

Problems worth *solving*

A mission-oriented approach to advancing
design for innovation and sustainable growth

Christian Bason, Ph.D., CEO
Danish Design Center



“Everybody designs who
devises courses of action aimed
at changing existing situations
into preferred ones.”



With design, we
build and unleash
people's capacity to
create a more
sustainable world



About us

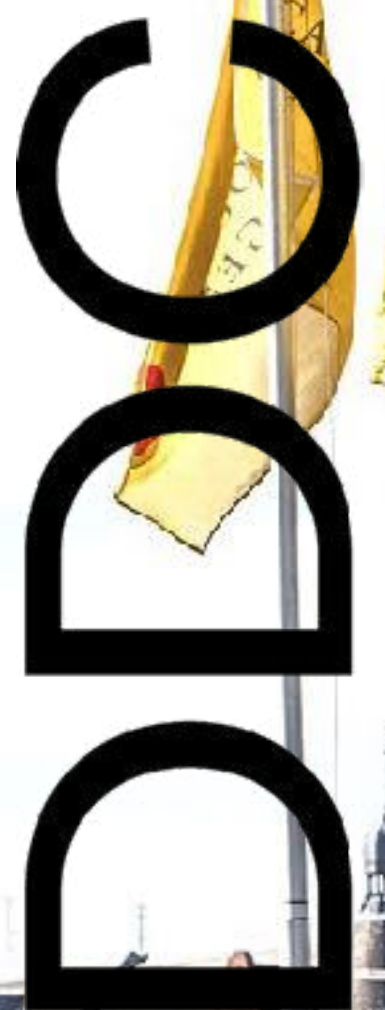
Independent foundation working
in the interest of society

Co-funded by the government of
Denmark

Innovation and sustainable
growth through a portfolio of
projects focused on green, digital,
and social missions

Cross-sector, cross-level, cross-
discipline





Dansk Design Center

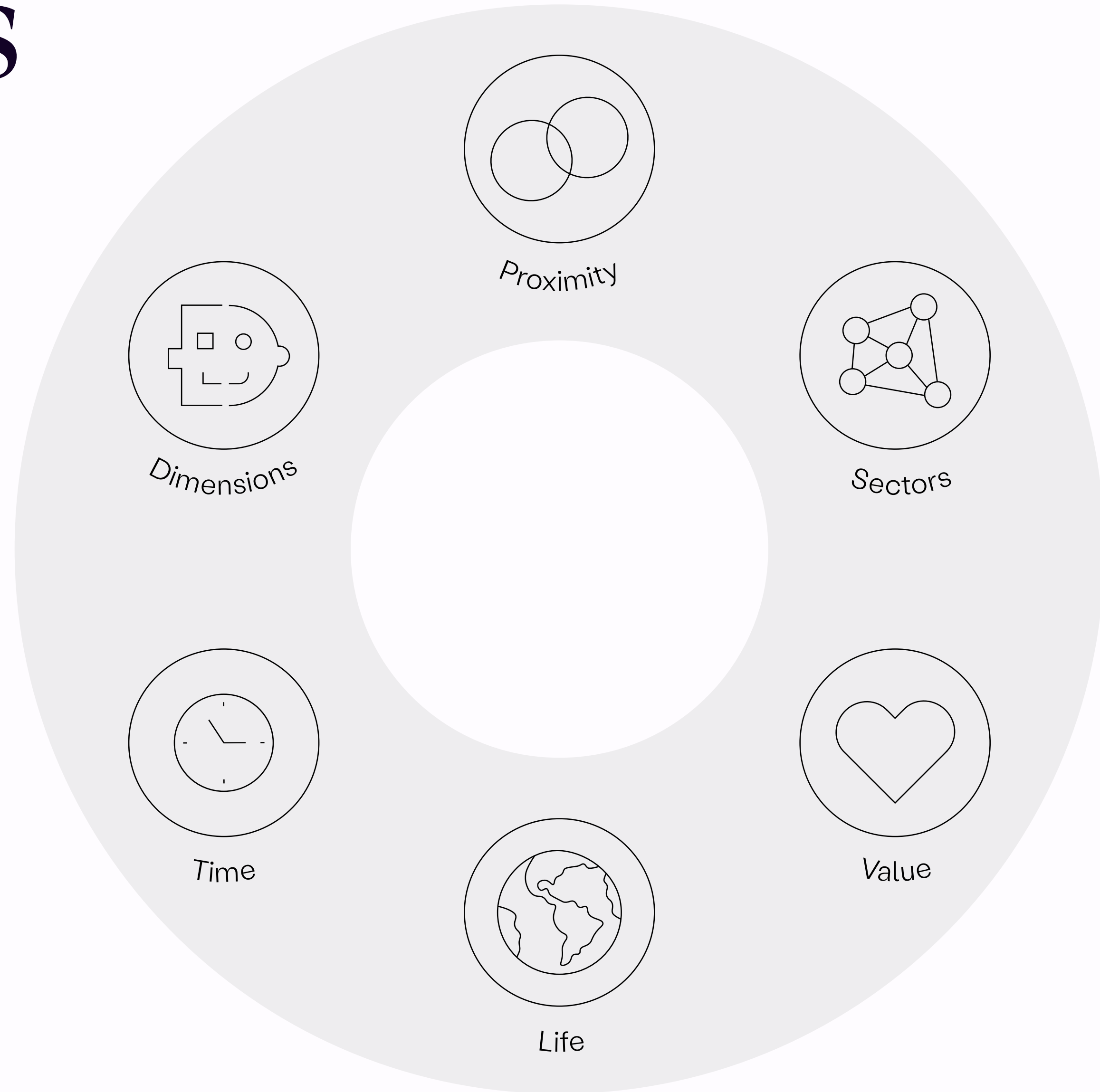
How we work

We must expand our
thinking *and doing*
to address our
thorniest problems

Innovation is in need
of innovation.



Six expansions



Missions

A strategic move to design
for impact *and* new markets

Mission-oriented innovation

Defined impacts for a concrete area or context that are:

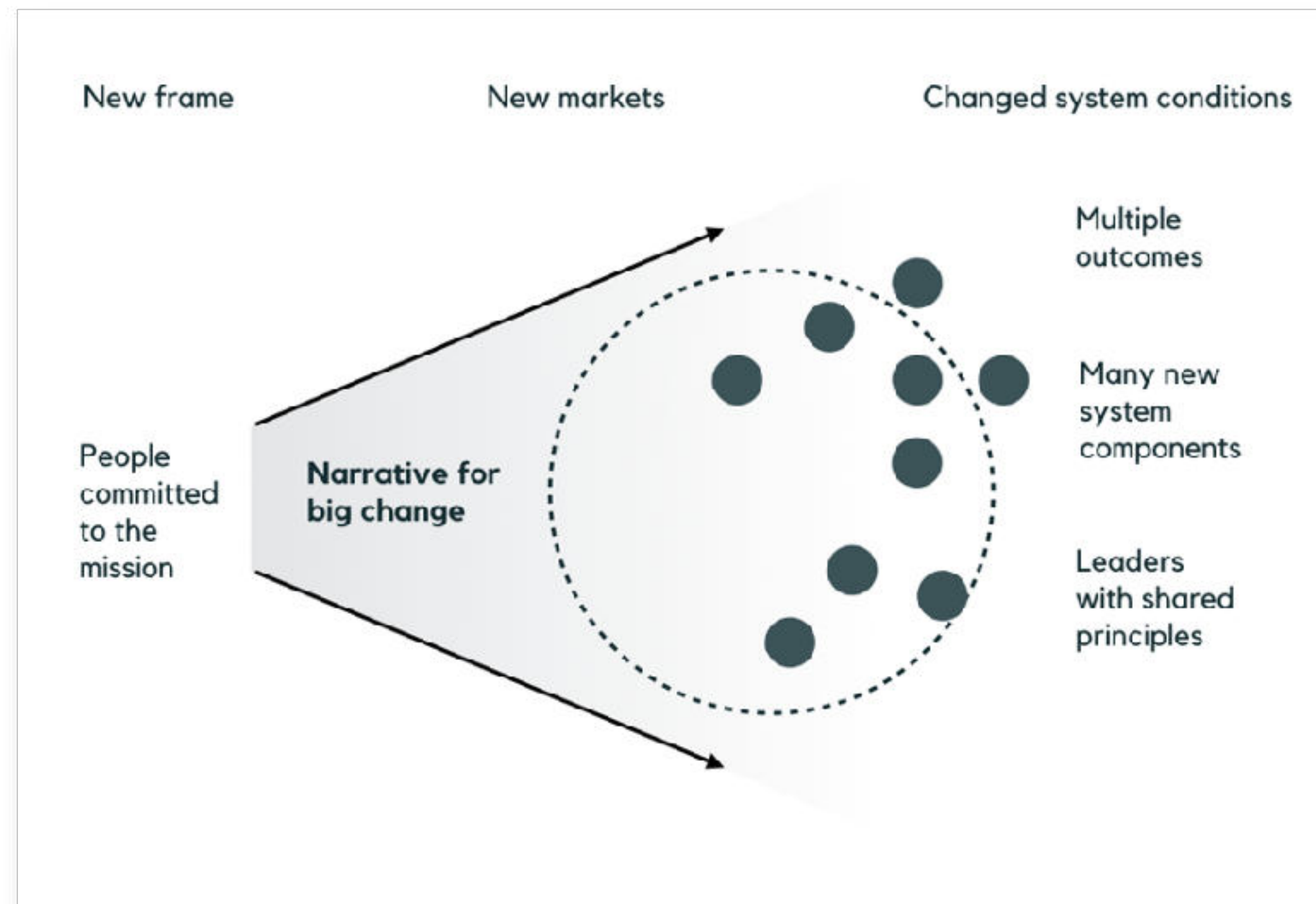
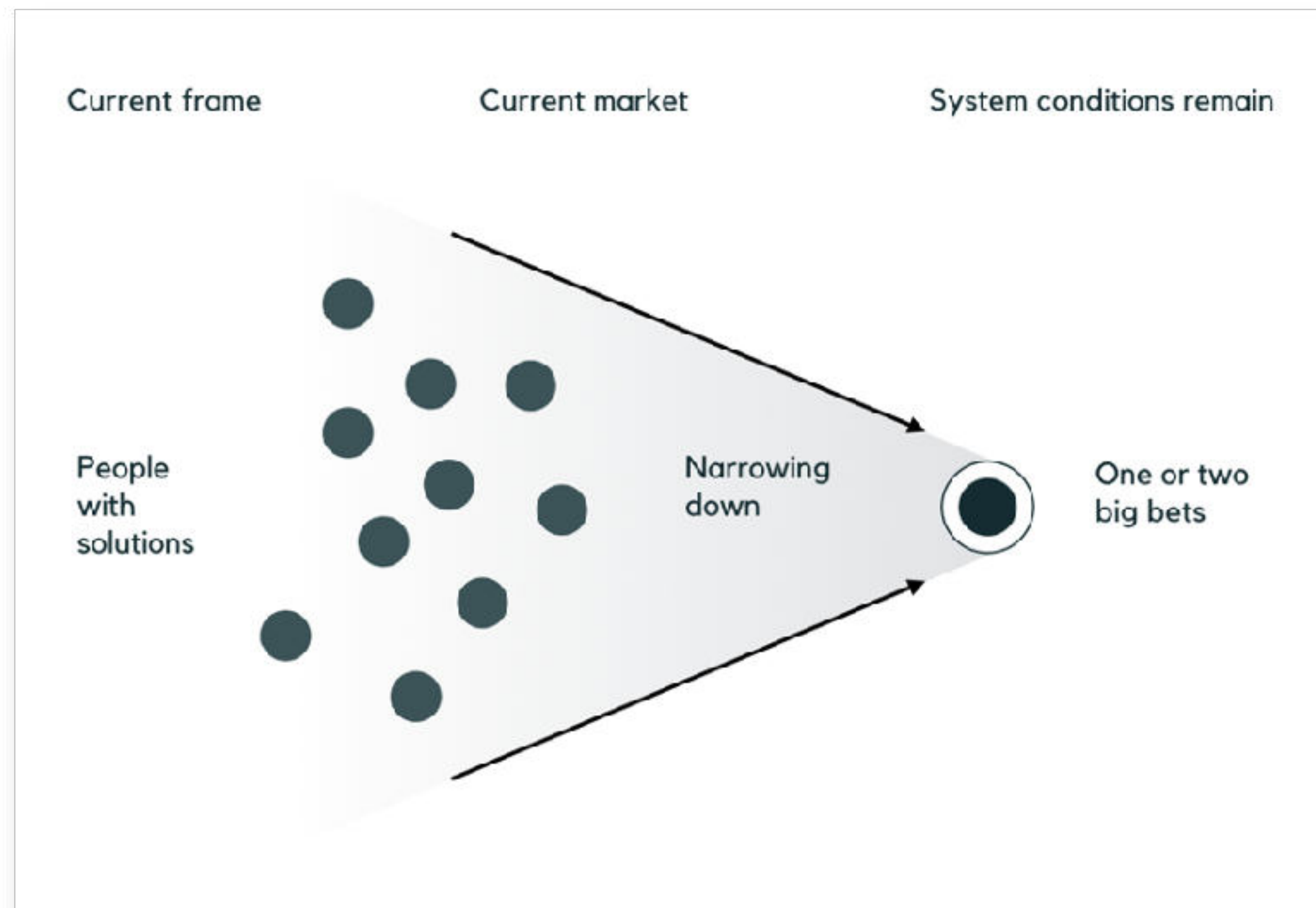
Bold, inspirational, and widely relevant to society

Clearly framed: targeted, measurable, and time-



*Mazzucato, Mariana (2018): Mission-Oriented Research & Innovation in the European Union MISSIONS A problem-solving approach to fuel innovation-led growth. European Commission

From funnel to megaphone: Missions entail a “reversed” approach to innovation



What is *different* in missions?

