



AQtivating Soul Power: Action Research Design for Cities in Metacrisis

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1. Abstract

In this action research design workshop, we explore the possibilities of Soul Power to resolve the Metacrisis that cities face. We start with the Action Research question - **"What?"** is the challenge? We consider **why cities seem to be fragmented, climate threatened, at war, polluted, biodiversity deserts, chaotic, destructive and disrespectful.** Then we ask: **"So What?"** How do these conditions arise from and contribute to cultural collapses, aging infrastructure, insufficient housing, degrading environment and broken economies? We share our research on **"Now What"** can we do about the Metacrisis? Gleaning from Integral and Living City practitioners, polymaths, cosmologists, transdisciplinary and ecovillage realities we consider if the fundamental cause of city Metacrisis might be a disconnection from our Soul? We consider **What is Soul Power?** And how can the Beauty, Truth and Goodness in Integral/Living City frameworks AQtivate us to address the Metacrisis in our cities?

A Contexting Note about Integral City Map 5

In exploring the Soul of the city, we refer to Integral City Map 5: Spirituality in the City. We acknowledge how our sense of the Soul has been influenced by our conversations with:

- **Nish Dubashia** and his Diamond Model which shows the disconnection from the Toroidal flow.
- **Karen O'Brien** and her book "You Matter More Than You Think," exploring the fractals, wholeness and entanglement that are in Integral City's 5 maps.
- **Jude Currivan** and her video "A Radical View of Reality" which demonstrates how Consciousness is the primary energy/source of the Universe.
- **Said Dawlabani** and his book "Second Sapiens: The Rise of the Planetary Mind and the Future of Humanity."
- **James Lovelock** and his proposition that humans are "Gaia's Reflective Organs."

2. Summary of Action Research Design for AQtivating Soul Power in the City

The backbone of our research design is based on the core questions of Action Research: **What, So What, and Now What.**

What: Cities are in crisis: they are fragmented, at war, polluted, disconnected, overgrown, destructive, disrespectful (Dubashia). The world's intergovernmental panels of scientists have produced two definitive reports that summarize the details of these crises:

- IPCC reports on Climate Change
- IPBES – reports on Biodiversity and Environment Systems

So What: Cities are damaging persons, people, places and the planet. The impact of cities can be measured by their destruction of the ecoregions that supply all city resources; by their ecocide of Gaia the planet that has given, gives, and will give life. If we don't wake up, grow up, show up, clean up, lift up, link up that we are killing the very life regenerators we depend on from microbes to planet – we will all die together.

The intergovernmental panels of scientists have set goals for us to achieve to address the climate and the biodiversity and environmental challenges.

IPCC – addressing Climate Change identified 17 Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs).

IPBES – addressing Biodiversity and Environment Systems identified 5 sets of Inner Development Goals (IDGs).

Now What: What can we do to heal the brokenness in cities?

Working with the Contexting Influencers (see above) we have identified the key steps below. And working with our Action Researchers we identify specific steps that can be taken in specific locations.

- Live with Gaia's Code of Care (Hamilton)
- Implement SDG's, IDG's, EcoDG's (A. Laszlo),
- Shake up our Paradigms: Wake Up, Grow Up, Show Up, Clean Up, Lift Up, Link Up, Whole Up (Wilber, Currivan)
- Open to CDG's (embrace Cosmic View of Reality and define Cosmic Development Goals – Currivan)

3. Exploring Details of Action Research

Now that we understand the design of the Action Research workshop, let us consider in more detail the perspectives that Integral City frameworks reveal about the metacrises arising from the disconnections in our cities.

3.1 WHAT: Let us consider why cities are in crisis. What is broken?

We ask the Workshop Co-Researchers: Where and what do you see happening in your environment (city, community)? What is Broken? Can you cite examples of the following disconnections?

