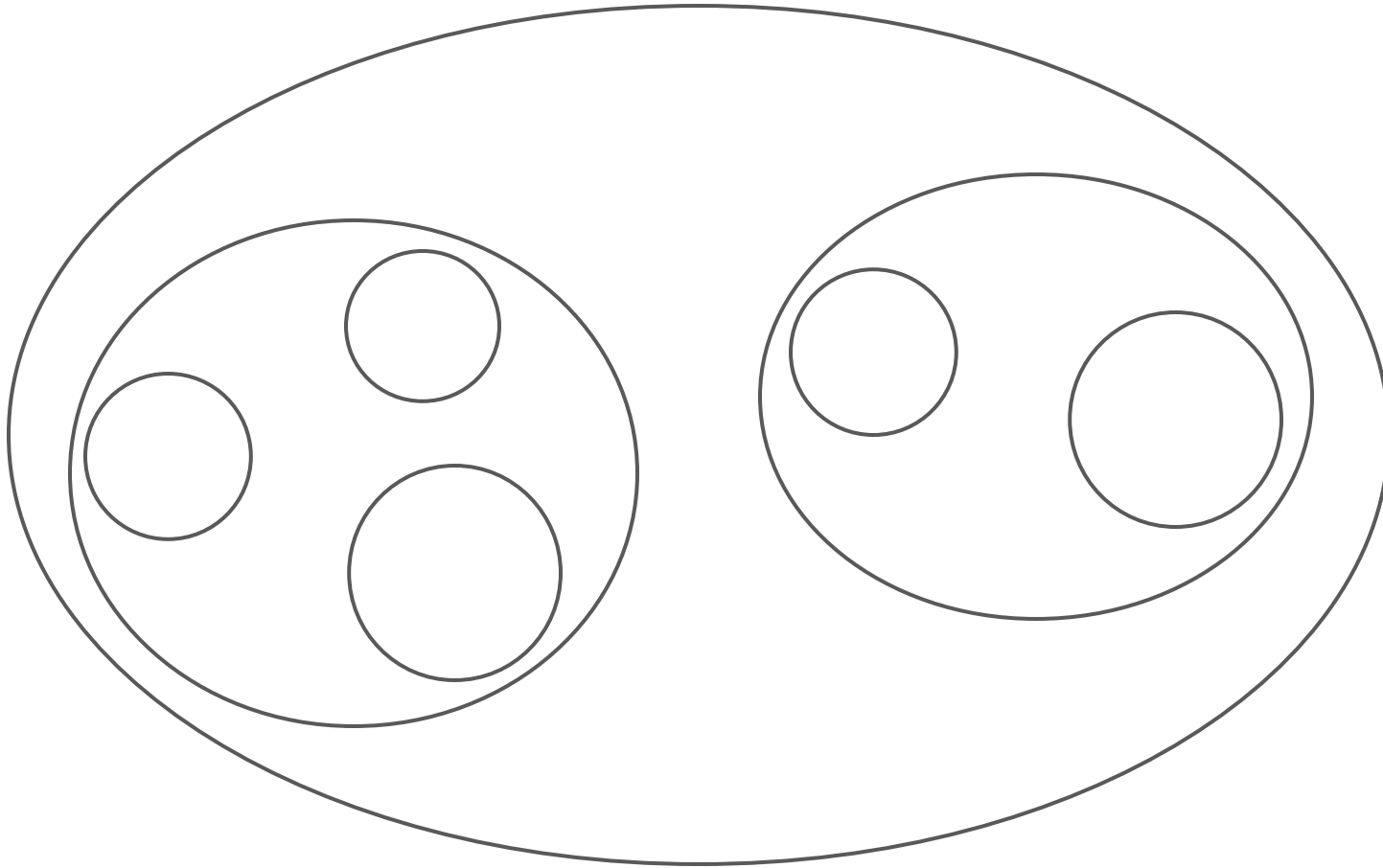
Adam Kahane

“Hidden Connections” Conference
Nanyang Technological University
March 3, 2014

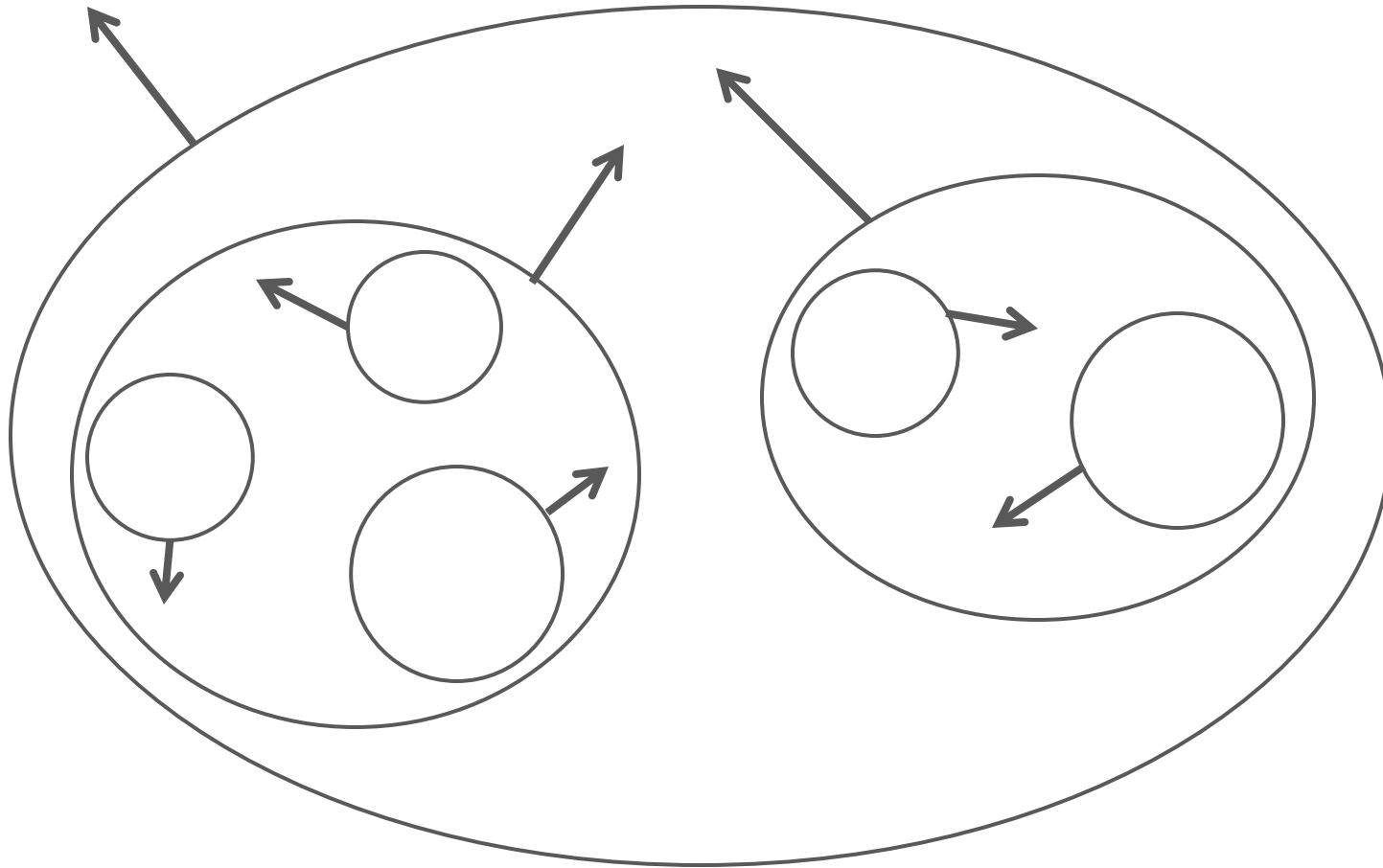
Two Ways to Solve Problems

Type of complexity	The common way that works for low complexity problems	The uncommon way that works for high complexity problems	The uncommon way's requirement for collaboration
Dynamic complexity: the separation across space and time between cause and effect	Working piece by piece	Working with the system as a whole	At a larger scale
Generative complexity: the unfamiliarity and unpredictability of the future	Based on existing practice	Based on emerging practice	To discover ways to mitigate risk
Social complexity: the differences in the perspectives and interests of different stakeholders	Relying on experts and authorities	Relying on stakeholders	Involving more actors