Traditional innovation

Development begins in the present

Project focus

Competitive funding

Top-down OR bottom-up

Governance as an expense

Innovation management

Internal labs and teams

Existing market

Mission-oriented innovation

Development begins in the future

Portfolio focus

Collaborative funding

Top-down AND bottom-up

Governance as an investment

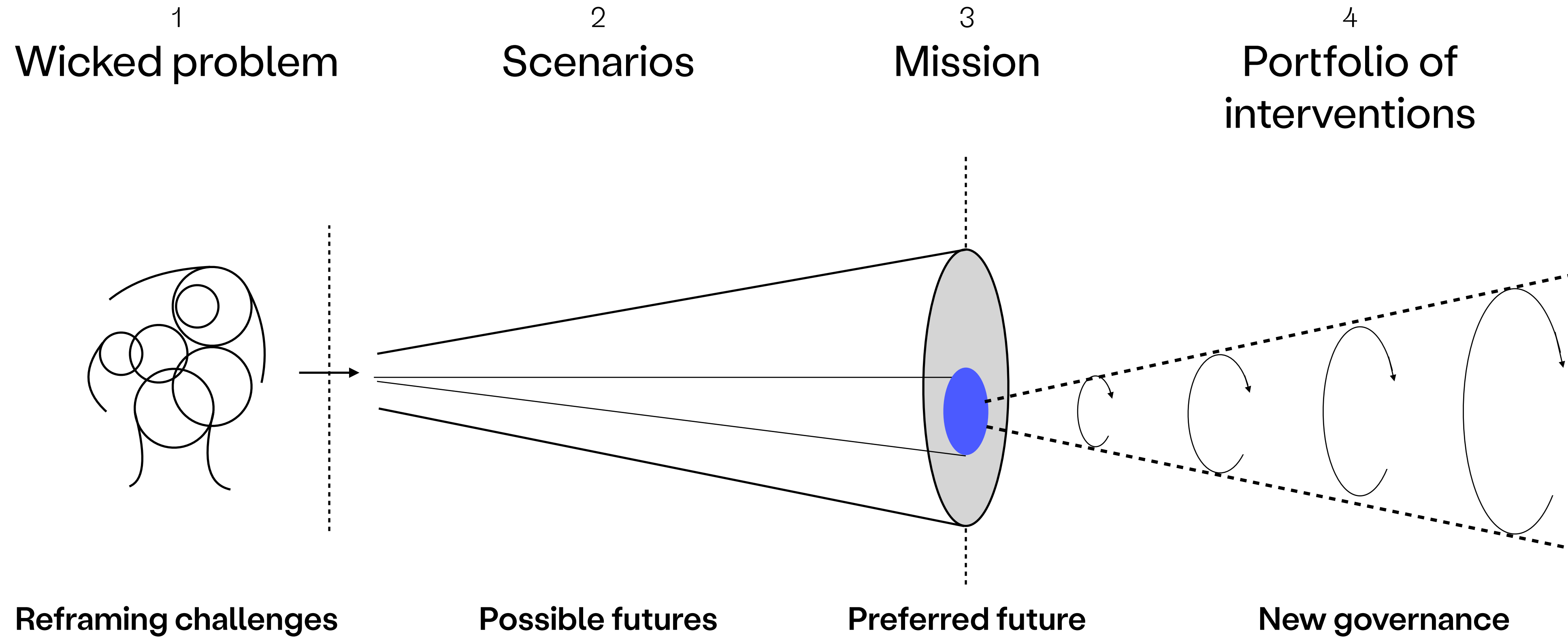
Mission management

“Third places”

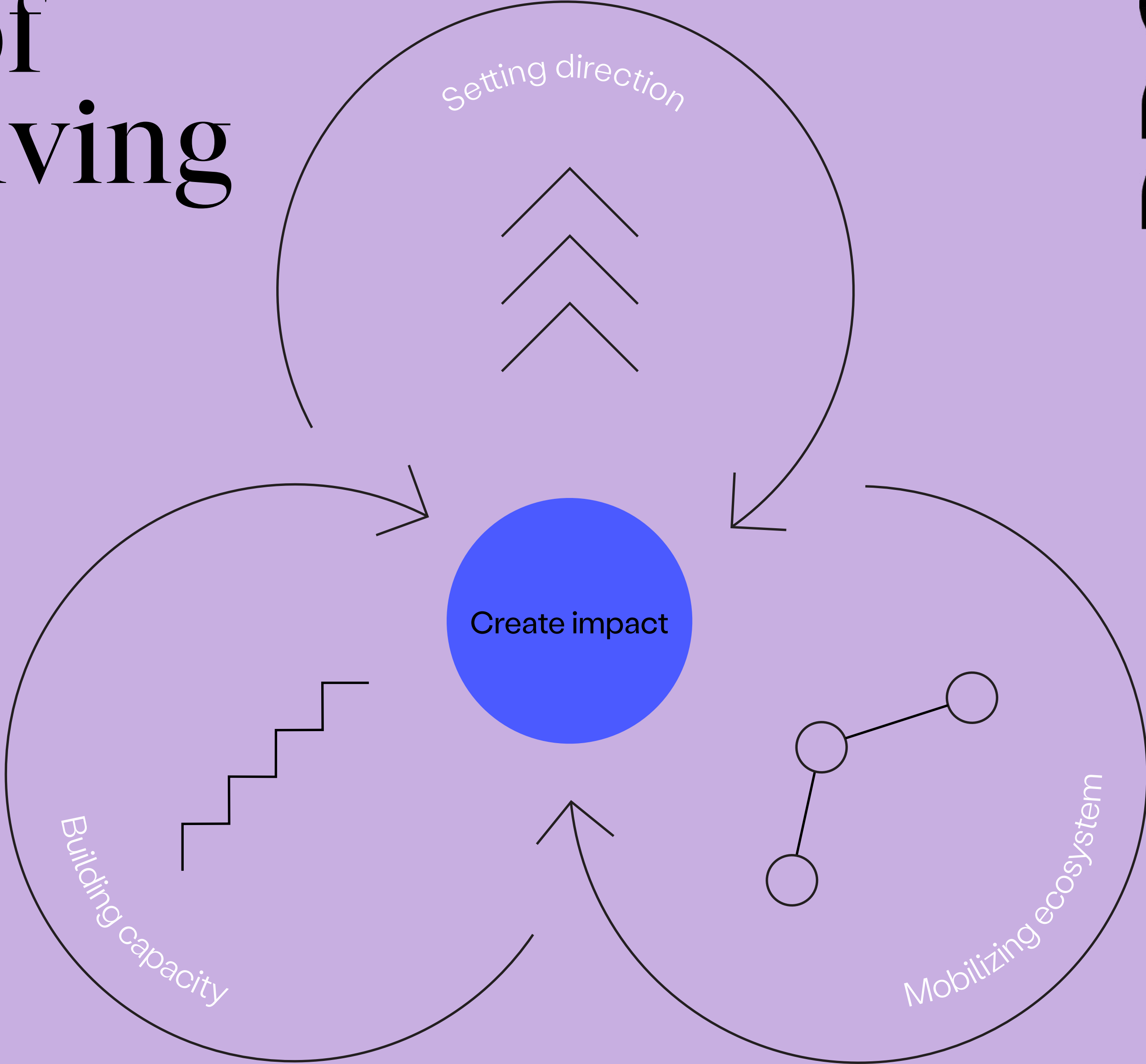
Market shaping



From a 'wicked' problem to new interventions



Three dynamics of launching and driving missions



A design-driven approach to missions



Imagining systemic shifts by evoking empathy
for the future

Experimenting in our approach to addressing
problems we don't know the answers to

Connecting skills, sectors, people in
the development of new approaches through
co-creation.

We pursue three *missions*
focusing on...

Green transition

Digital transition

Social transition

...supported by design *capacity*.

♡ *Social* Transition: A radical approach

Rethinking our social structures and designing inclusive social solutions with human needs front and center

PROJECT

The Mission: A Future where Young People Thrive

Imagine this; Young people in Denmark are doing better than ever before. Even with the historic challenges facing this generation, they have never had greater influence or more opportunities to shape their own future. Collectively, we have taken responsibility for providing a framework for young people to thrive

THIS PROJECT IS A PART OF OUR THEME
SOCIAL TRANSITION

MENU

DDC

Ⓞ *Digital* Transition: A moral imperative

Designing a society, where ethics are a connected part of our digital infrastructure

Just because we can, should we?

Developed in a strong *partnership*

**INDUSTRIENS
FOND** FREMMER DANSK
KONKURRENCEEVNE
The Danish Industry Foundation

DI
Dansk Industri

petersvarre.dk

Dansk
Design Center

1508TM

CHARLIE TANGO

Flip Studio!
A customer experience
company

DATAETHICS



Manyone[®]



elektronista

holo

Danske Bank

C Corti

The Digital Transition

- Digital development is moving fast.
- The transition creates enormous opportunities for companies and for society - nationally and globally.
- It can be difficult to follow.
- Techlash in 2018 and beyond put an end to 20 years of technology optimism.
- Regulation and legislation: GDPR, AI regulations, Data Ethics Board, SIRI Commission, Tech expert groups.....

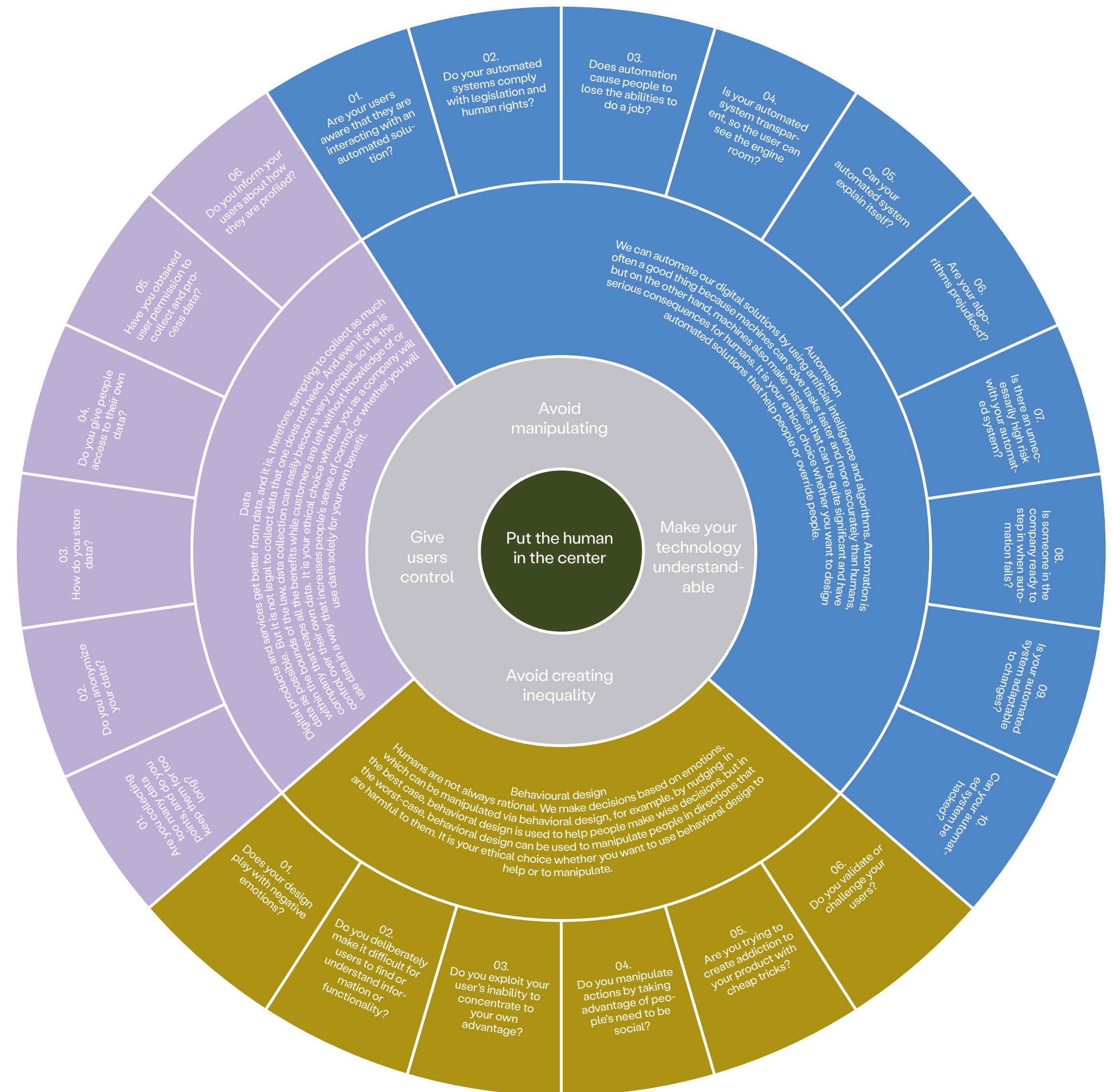
The Role of Design

- Humans at the center
- Holistic approach
- Multidisciplinary
- Enforcer of Ethics
- 80% of the decisions that affect the impact of digital solutions on people and society are decided in the design phase.

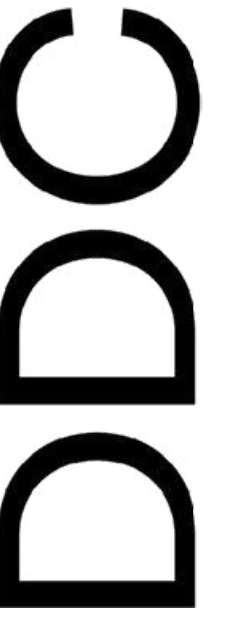
Technology creates opportunities - design determines *how we choose to use the technology*

The Digital Ethics Compass

- Helps companies and organizations create a shared focus on, understanding of, and vocabulary around ethics
- Provides companies and organizations with a framework for working with and securing an ethical focus in relation to concrete products and services
- Gives us a systematic way to talk about ethics



Key guidelines in digital ethics



Make your technology understandable

Give users control

Avoid manipulation

Do not create inequality

MENU

DDC

Green Transition: An irresistible urge

The past is irreversible.
Let's make a greener future irresistible

Designing an irresistible circular society



Designing an irresistible circular society

Moving Earth Overshoot day closer to New Years Eve



MENU

PROJECT

The Mission: Designing Our Irresistible Circular Society

Join the mission to design an irresistible circular society. With 30 partners, we've created ten actions that set a direction for how to get there

THIS PROJECT IS A PART OF OUR THEME
GREEN TRANSITION

DDDC

Danish Design Center





THE
CIRCULARITY
GAP REPORT

Denmark



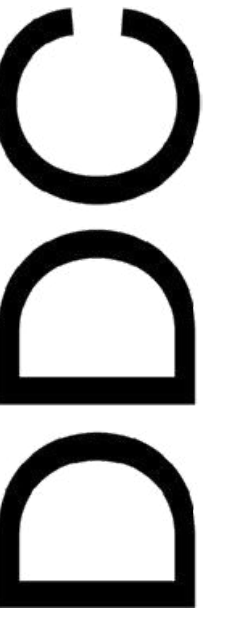
TOOL

Tool 08: Circular Value Proposition

Make the future concrete

Time	40-60 min
Participants	Individual or group (max 5 people)

Case: Sustainable manufacturing mission



INDUSTRIENS FOND

Aktuelt Fokusområder Vi støtter

OM OS SØG STØTTE



Aktiv

TEMA:

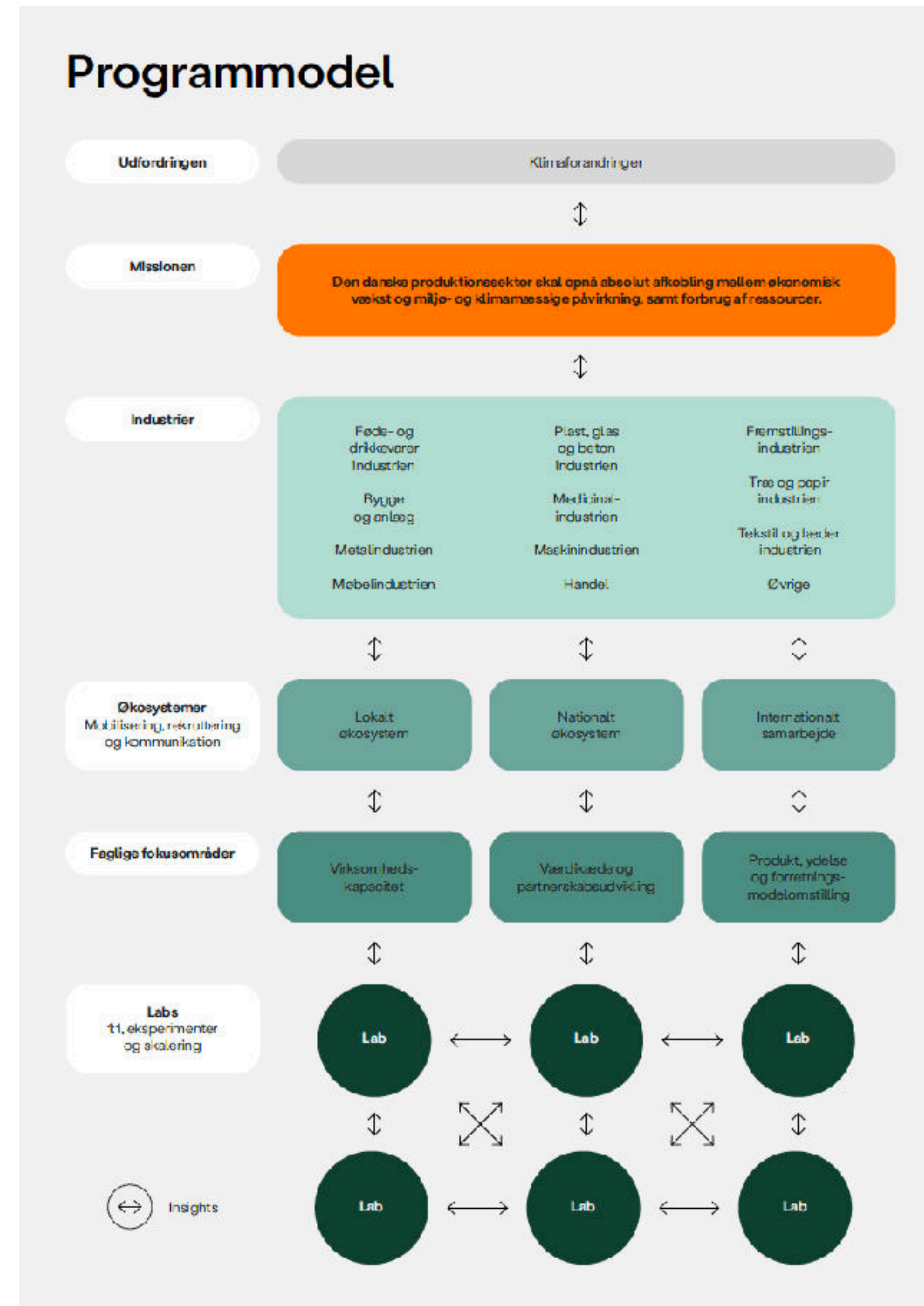
 BÆREDYGTIG PRODUKTION

Nyt projekt skal løfte bæredygtigheden i hele Danmarks produktionssektor. Vi starter i Trekantområdet!



Mission for sustainable manufacturing

- Long term: 2030
- **Ambitious:** 4000 Danish companies
- **Concrete:** Carbon reduction targets
- **Partnership:** 6 partners across DK
- **Financing:** 15 mio. EUR



Towards Mission Managers

Next-gen public innovation calls for a new type of leader.

Not innovation managers, but mission managers who focus on achieving a long-term vision of change for a wide range of stakeholders.



06/03/2023, 23:12 Fremtiden byder på en ny lederrolle: Mission managers Måndag Morgen Uafhængigt innovationshus, Analyser og ny viden.

27. januar 2023 kl. 05:00

Nyt lederskab med Christian Bason

Fremtiden byder på en ny lederrolle: Mission managers

En ny lederrolle er under fremvækst, i takt med at de store udfordringer er vokset med os ind i 2023. Komplekse dagsordener som klimakrise, sundhedskrise og arbejdskraftkrise, også kaldet for 'vilde problemer', kræver, at vi udvikler en ny type lederrolle, som ikke er forankret internt i den enkelte organisation, men leder fra et nyt sted.



Foto: Shutterstock

Lyt til artiklen

Husk du, da innovationsenheder var det nye sort? Da alle store organisationer med respekt for sig selv skulle have sit eget 'lab'? Dengang i starten af 2000'erne gav det god mening, for rigtig mange organisationer skulle have et skud kreativitet og innovation og det kunne man forankre i dedikerede teams med et enkelt formål. At udfordre 'moderskabsorganisationen' og tilføre nyskabende tilgange som brugervenlighed, visualisering og co-creation.

Selv var jeg i en årrække leder af MindLab, statens interne innovationsteam. Det var en spændende tid, hvor jeg oplevede, at vores team gjorde en forskel. For der var slibe-strukturer, silolænkning og inderl at gøre op med. Brugervenlighed, workshopfacilitering og konceptudvikling var en del af de daglige opgaver.

Men labs indbefatter mere end at sætte skarpe hold af designere, antropologer, policy- og businessudviklere og dataanalytikere. De handlede også om en ny lederrolle: Innovationslederen, -chefen eller -direktøren, som skulle aktivere teamets ressourcer på tværs af organisationen og i et frugtbart samspil med topledelsen.

Jeg kan fortælle af egen erfaring, at det er en svær rolle.

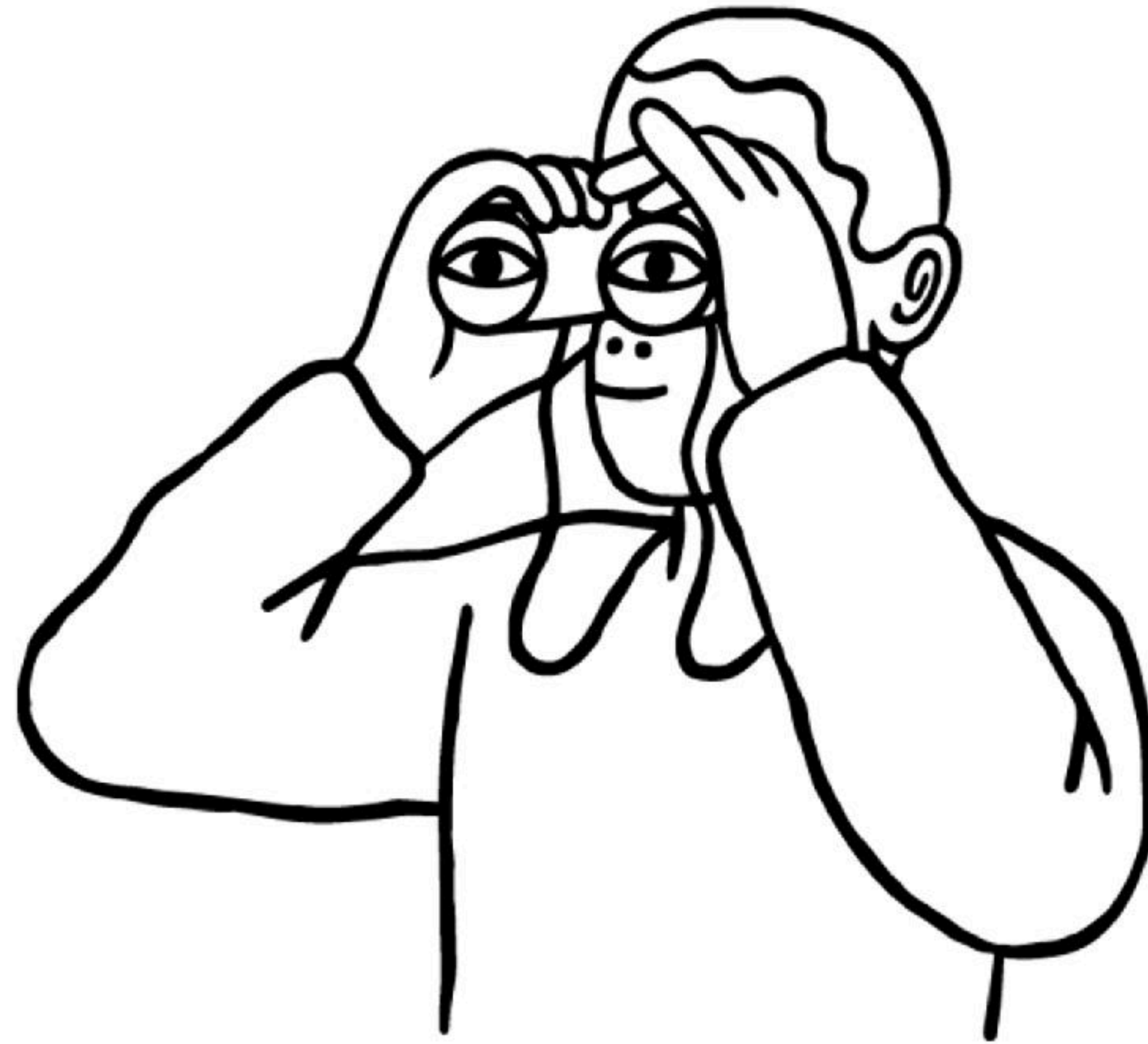
For nylig gennemførte vi i Dansk Design Center en analyse blandt 11 virksomheder om, hvordan ledere af innovationsteams i store, komplekse organisationer håndterer deres job i praksis. Den viser, at de skal navigere mellem at udfordre og vedligeholde status quo, mellem at være i frontlinjen og bag den. Ingen blandt de dusin innovationsledere, der indgik i analysen, synes, det var nemt. 'Dynamisk navigation' er nok det bedste ord, man

<https://www.mindlabcenter.com/nyheder/2023/01/27/fremtiden-byder-pa-en-ny-lederrolle-mission-managers/>

1/7

Roles of mission managers

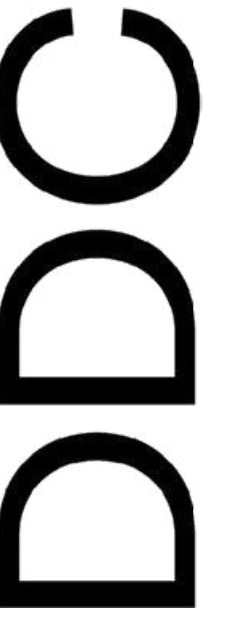
- **Direction:** Sustaining the mission for the long term
- **Governance:** Building & nurturing legitimate, collaborative decision-making
- **Impact:** Managing a strategic portfolio of interventions & driving learning across the ecosystem
- **Comms:** Communicating the difference the mission makes.



<https://ddc.dk/mission-managers/>

Building a co-leading organization

What type of organisation fully reflects the challenges of our time?



A time of complexity and turbulence

Need for agility, innovation and sustainability

Balancing the long-term versus fast decision-making

Organizations that unleash the full creative potential of people

Attracting, retaining and nurturing talent



We want the DDC to be...

...a **liberated organization** where colleagues have the space and backing to realize our strategy together

...a **healthy organization** where people thrive and grow

...an **efficient and innovative organization**, where there is the most possible space to work on what creates value and makes sense

What do we
believe about
people?



Starting point: What do we believe about people?

A set of assumptions about human nature drive every strategic and organisational decision.

We believe that people

- Thrive by trust and recognition
- Grow when they have influence
- Want to make a difference
- Will take responsibility
- Can lead and can follow

Profile of the next organisation?

Elements of a human-centred workplace.

Working at the Danish Design Center

- Everyone chooses their personal leader
- Everyone can offer their leadership
- Everyone freely chooses their professional area of work
- No fixed departments or teams.
Instead : Task/project-based teams
- Procedures and polices aren't formulated before the need arises.
- Tasks not defined by position but by roles.

“I don’t know, but let’s find out together”.

Value of co-leadership

- Problems solved closer to the task
- Better attraction & recruitment of talent
- Higher productivity
- More innovative
- More collaboration
- Adaptive organization
- More qualified, legitimate decision-making
- Resilience during covid-19

Some challenges

- What is the balance between individual and the collective?
- How to make the most critical decisions?
- How to ensure that everyone thrives?
- Speed in difficult decisions
- What are the new leadership roles?

Zooming in on:

The Future Organization

In the summer of 2020, we launched our biggest organizational experiment to date; rethinking the DDC itself with a human perspective as the key management principle. Our experiment shows many promising results, but also raises several new questions. For instance, how do we make important decisions? How should top management adapt? And how do we foster communities?

In a series of articles, we share our learnings and the process of restructuring our organization.