1. Cities as complex adaptive living systems **have stopped using 5 sets of intelligences** for surviving, adapting to our environments and regenerating. We disregard the damage to individual citizens, organizations, and cities. The bombing of Gaza or Mariupol to reduce them to rubble destroyed civilian residences, hospitals, schools and the very basics of a civilized life and the bioregion in which the cities reside.
2. **Biomimicry lessons** reveal our cities as **human hives are being ignored** – powerful resilient collectives, like the beehive is for bees. The military assaults on human habitats in the wars, or the industrial assaults on soil health, rainforests, fishing grounds and mining sites require the contribution of human life to extract all that wealth, and disregard its value through mass murder of species from bees to birds to mycelia – not to mention shootings of individuals, targeting women and children in refugee convoys.
3. **Acting blind to the 4 realities** that inspire our lives **denies our wholeness and interconnection to all life**. When we separate our intentions, cultures, behaviours and systems and create anti-life conditions that: propagate intentional misinformation, cultural propaganda that engenders hate of humans, animals and life itself; inhuman actions like rape and torture; and systemic use of weapons to annihilate nature's abundant ecosystems, disable infrastructure and incapacitates transportation routes that connect them e.g. roads, bridges, airports. – we destroy the life-foundations that we take for granted.
4. **Ignoring 4 ways of knowing fragments our unity as** multiple perspectives are disconnected from one another: subjective, intersubjective, objective, interobjective. It would appear that invading forces act under autocratic control that denies individual conscience/consciousness, cultural history (e.g. of intertwined Russian/Ukrainian Palestinian/Israeli stories), ethnic bonds (e.g. intermarried families), combined infrastructures (e.g. of pipelines, sea lanes, agricultural supply chains) and ecosystemic inter-dependencies.

5. **Not listening to our 4 Voices prevents us from acting with a Unitive Narrative that creates conditions for Peace** – thus we prevent the operation of our human hives (essentially disconnecting the 4 roles in the beehive: Citizens/Producers, Business-Innovators/Diversity Generators, Resource Allocators/Civic Managers, Inner Judges/3rd Sector). The 4 Voices of the Russians/Israelis were strategically misinformed via news and propaganda thus disabling their intercommunication capacities. The 4 Voices of the Ukrainians/Gazans were damaged by the millions of citizens who exited the country as refugees, leaving behind further millions more people displaced within home countries (like Ukraine, Economist May 2022). The majority of City Voices were diverted from their usual peace-time occupations into military roles in defence of their countries. Thus, in all countries at war the 4 Voices are serving the Purpose of War rather than the Purpose of Unity (Peace).
6. **Regressing species development** from possibilities of cooperation and collaboration into mere competition or authoritarianism blocks the emergence of Unity/Peace. War conditions ironically demonstrate the more complex stages of cooperation and collaboration amongst the countries (Ukrainians) who fight for the value of freedom and democracy. Meanwhile the combatant nations (Russia/Israel) are rewarded only for service to the attacking of neighbours, wasting Russian/Israeli resources for generations. In further irony the Russian oligarchs (and Israeli military machine) become targeted by the EU and Western democracies to reduce their influence and recover their resources for the rest of the world supporting other nations, through diverting their own resources for the delivery of weapons, munitions and training,
7. **Preventing city growth through steps and stages because the war machine is just attacking or defending at the same time as it** severs flows to support the development of capacities for Unity/Peace. While the wars and destruction of nature, production of emissions, continue no growth is possible. In fact, the wars have impacted the evolutionary trajectory and set it back into less complex stages of complexity possibly for generations to come. Not to mention having increased the carbon emissions and pollution.
8. **Forgetting Gaia's Master Code of Care shrinks our circles of compassion.** Some Russians/Israelis in the diaspora in the rest of the world have been able to demonstrate compassion for those involved in the conflict, including Ukrainians/Palestinians. The Ukrainians/Palestinians have been reduced to care for self and their immediate families and countrymen and women – while desperately trying to live as their human habitats (cities, towns, villages) have been reduced to rubble. The Gaian/Master Code of Care has been

seriously thwarted, even while the Rest of the World assimilates the pain and trauma from the impact of refugee migrations.