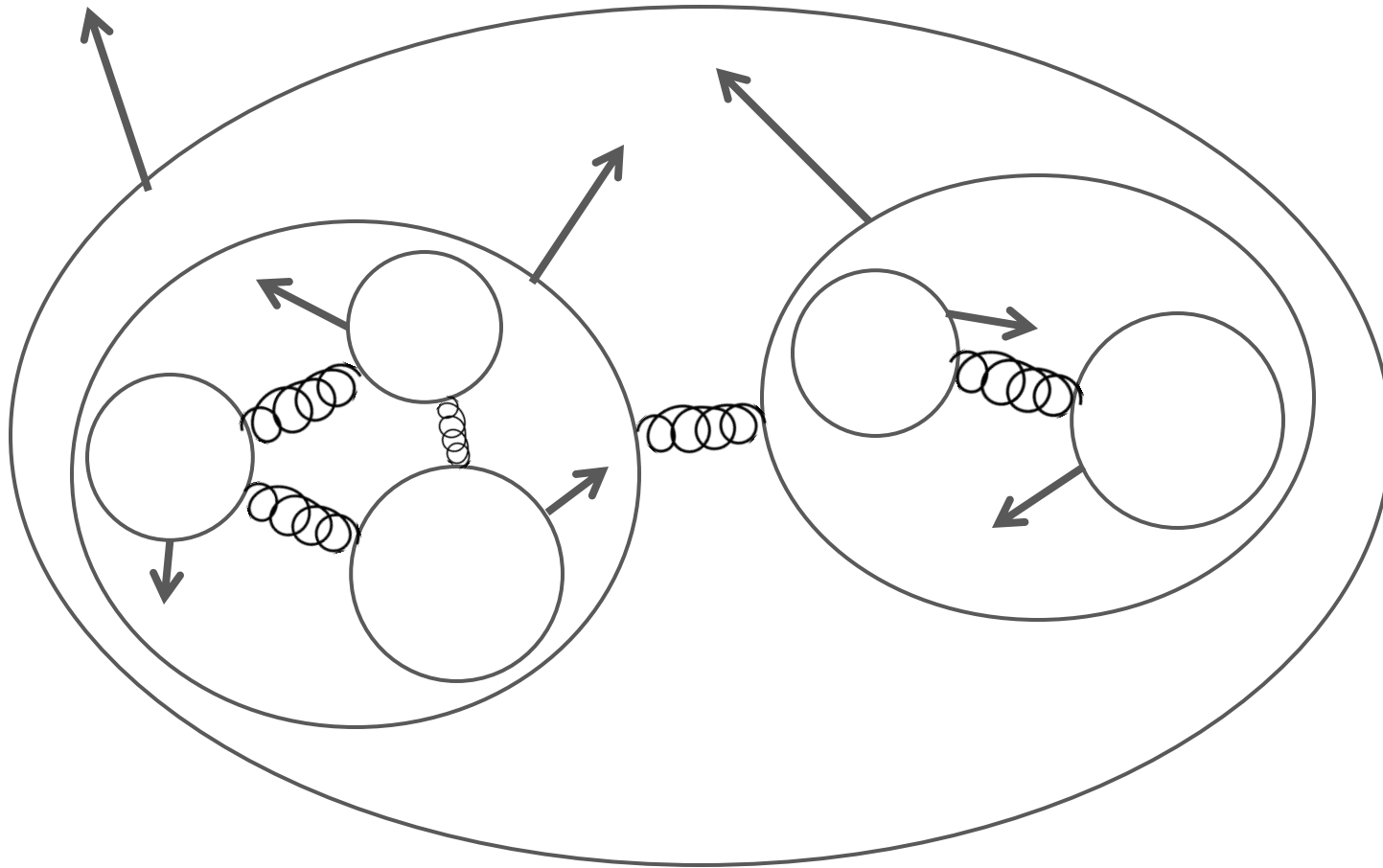
The Holonic Structure of Social Systems



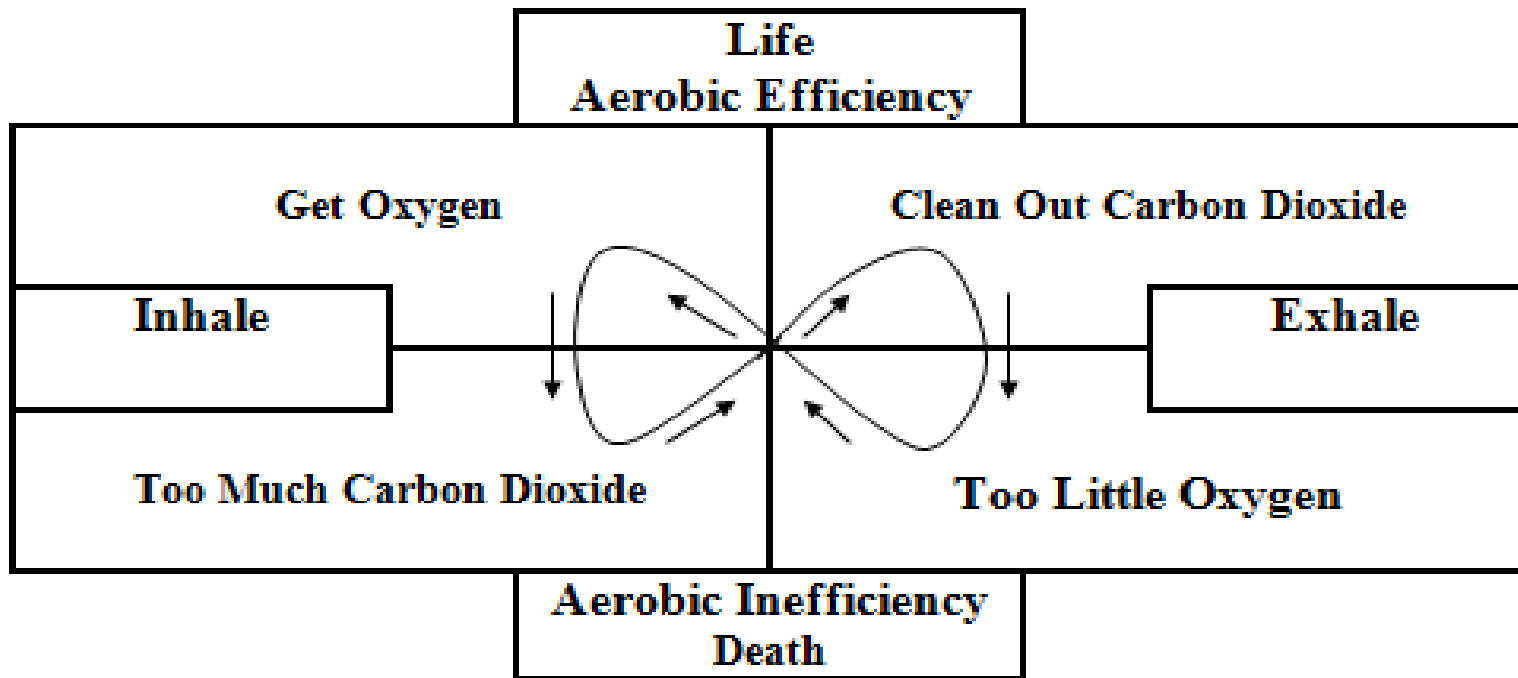
The Power Drive of Social Holons



The Power and Love Drives of Social Holons



The Cycle of Breathing



Generative Cycle of Social Transformation

	Power	Love
Generative action	Asserting , mobilising, pushing	Engaging , collaborating, embracing
Liminal reaction	Resisting , fighting, polarising	Compromising , capitulating, fusing