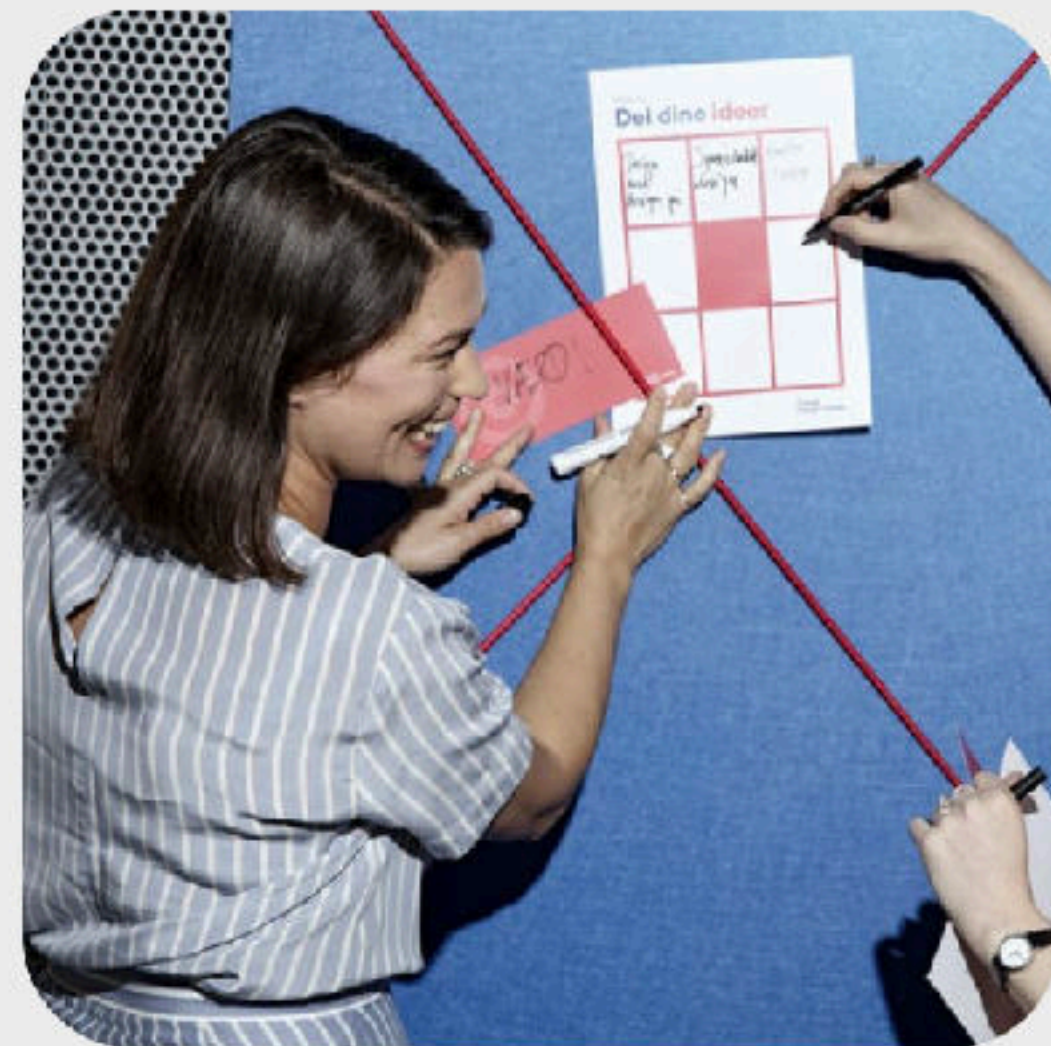
READ MORE ABOUT THE SELF-LEADING ORGANIZATION

CONTENT

17. DEC 2021

A Human Perspective is a Surprisingly Useful Management Principle

LONG READS



CONTENT

17. DEC 2021

Dilemmas Emerge in the Liberated Organization

LONG READS



CONTENT

17. DEC 2021

“Today, We Are More an Organism Than an Organization”

LONG READS

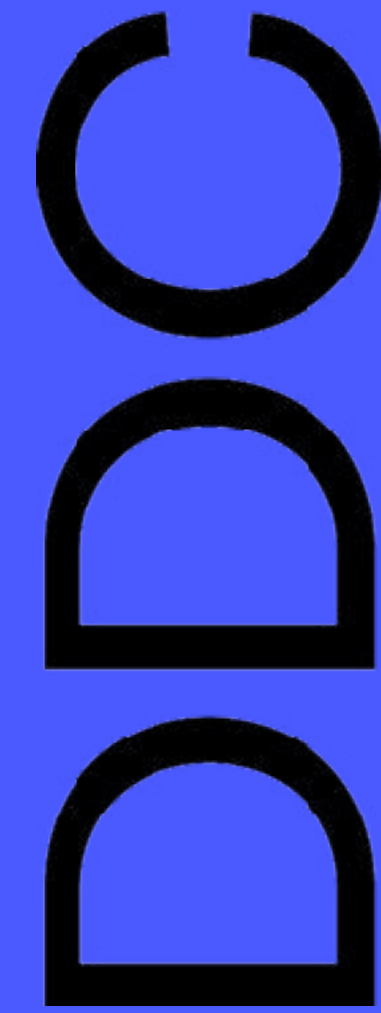


*“We are now more an organism
than an organization.”*

“The ultimate hidden truth of the world is it is something we make and could just as easily make differently.”



Introducing our design futures practice



Kimmmie Tentschert
Senior Creative & Project manager

Futures Design

If you can *imagine it*,
you can design it



DDOC

Bladerunner 2049

We're facing several
immense *systemic*
challenges

e.g. *youth mental health*

The future feels both
terrifyingly uncertain and
entirely out of our grasp

DDC

We have no agency

It's not about
finding the solution
but claiming
opportunity space

We work like this
to...

DDC

We work like this to...



Open up the
conversation

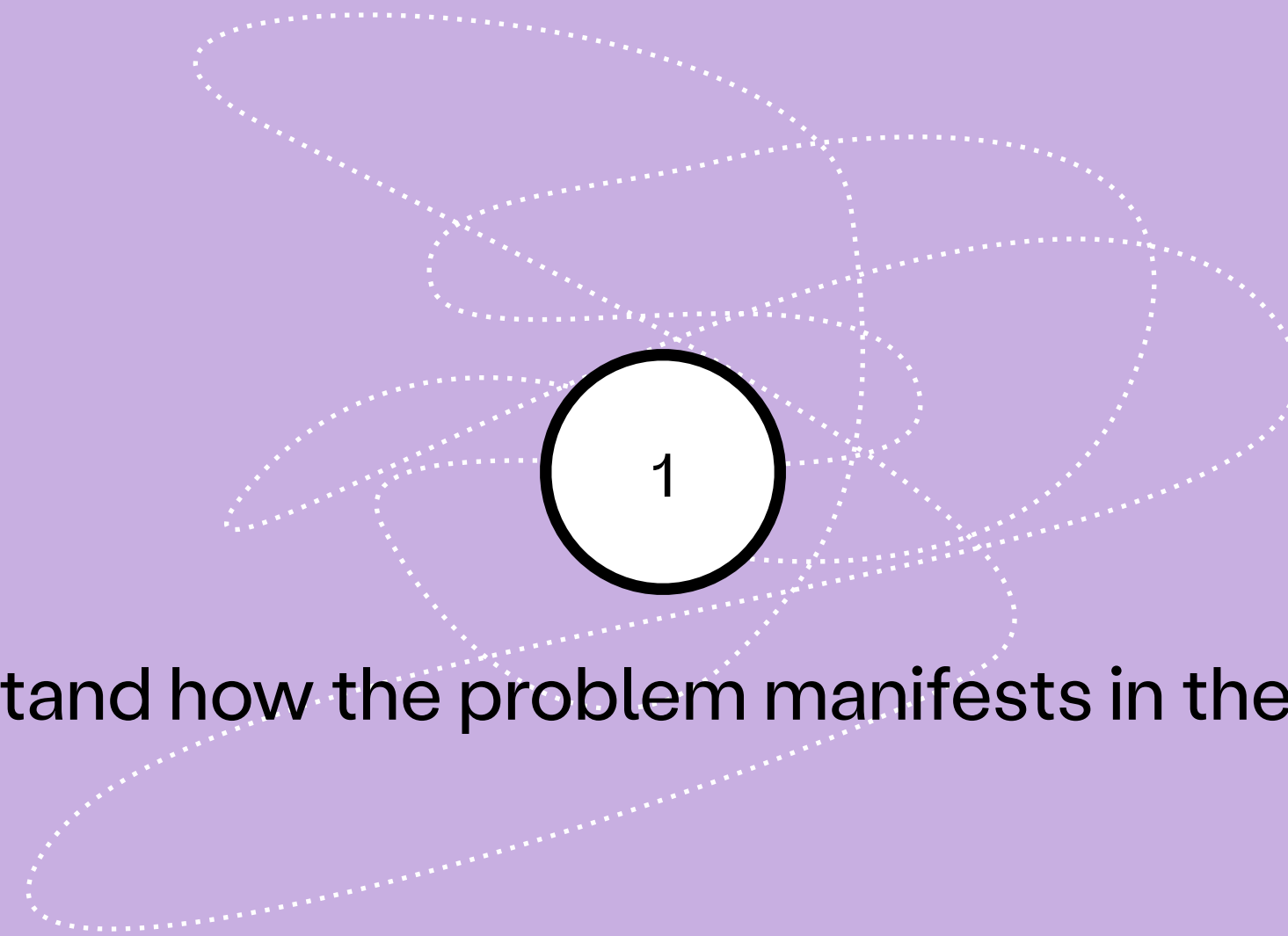
Expose our
blindspots

Build an emotional
with the future

Expand the
opportunity space

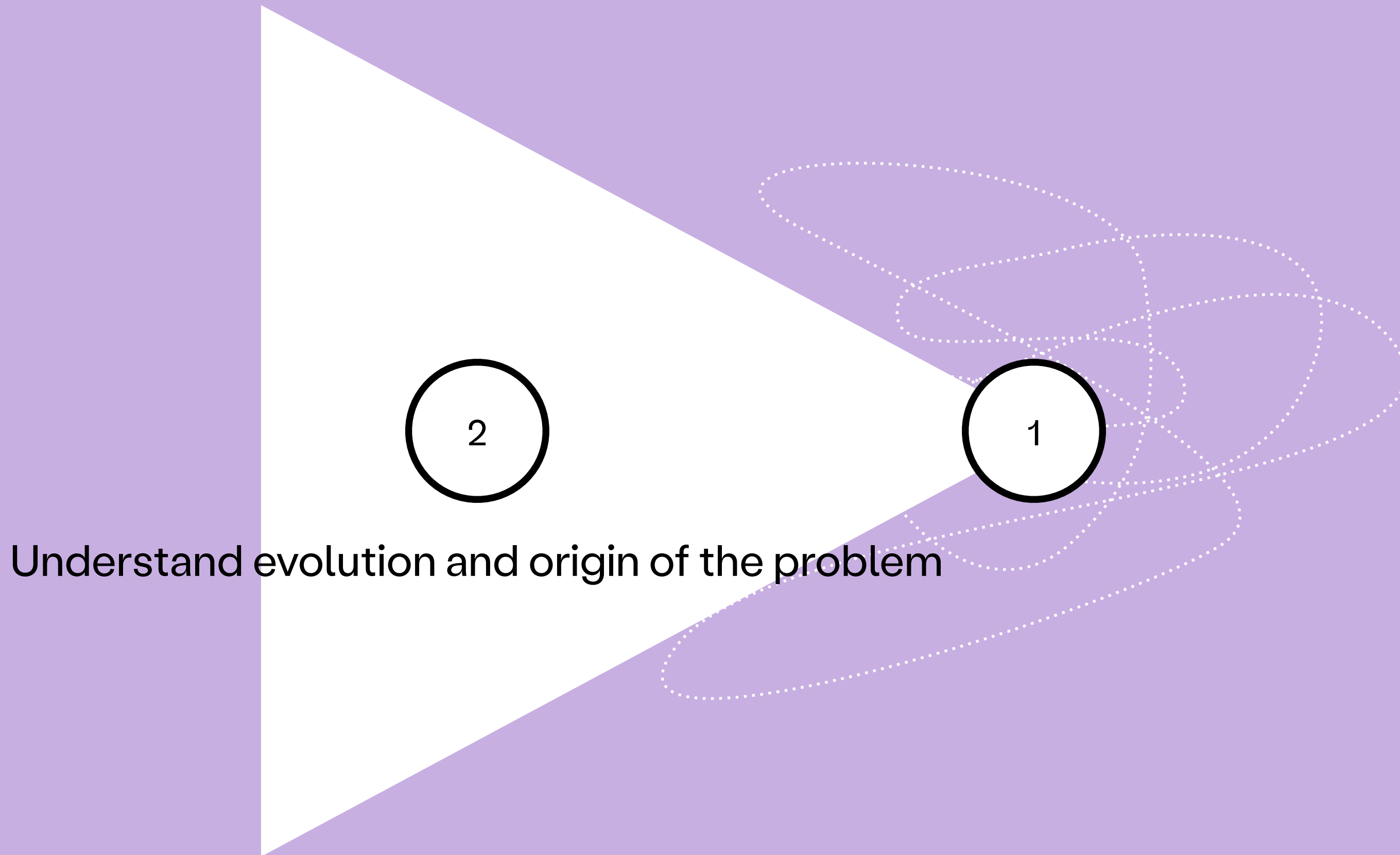
What can it look
like in *practice*?