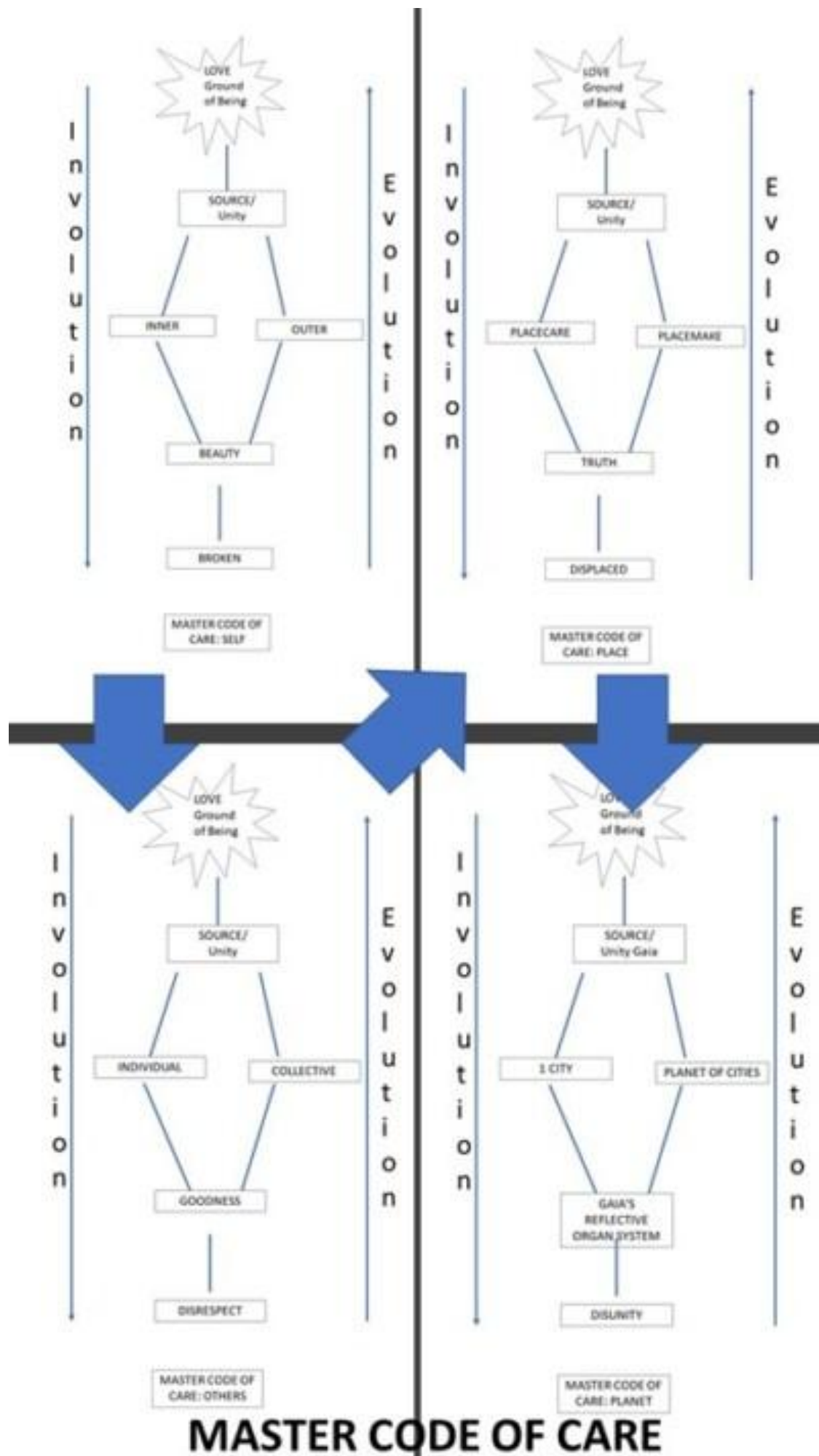
9. **Weaponizing Human Security mechanizes human disconnections creating fragmentation of human relationships and deserts in Nature's ecosystems.** Denying this most fundamental assumption of daily life – that safety and security is fundamental to all human endeavours, and respect and love of Nature fundamental to support of life conditions that support human life – has shocked both human and non-human systems alike.
10. **Traumatizing the 4 Voices of Community prevents the emergence of** a 3rd Side able to engage any issue and blocks the healing of trauma, pain, injustice, conflict, pollution, degradation. The impact of the Russian-Ukrainian and Israeli-Palestinian wars will last generations, as they derive from unhealed traumas from previous wars and conflicts. The great wounds of distrust and disrespect have damaged both victims and aggressors. Rescuers, Rebels, Witnesses of human and non-human life cannot be effective while the conflicts continue.