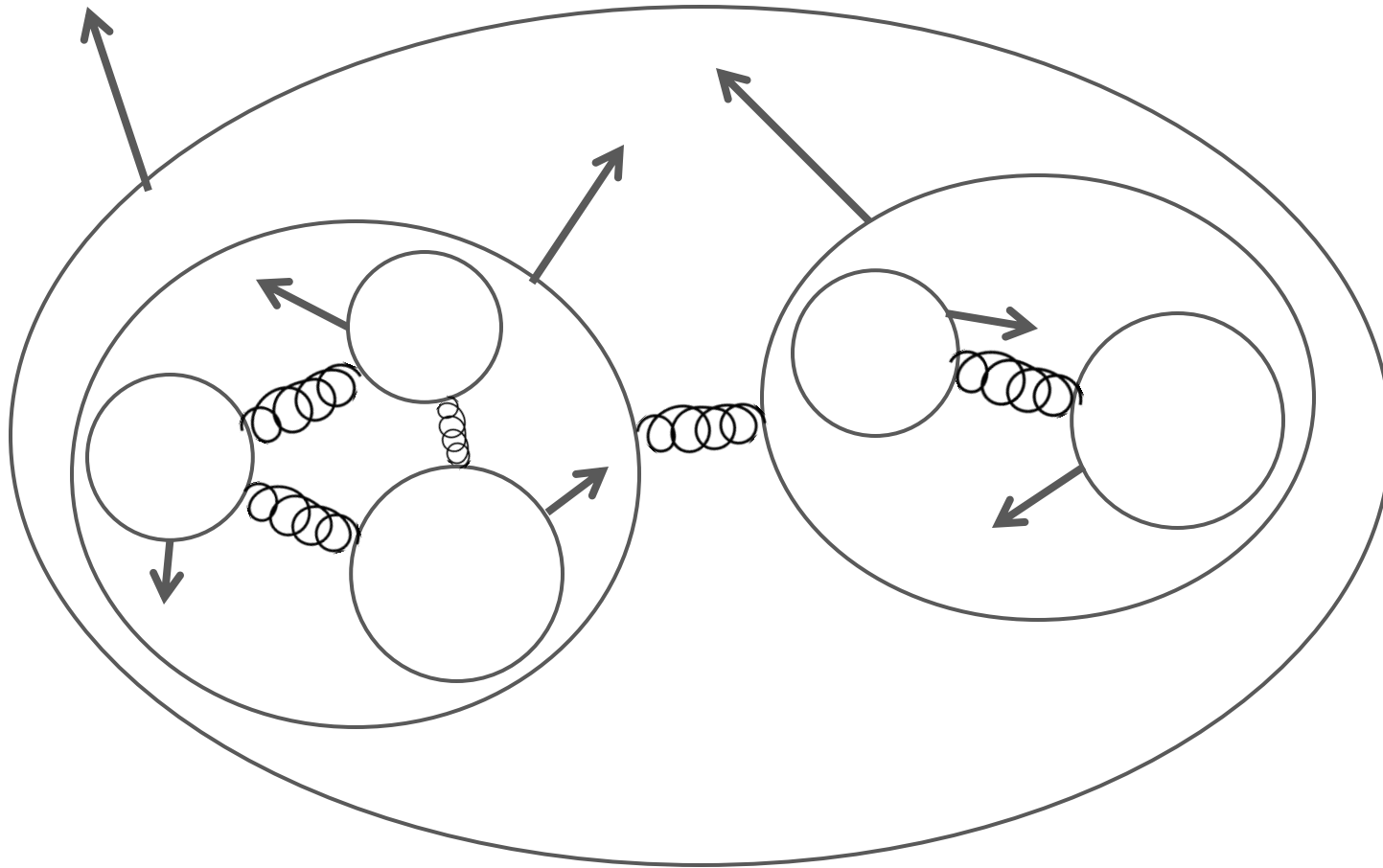
Generative and Degenerative Cycles of Social Transformation

	Power	Love
	<i>Alive creativity</i>	
Generative action	Asserting , mobilising, pushing	Engaging , collaborating, embracing
Liminal reaction	Resisting , fighting, polarising	Compromising , capitulating, fusing
De-generative action	Steamrolling , defeating, destroying	Manipulating , emasculating, suffocating
	<i>Deadly war</i>	<i>Deadly peace</i>

The Two Sides of Power and of Love

	Generative side	Degenerative side
Power	<i>Power-to</i> : the drive to realize oneself, to do one's job	<i>Power-over</i> : power that overlooks or denies or cuts off love and unity
Love	<i>Lifting-up-love</i> : the other-acknowledging, other-helping drive that reunites the separated	<i>Falling-down-love</i> : love that overlooks or denies or suffocates power