Example of a process

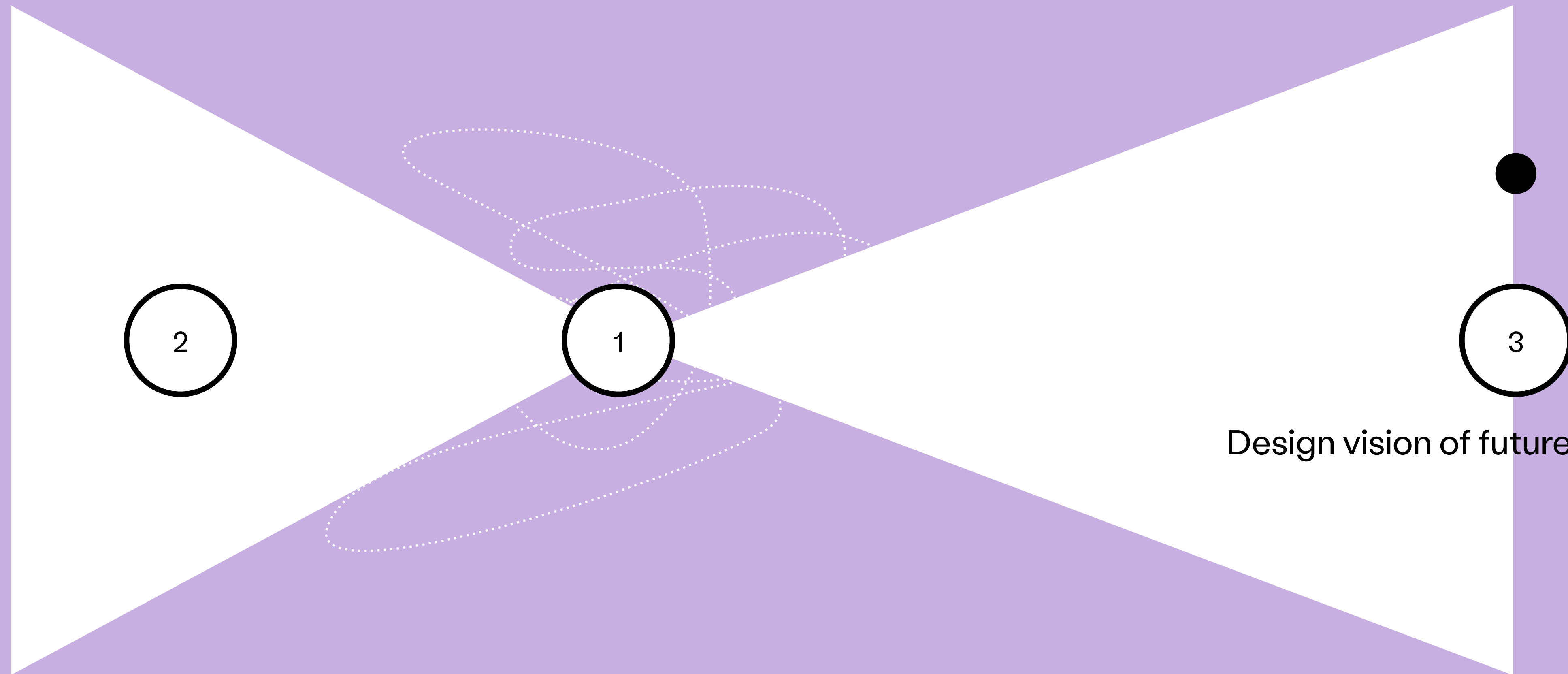


Understand how the problem manifests in the present

Example of a process

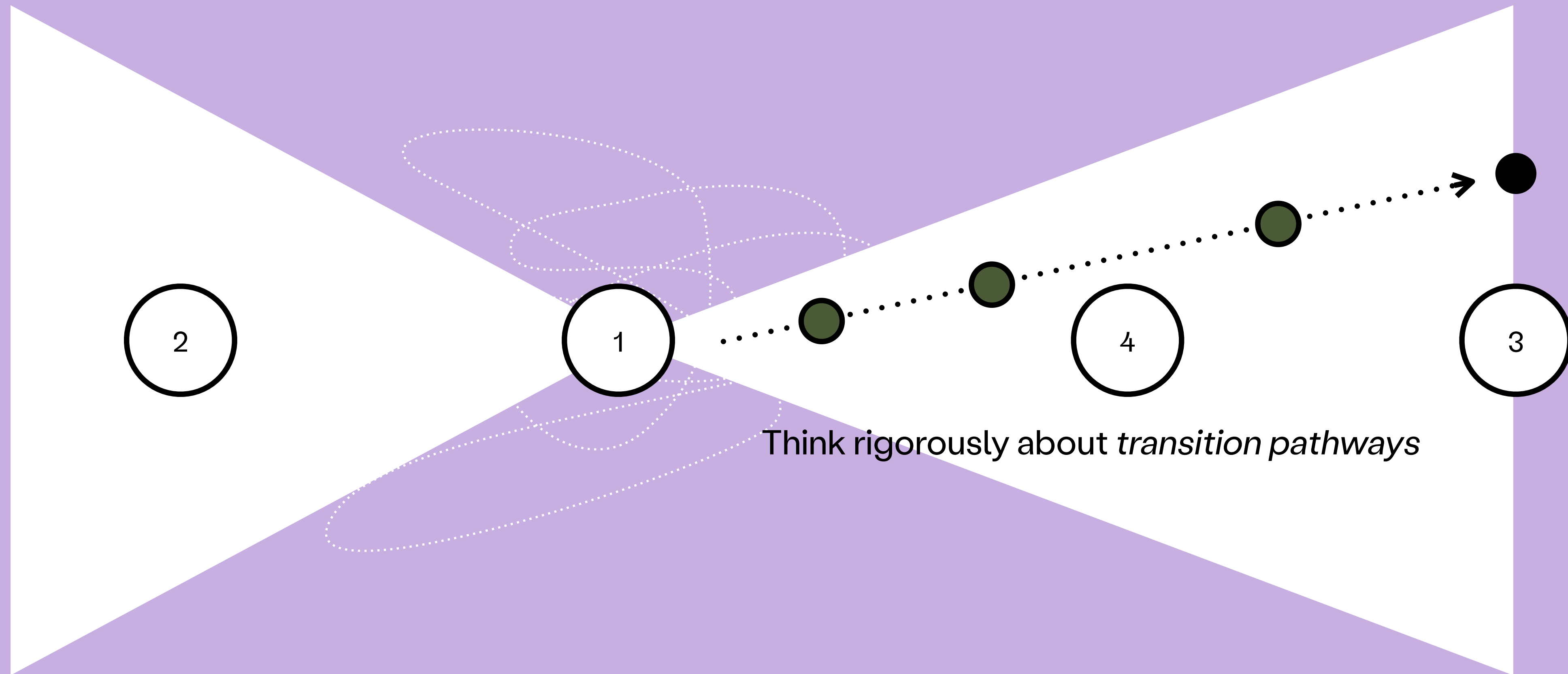


Example of a process

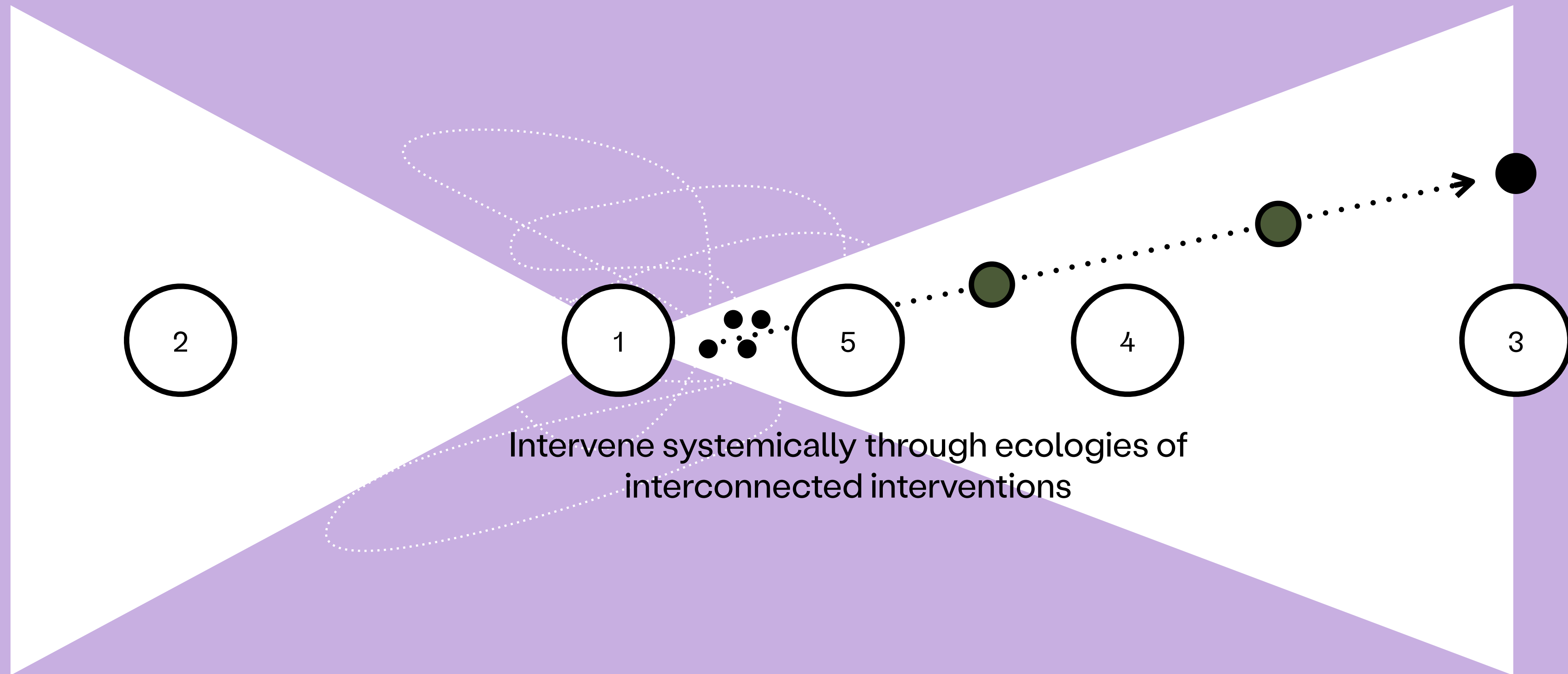


Design vision of future to transition to

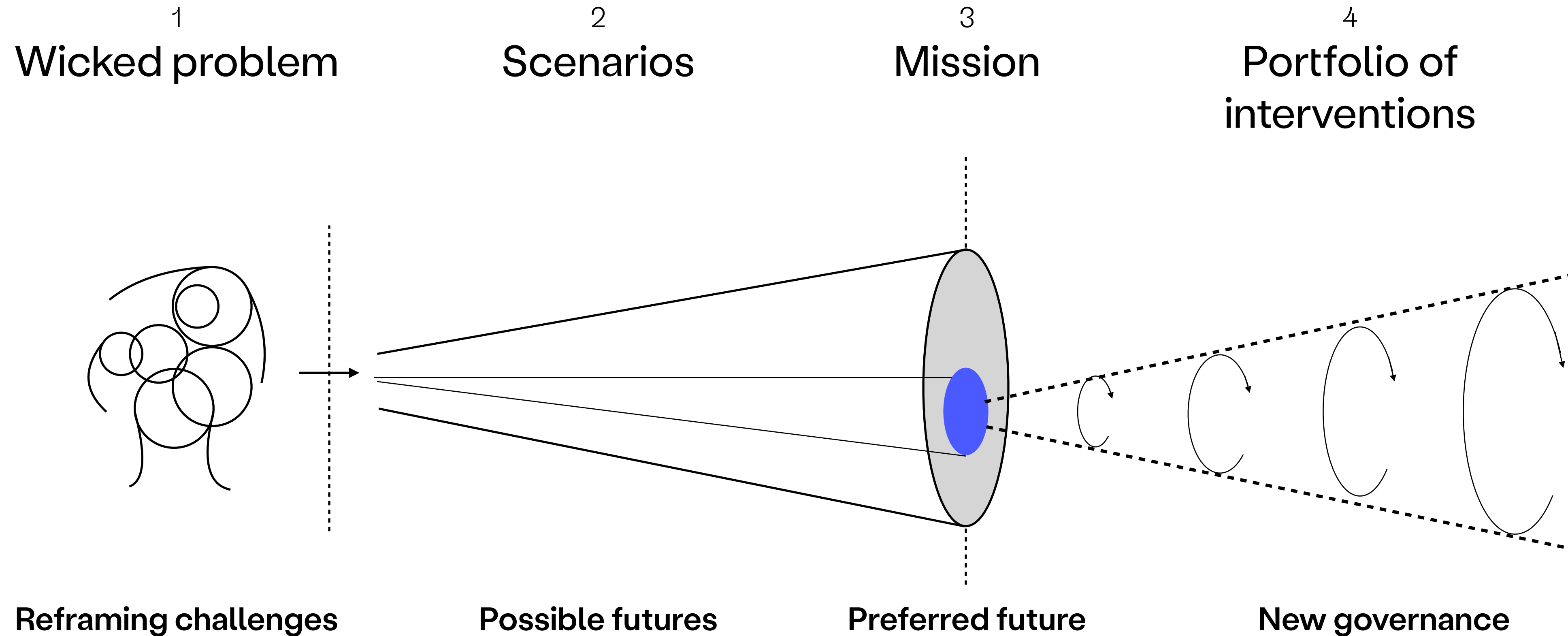
Example of a process



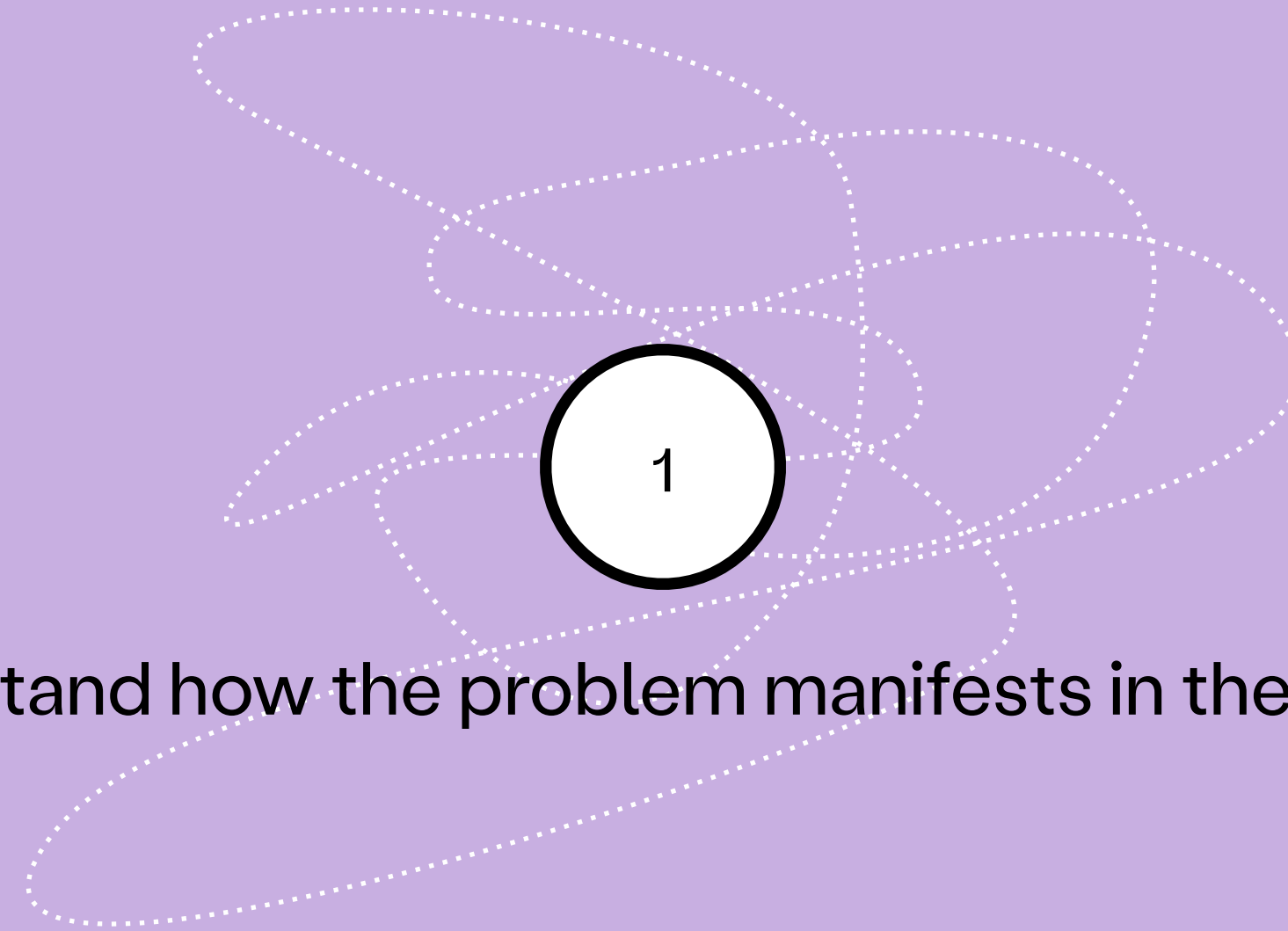
Example of a process



From a 'wicked' problem to new interventions



Example of a process



Understand how the problem manifests in the present

Characteristics of the current system



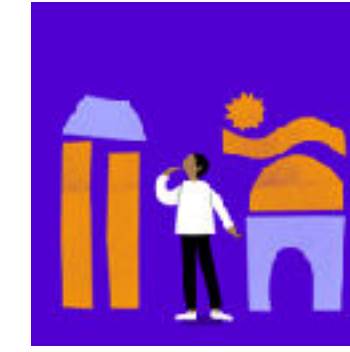
Purpose

Focus on symptoms

Focus on diagnosing and treating the individual's symptoms.



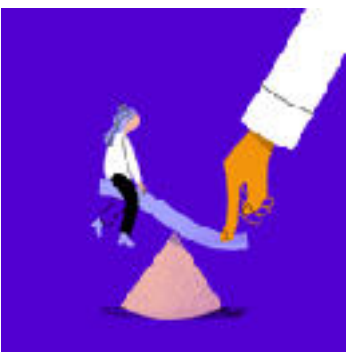
Characteristics of a new, alternative system



Purpose

Focus on structures

Focus on re-designing the structures that reproduces patterns which cause well-being.