3.2 So What: Integral City graphic description of metacrisis through lens of metacrisis.

When we look at the metacrisis in cities we can gain insight from our Map 5. We can see from our discussions with Nish Dubashia and the Diamond Model how we are no longer aligned with our Soul.

We are disconnected from Beauty, disrespectful of Goodness, displaced from Truth and out of unity with our Whole as Gaia's Reflective Organ.

We ask our Co-Researchers: Where and what do you see resulting from these fragmentation paths? Where can you point to the fragmentation from Beauty, Truth, Goodness, and our Role as Gaia's Reflective Organ?



3.3 Now What: How can Soul Power recover Unity and Peace?

McGilchrist says humans are disconnected from our Soul. In order to heal our metacrisis we need to reconnect to our Soul – through Beauty, Goodness, Truth, and as Gaia’s Reflective Organ System (Lovelock, Hamilton)

We ask our Co-Researchers: How Might We Heal?

Where and what do you see as possible healing journeys? How would you heal brokenness through reconnecting with Beauty, Truth, Goodness and as Gaia’s Reflective Organs?

How would you design Action Research to study the impact of your choice(s)?

Here are some suggestions using the Integral City frameworks.

Designing a healing process for cities will call us to address all that is broken in the cities and nations. We can use the same 10 capacities as we identified in ***What is Broken?*** – but in a different sequence. We suggest a sequence below – (with the sequence from the What is Broken? In parentheses.)

1. (8) Practise Gaia’s Master Code of Care (MCC) (Goodness) to expand our circles of compassion. (Hamilton)

A fundamental place to start is with the MCC because it provides an ethic for Unity, a theory of change and a practice to calm the inflamed and damaged systems. It starts with Caring for Self and that makes possible caring for others and then caring for place and planet.

2. (9) Nurture Human Security as Ecology for Peace. (Truth)
(Hamilton, Buhaug O’Brien et al)

Recognizing that safety and security is a human right that is fundamental to every stage of development and manifestation of human habitats will depend on the MCC – we must be held by trusted others who have not been party to the conflict (on either side). Safety and security must start small with individuals and families and embrace the city block by block. This can be tied into the next step of creating a Peace and Conflict Restoration process (e.g., Truth and Reconciliation commission). (See O’Brien on Paradigm Shakes – small steps.)

3. (10) Manage Peace and Conflict with the 4 Voices as Community (Goodness, Truth), acting as a 3rd Side able to engage any issue and heal trauma, pain, injustice, conflict, pollution, degradation. (Ury, Huebl)

In this stage, **the 4 Voices of Community** (Citizens, Civic Managers, Business/Innovators, 3rd Sector) must **be found and strengthened** so that they can have the courage to engage issues, damages, and injuries in any of the 4 areas of reality (bio, psycho, cultural, social systems). They will likely need strong representatives from other cities who can come in and incubate (citizen) assemblies for Recovery (and reconciliation).

4. (1) Recognize cities as complex adaptive living systems with 5 sets of intelligences for surviving, adapting to our environments and regenerating. **(Beauty)** (Hamilton, Capra)

Cities must be honoured as living systems who have intelligences at all scales from individual to collective to organizations, neighbourhoods, communities and are embedded in bioregions (Map 2). They need to use the contexting and strategic intelligences guided by the evolution impulse of Gaia's Master Code of Care.

5. (2) Learn Biomimicry lessons that reveal our cities are **human hives** – powerful resilient collectives, like the beehive is for bees **(BTG)**. (Hamilton, Bloom, Benyus) located in sensitive, interconnected bioregions.

When we look at regenerating cities as human hives, we will consider not only the rehabilitation of bricks and mortar, but the lives of individuals, relationships and purposes and values embedded at every scale of the city and look at how we must regenerate Nature – because as we do so, she will regenerate humans. Looking at how Nature can recover from natural disasters can give us inspiration and impetus to learn how best to be effective in our recovery efforts (e.g. After volcanos like Mt. St. Helen's, or tsunamis (like 2004 in Indonesia, or fires in Los Angeles 2024, or floods in Germany 2024).