The Power and Love Drives of Social Holons

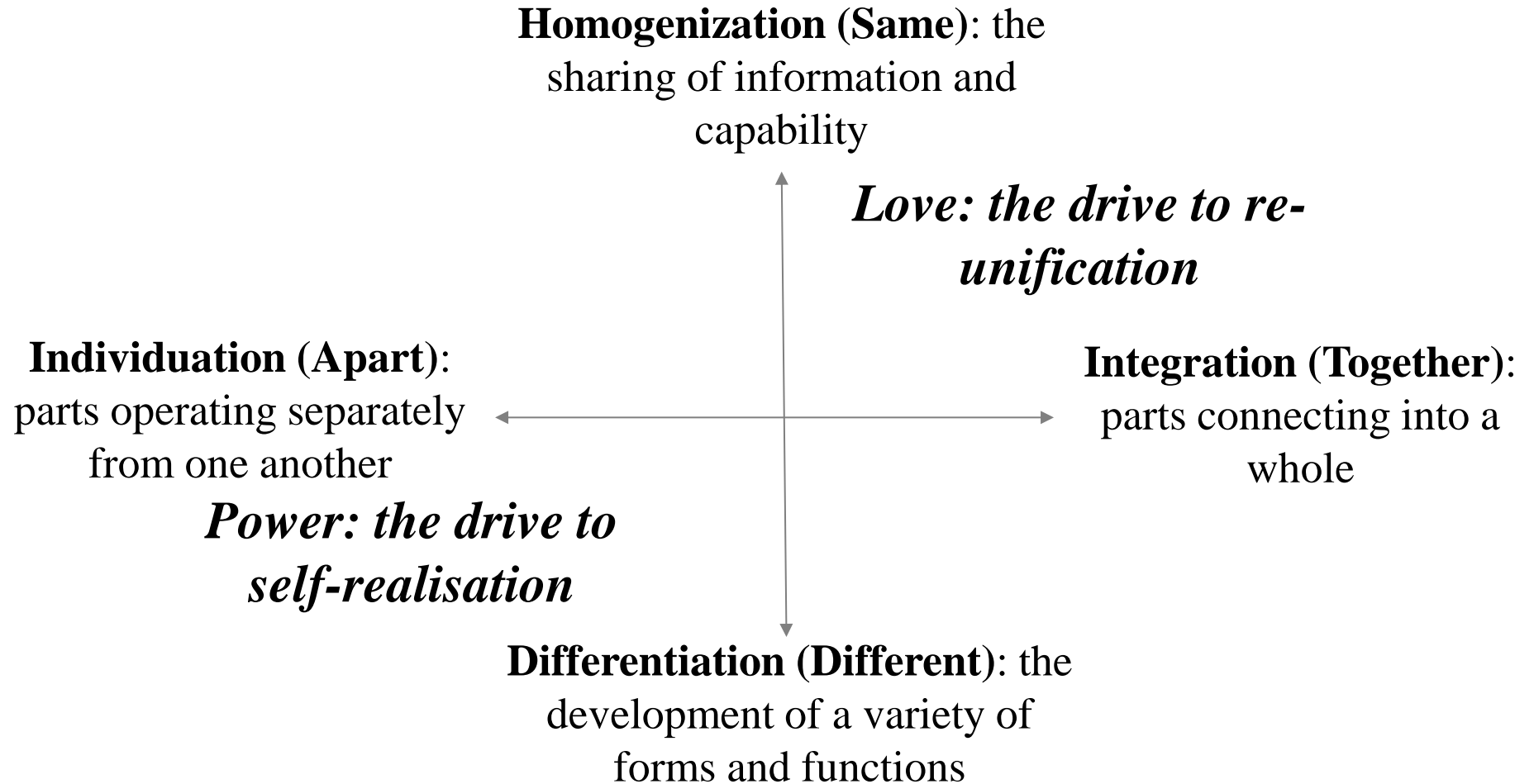




The Cycle of Social Transformation

	Power	Love
	<i>Alive creativity</i>	
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Four Processes in Social Systems



Characteristics of Social Labs

Not only	But also
Fixing symptoms or effects	Addressing structural causes
Relying on experts or authorities	Involving all key stakeholders
Making recommendations on paper	Developing solutions in practice
Implementing one chosen solution	Iteratively piloting and managing a portfolio of promising solutions
A once-off project	An ongoing platform

Visión Guatemala Scenarios, 1999



The Illusion of the Moth



The Zigzag of the Beetle



The Flight of the Firefly

Four Ways of Talking and Listening