Power

Mental health is handled by professionals

Access to diagnosing and treating mental health symptoms is limited to psychiatrists and psychologists.



Power

Well-being is a shared responsibility

Access to understanding and engaging with the collective well-being is open to all.



Ressources

Away from the everyday environment

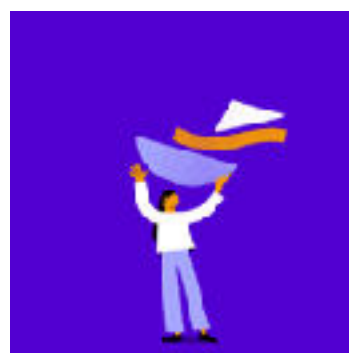
There is a focus on providing individual support and treatment, away from the everyday environments.



Ressources

In the everyday environment

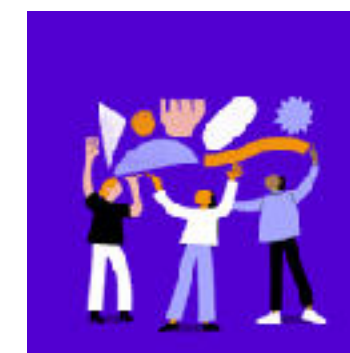
There is a focus on promoting well-being in everyday environments by enabling new responses when problems are collectively experienced.



Relations

Targeted individuals with specific diagnosis

The individual diagnosis unlocks treatment targeted the individual's specific needs.

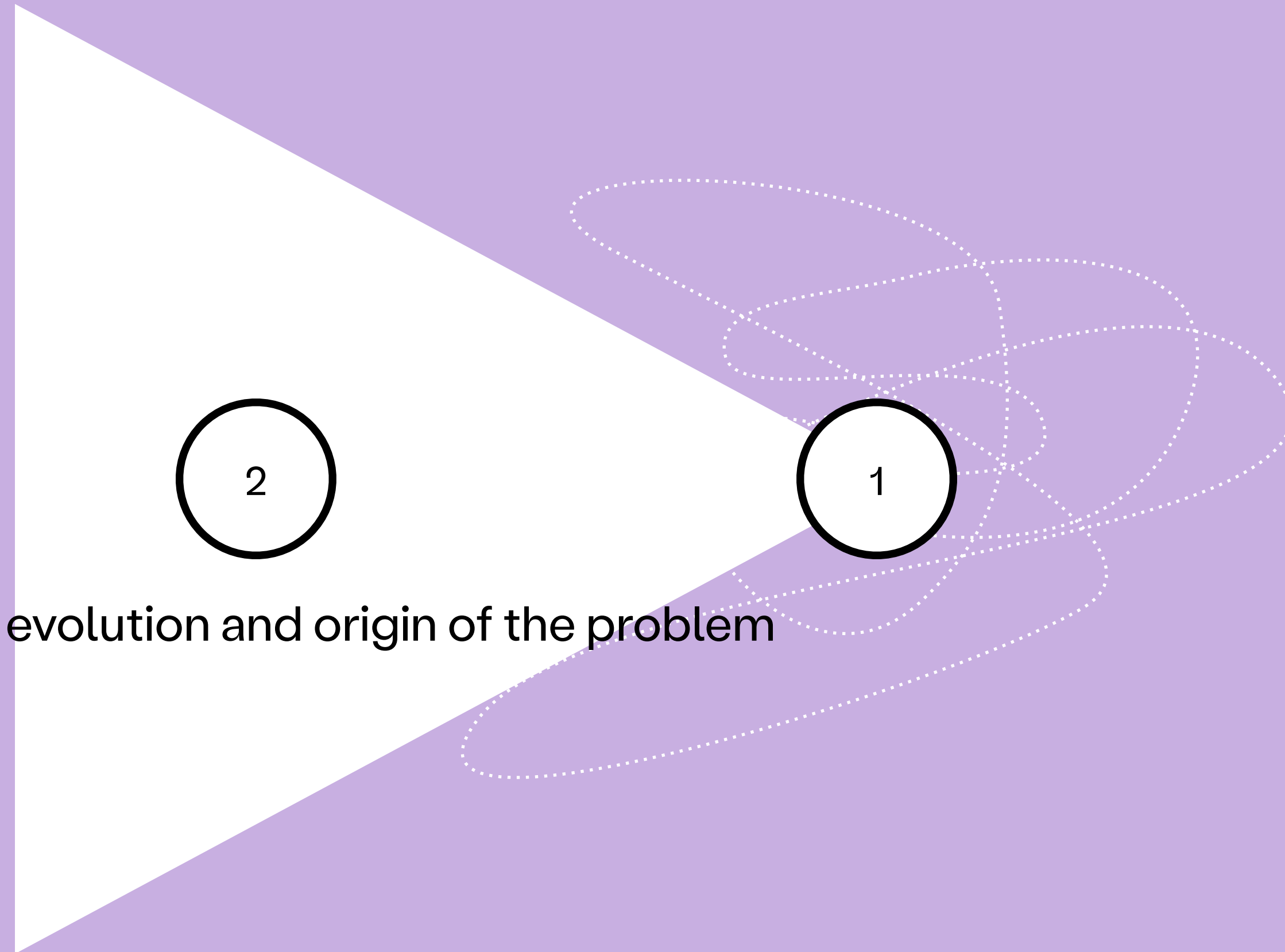


Relations

For all

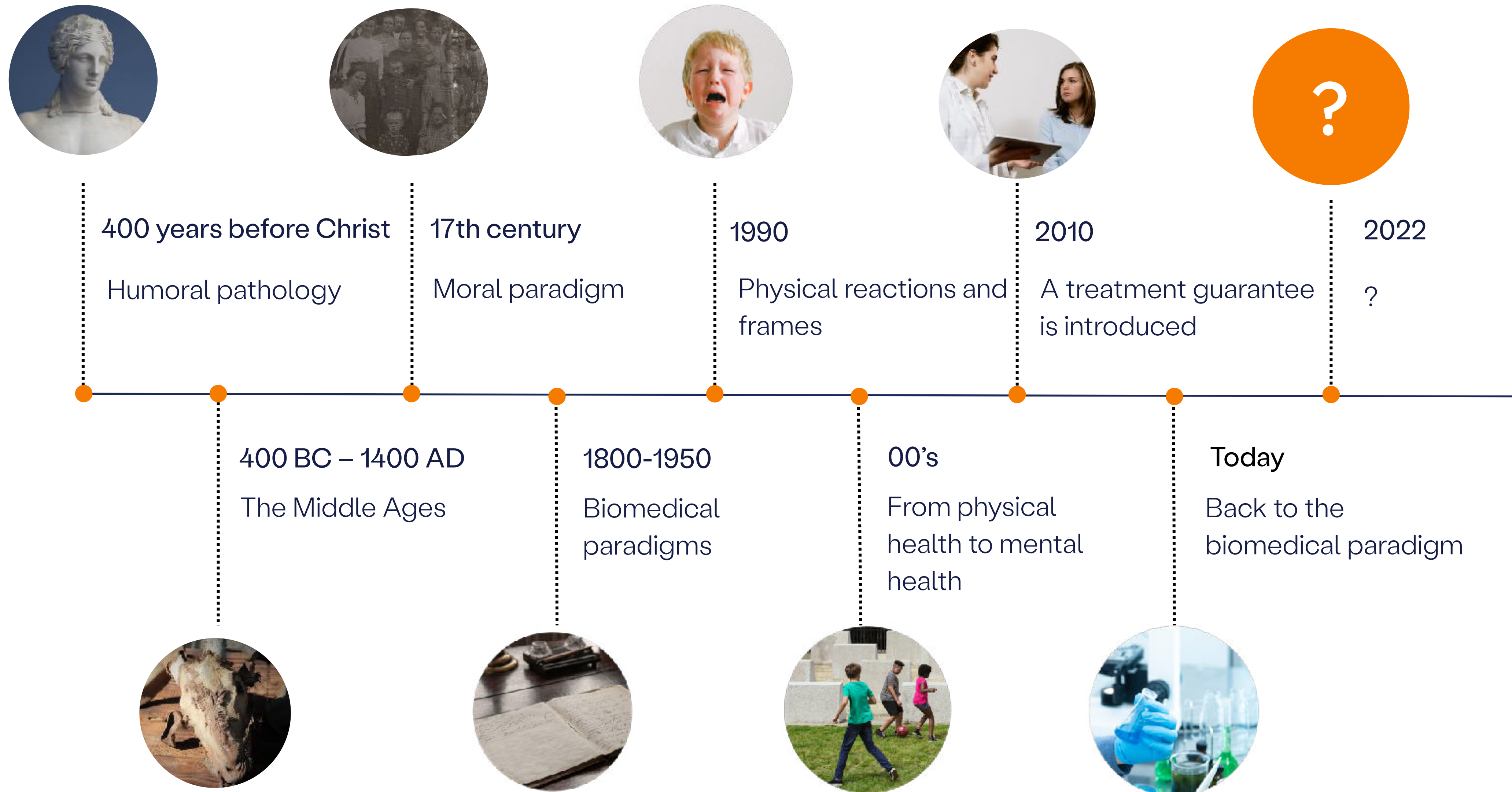
Build capacity beyond professionals, allowing people to be a resource to each other and the everyday environment.

Example of a process



Understand evolution and origin of the problem

Historical perspective



Historical perspective

90's

The debates about the well-being of children and young people were about divorces, physical conditions at schools, bullying, obesity and health behaviour.

Focus on physical reactions: headache, stomach ache, nervousness, irritation and sadness

Mental health among adults in the 90s:
Stress

00's

In the early 00s, focus on physical school environment rather than MH - computer games, tobacco, alcohol, chat, and physical health

From the year 2000, it is also discussed that the frequency of stress, unhappiness, and DAMP/ADHD is increasing and that many students feel nervous and are often sad.

The concept of mental health appears in several reports in the late 00s.

This may be due, among other things, to systemic changes in the late 00s - the Health Act: Extended right to examination and treatment in psychiatry.

10's

Up through the 2010s, the focus on children and young people's mental health is increasing.

Systemic change: Treatment guarantee In 2010 - Psychiatric patients are equated with patients who have a somatic disorder

In this period, we talk about life satisfaction, body image, loneliness, self-esteem, self-efficacy and positive mental health.

Focus on the pressure that school children experience in terms of expectations for their schooling and performance culture, and how a great deal of pressure is connected to mental dissatisfaction.