6. (3) Co-exist with 4 realities that inspire our lives through: intentions, cultures, behaviours, systems **(BTG)**. (Wilber, Hamilton)

We can use these 4 realities to look for early wins to build capacities for recovery (O'Brien, 2025, Paradigm Shakes). This will include individual cities and the people and organizations from the rest of the world – always keeping in mind to embrace the 4 realities as co-arising, co-existing dimensions enables us to be most impactful (and should be based on the Needs strata of (Maslow, Manfred Max-Neef).

7. (4) Empower 4 ways of knowing through multiple perspectives
(Truth): subjective, intersubjective, objective, interobjective. (Wilber)

We can empower people's recovery by using 4 approaches/
epistemologies/strategic designs that embrace all our senses,
intelligences, response-abilities in the 4 Quadrants. We bring in specialists
for each of the 4 Quadrants and work as recovery teams – co-operating
and co-laborating with locals, non-humans and Nature.

8. (5) Serve the Purpose of Unity with the 4 Voices in our human
hives (like **the 4 roles in the beehive (BTG):** Citizens/Producers,
Business-Innovators/Diversity Generators, Resource Allocators/Civic
Managers, Inner Judges/3rd Sector). (Hamilton)

We make room for the activities of all 4 Voices to serve Peace as we
rebuild capacities. We keep Peace as an integrating/uniting Purpose in
service to Planet/Place/People/Person.

9. (6) Mature species development beyond the stage of competition
into the **stages of cooperation and collaboration (Goodness)–** in
other words Unity and Peace. (Sahtouris).

We help the city systems discover what resources they can contribute,
how their needs are being met – and create the life conditions for
recovery to emerge. We need to meet people where they are at and help
them regrow full, healthy capacities for living (surviving, connecting with
the environment and regenerating). Wake Up, Grow Up, Show Up, Clean
Up, Lift Up, Link Up.

10. (7) (Re-)Grow our Cities through steps and stages that scale the
Capacity for Integration, Unity and Peace **(BTG)**. (Eddy, Hamilton)

We are mindful of Gaia's stratified elements/capacities and design Unitive
Journeys to respect and recover how life depends on life in an ecosystem
of Peaceful coexistence. We help the city design its own steps and stages
and link individual cities to others in their bioregion so they can help each
other.

4. Summary of Integral Soul Practices:

We summarize the key Soul Practices as follows:

- Gaia's Code of Care / Care-ma Yoga
- Experiment in Eco-Villages (rural, urban, mixed)
- Wake Up, Grow Up, Show Up, Clean Up, Lift Up, Link Up.
- Self-Organize – keep flying, as close as possible to next being/bird,
always tend towards the centre (city murmuration)

- Islands of Calm
- Islands of Coherence

When we look for a living example, we might learn from Park Ecovillage Findhorn who responds to the metacrisis through its own metamorphosis expressed as follows:

More than an ecovillage

We are a thriving, regenerative, spiritual community.

Hospitable to the Soul for Planet, Place, People, Person.

- **Share examples of how we are Hospitable to the Soul.**

5. References:

.Dancing Soul Connections

<https://integralcity.com/2024/12/20/dancing-soul-connections-arise-with-spirituality-in-integral-city/>

.Newsletter Hospitable to Soul

<https://integralcity.com/2024/12/21/reflective-organ-newsletter-december-solstice-2024-soul-power-as-beauty-truth-goodness/>

5 Blogs on Recovering Cities Through Living Cities Peace Room

<https://integralcity.com/2022/05/19/recovering-cities-through-living-cities-peace-room-1-4/>

- **Blogs on Peace:** <https://integralcity.com/page/2/?s=peace>
- **Integral City Book Series:**
<https://integralcity.com/resources/resources-books/>
 - Integral City 3.7 *Reframing Complex Challenges for Gaia's Human Hives* (2018)
 - *Integral City Inquiry and Action: Designing Impact for the Human Hive* (2017)
 - *Integral City: Evolutionary Intelligences for the Human Hive* (English 2008, 2019, Russian 2014)

Radical Guide to Reality (Produced by June Currivan, Whole World View)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GkLM8o4RXc&pp=ygUYcmFkaWNhbCBndWlkZSB0byByZWZsaXR5>