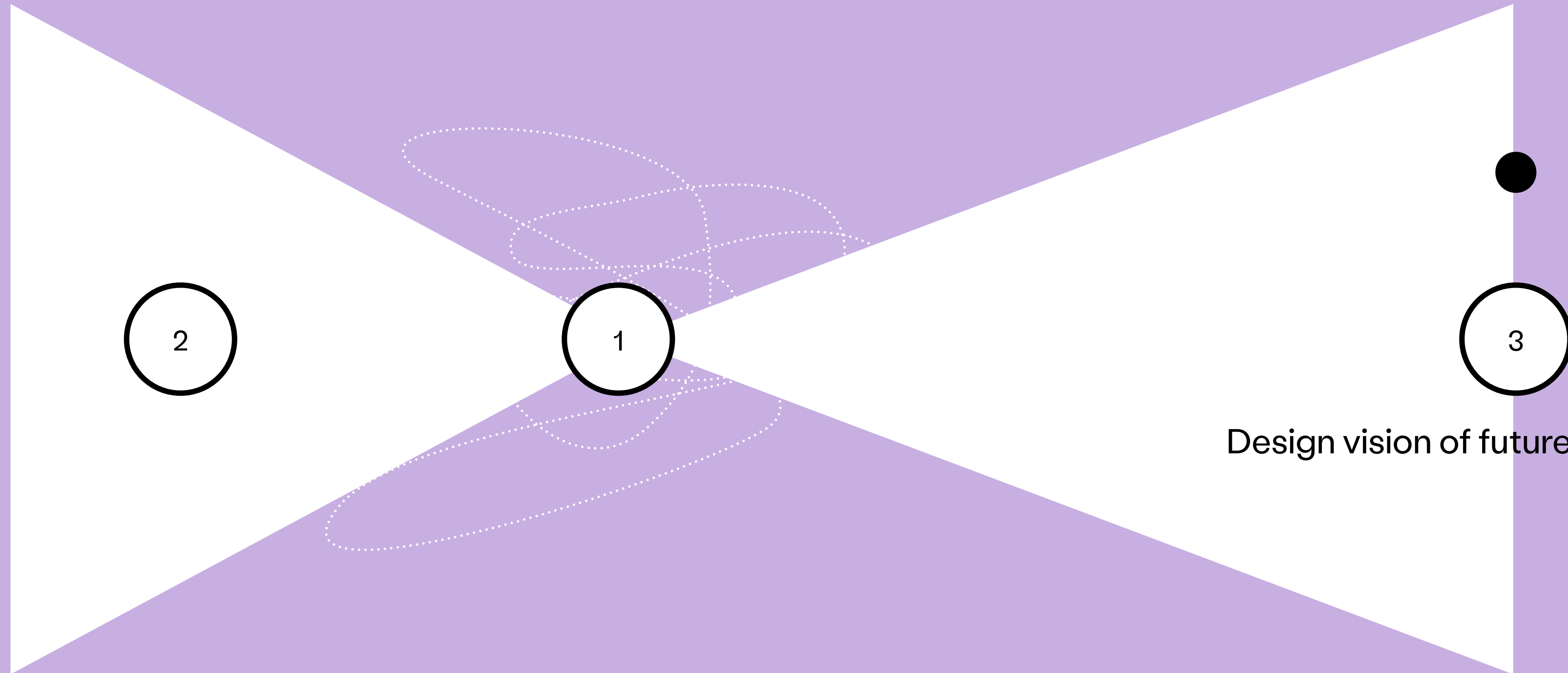
1990

2000

2010

2020

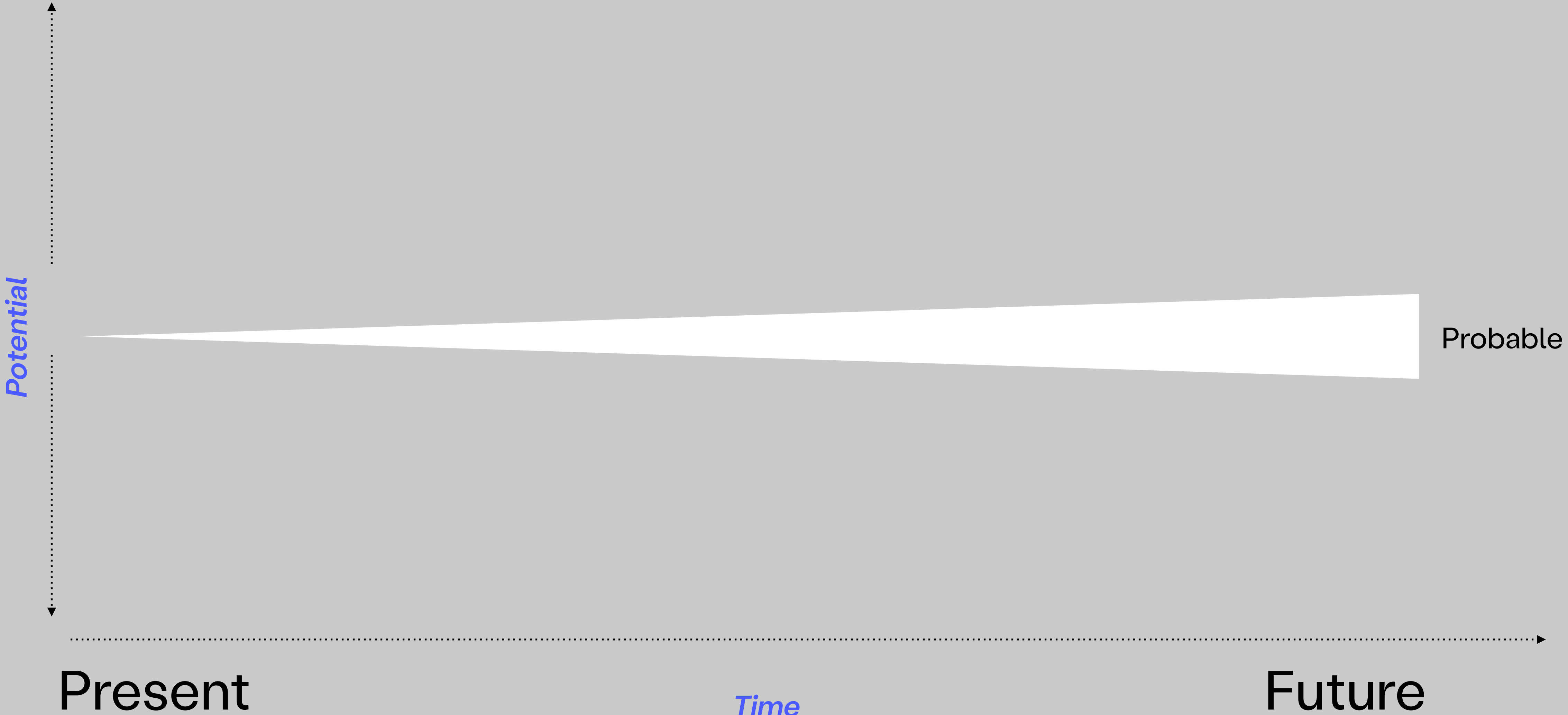
Example of a process



Design vision of future to transition to

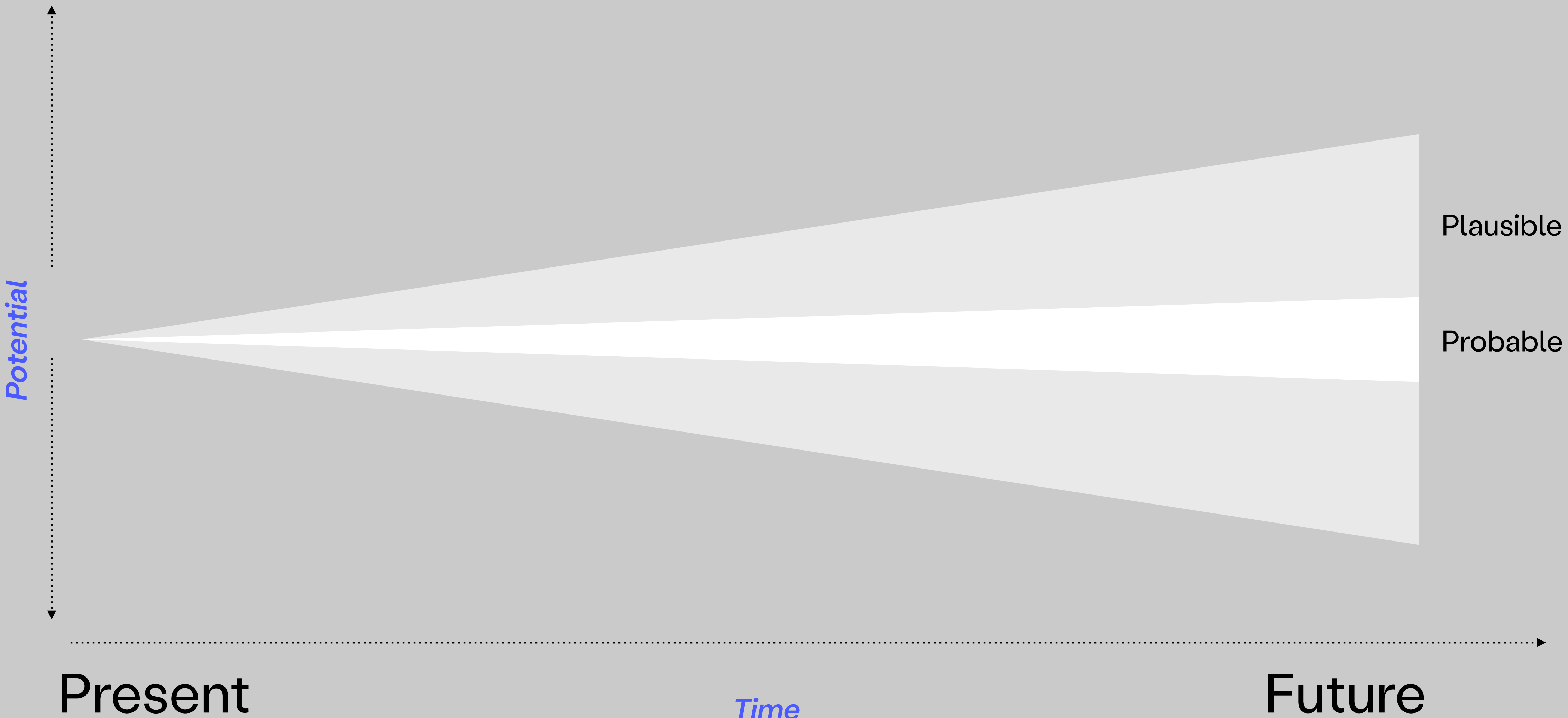
Probable futures

DDC



Plausible futures

DDC



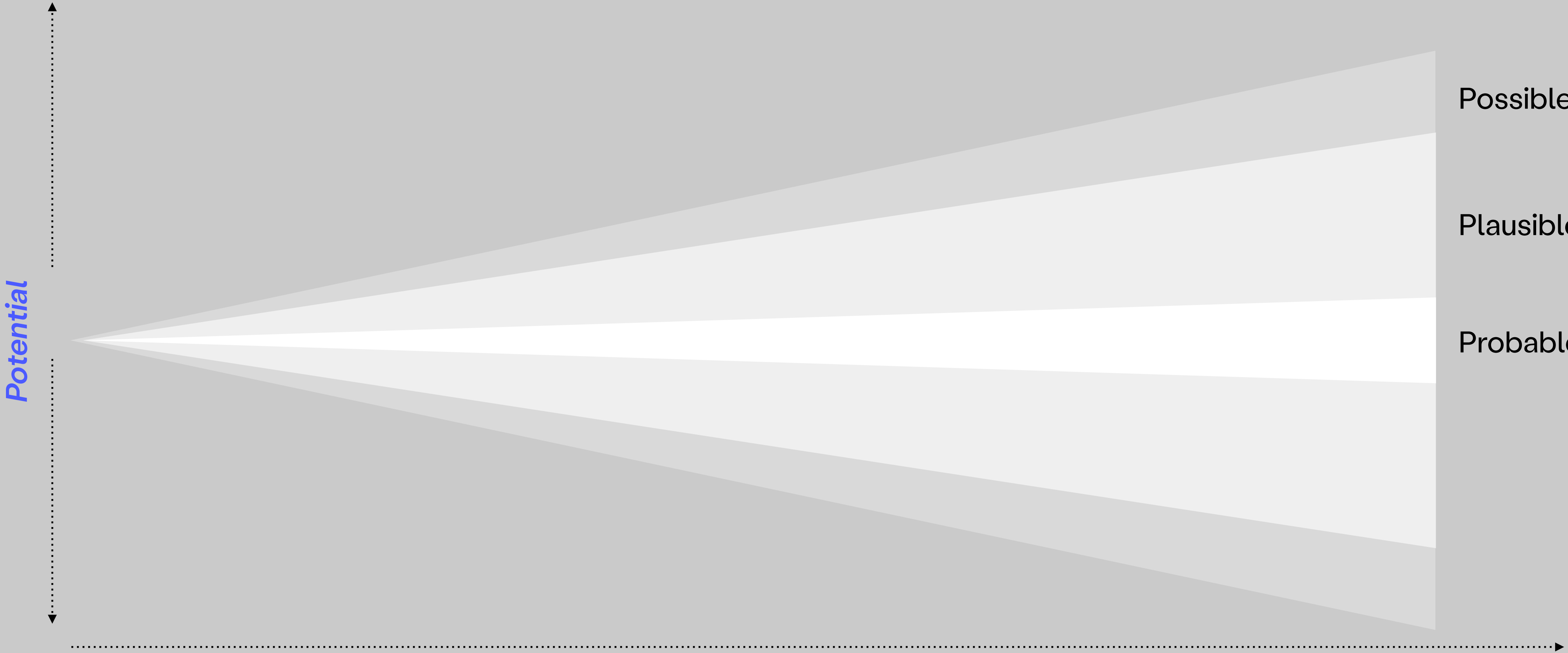
Possible futures



Possible

Plausible

Probable



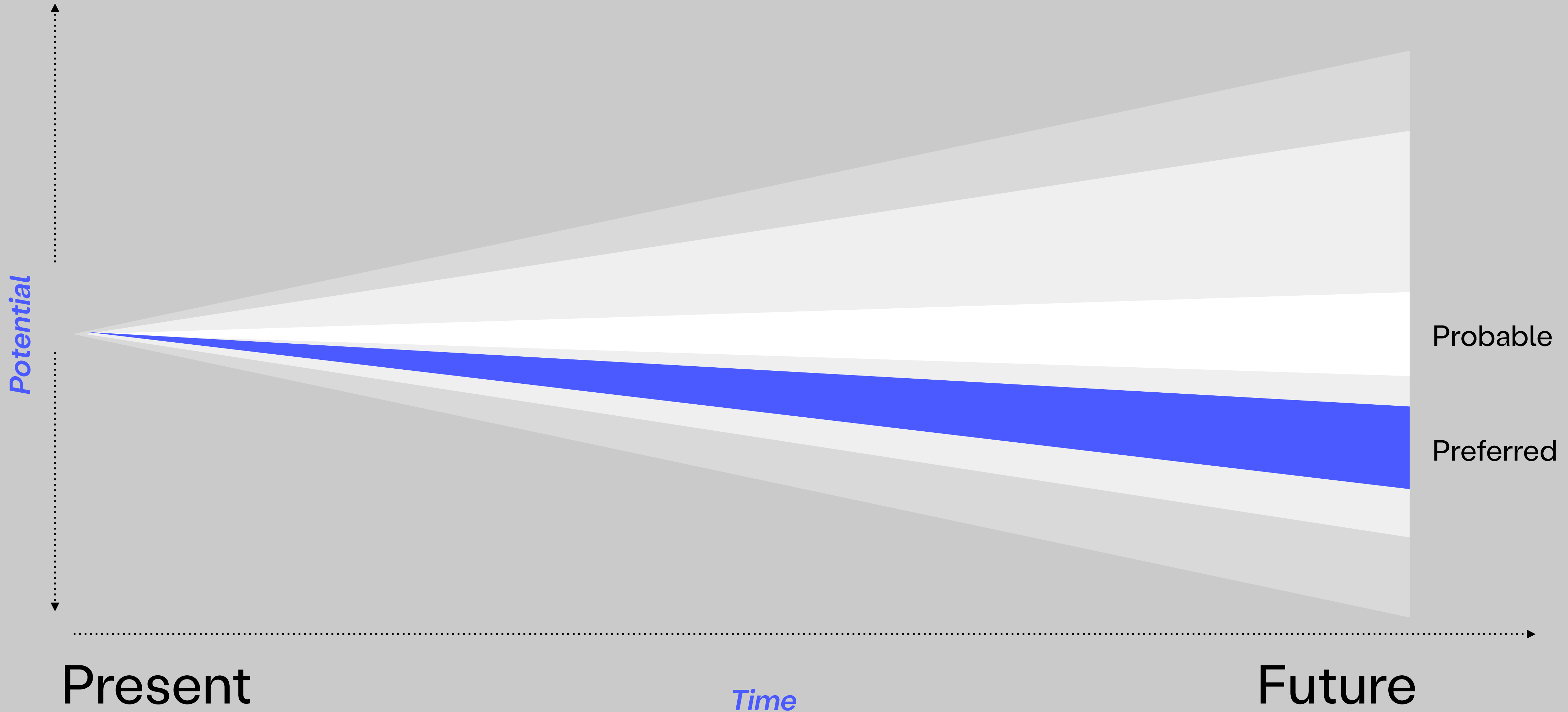
Present

Time

Future

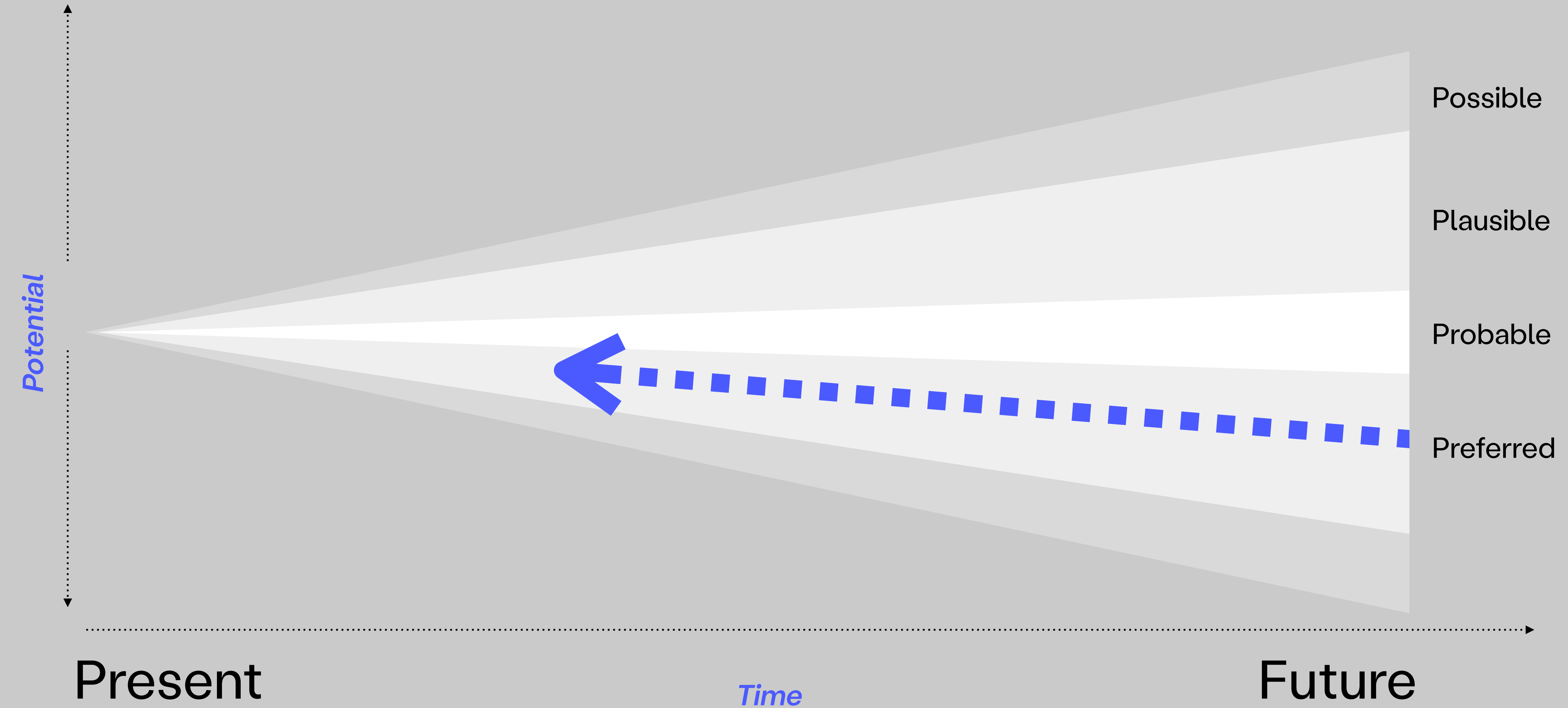
Preferred futures

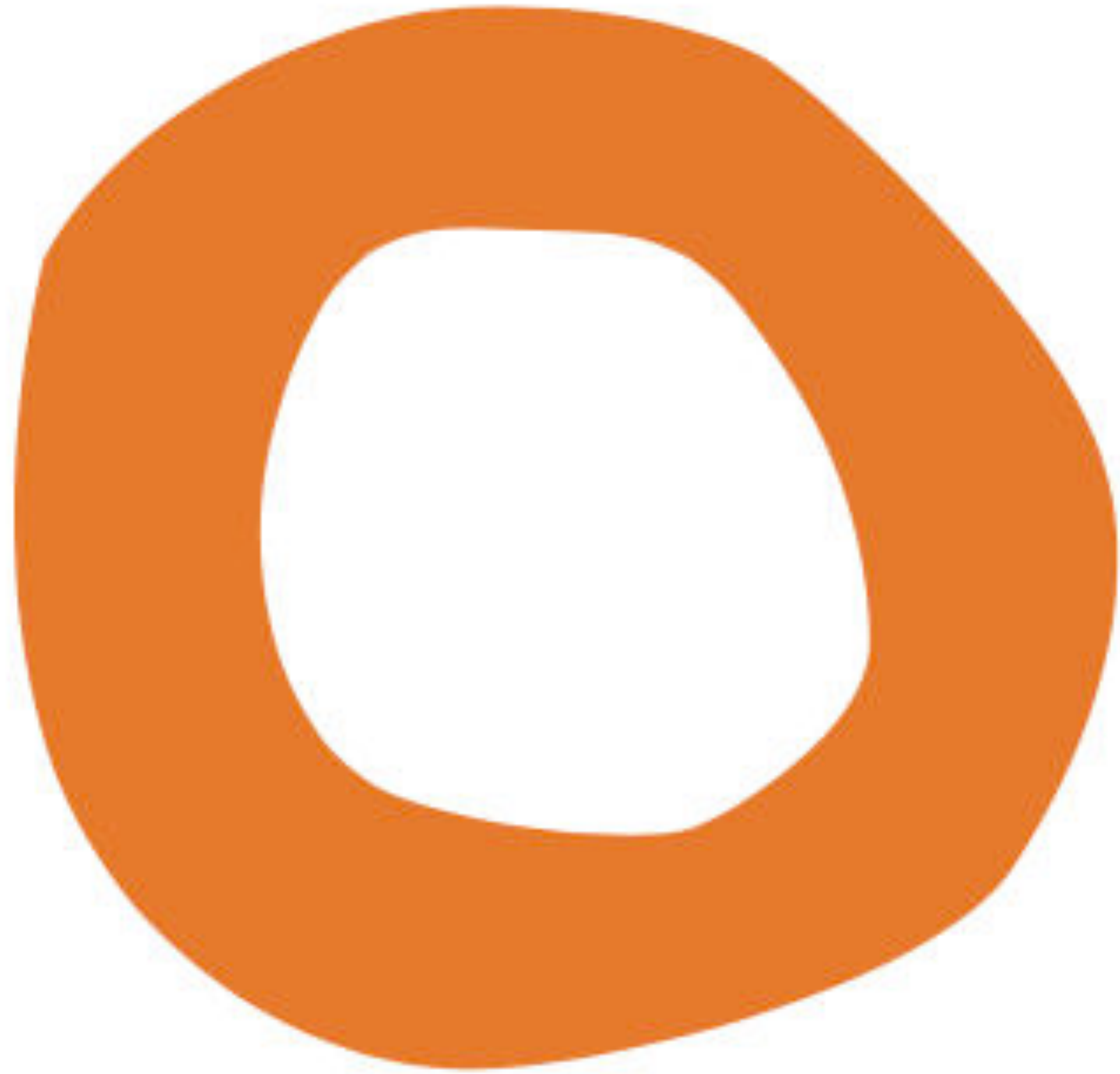
DDC



Backcasting

DDO





Welcome to Vorby

**Orientation meeting for
new residents to Vorby**

Example

Imagine if we



DDC

The seven core principles are the foundation of Vorby..

Relationships & caring

Community and democracy

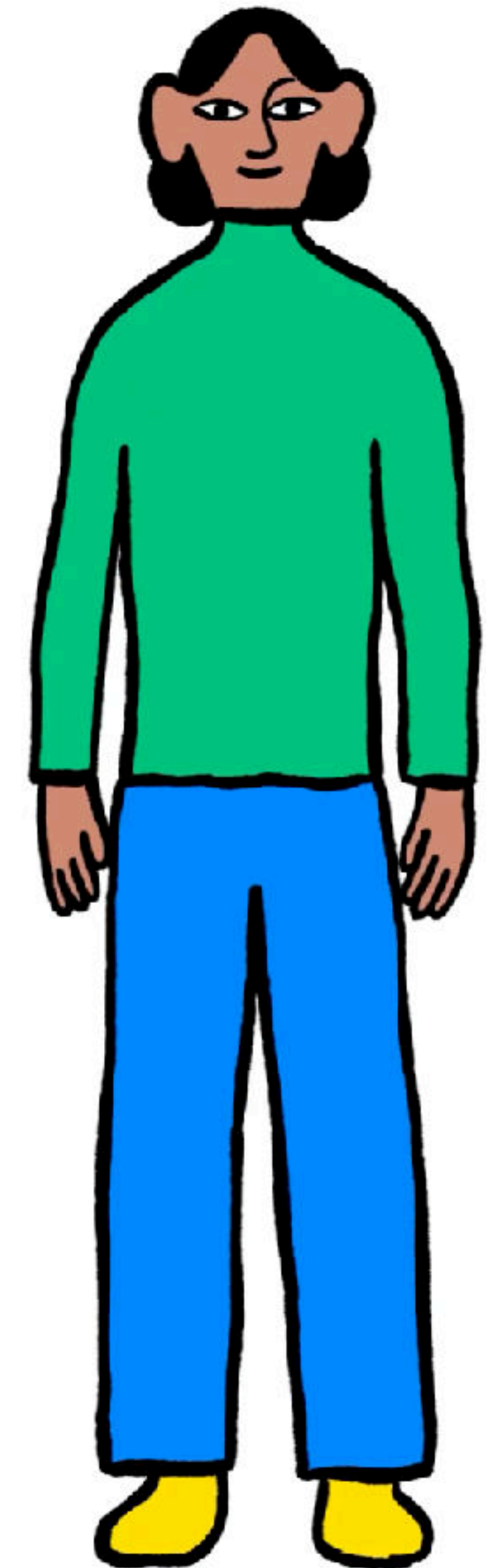
Prevention & treatment

Education throughout life

Nature on purpose

The open family

A different kind of work



DDC

Marna
How do we spend
our free time?



Vinter
How do
we learn?



Akeleje
How do we
contribute?





Hjordsholm Algegård



Vorby bibliotek og drømmelaboratorie



Artsforum



Symposiumsparken



Natskoven



Hviskemosen



Vores hus



MOLE2



Generationshusene



Læringsfællesskabet 'Solkilde'





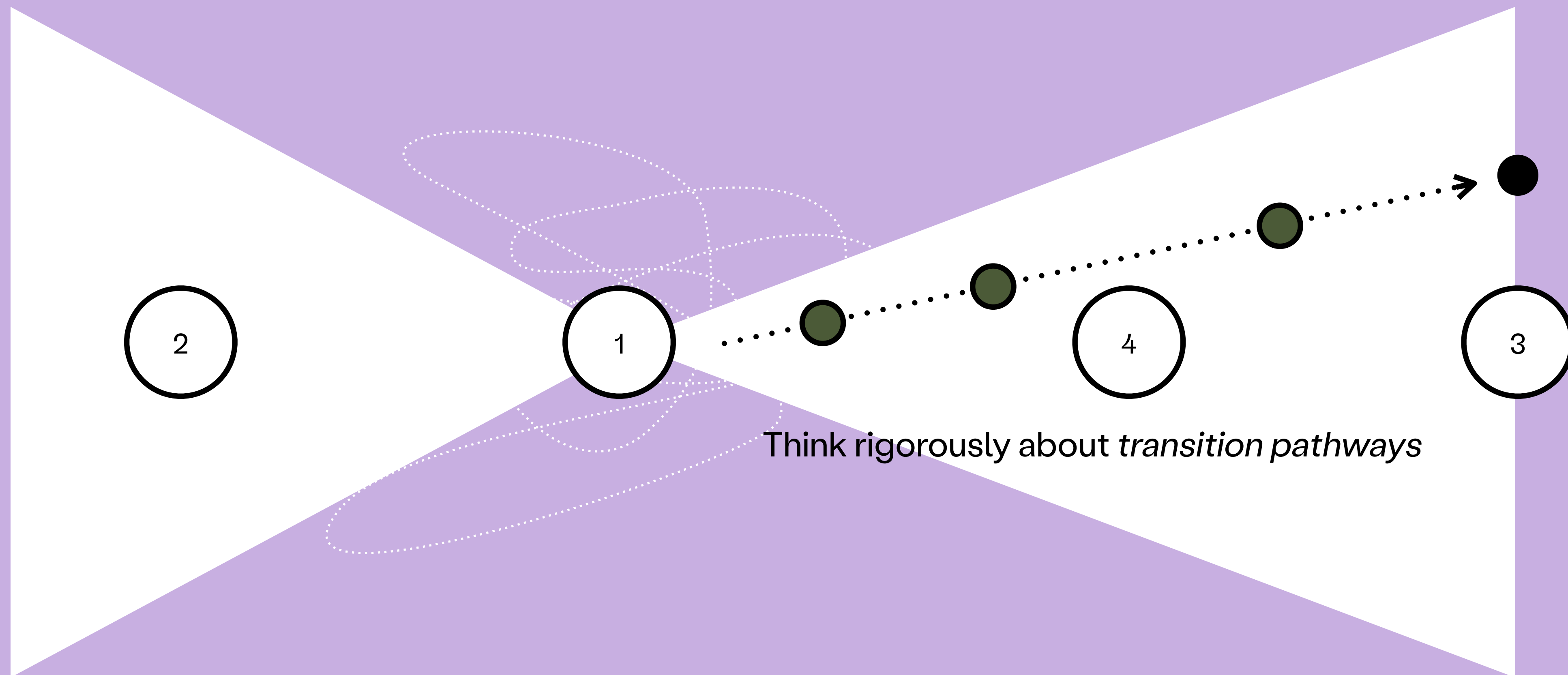
DDC

Dansk Design Center



DDDO

Example of a process



The seven core principles are the foundation of Vorby..

Relationships & caring

Community and democracy

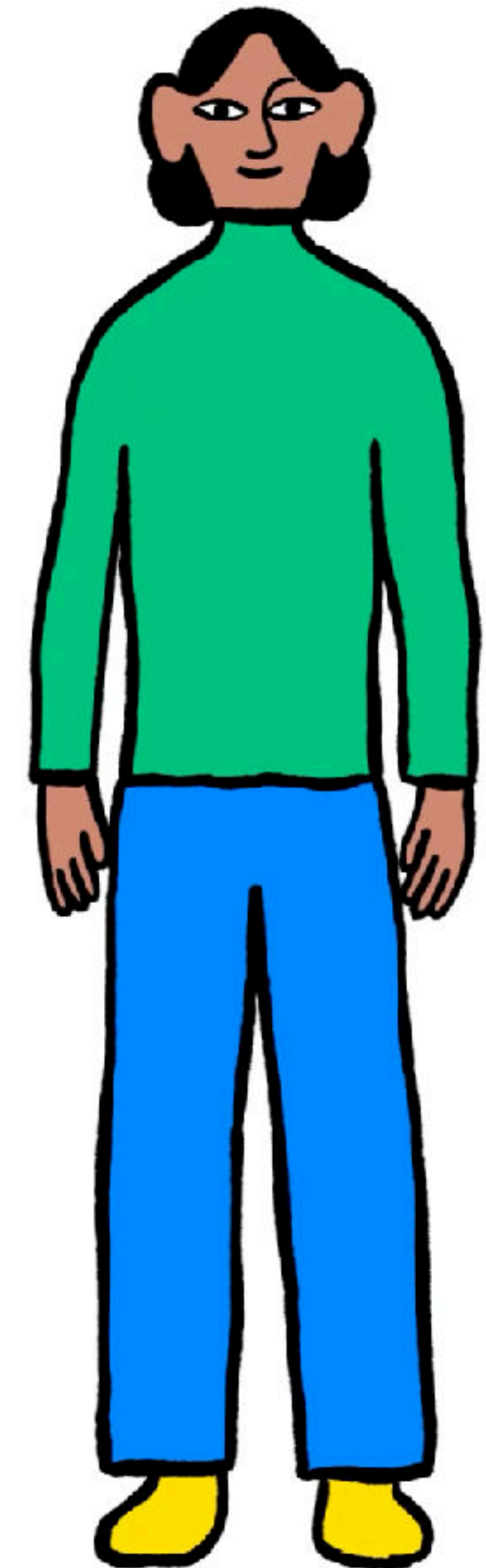
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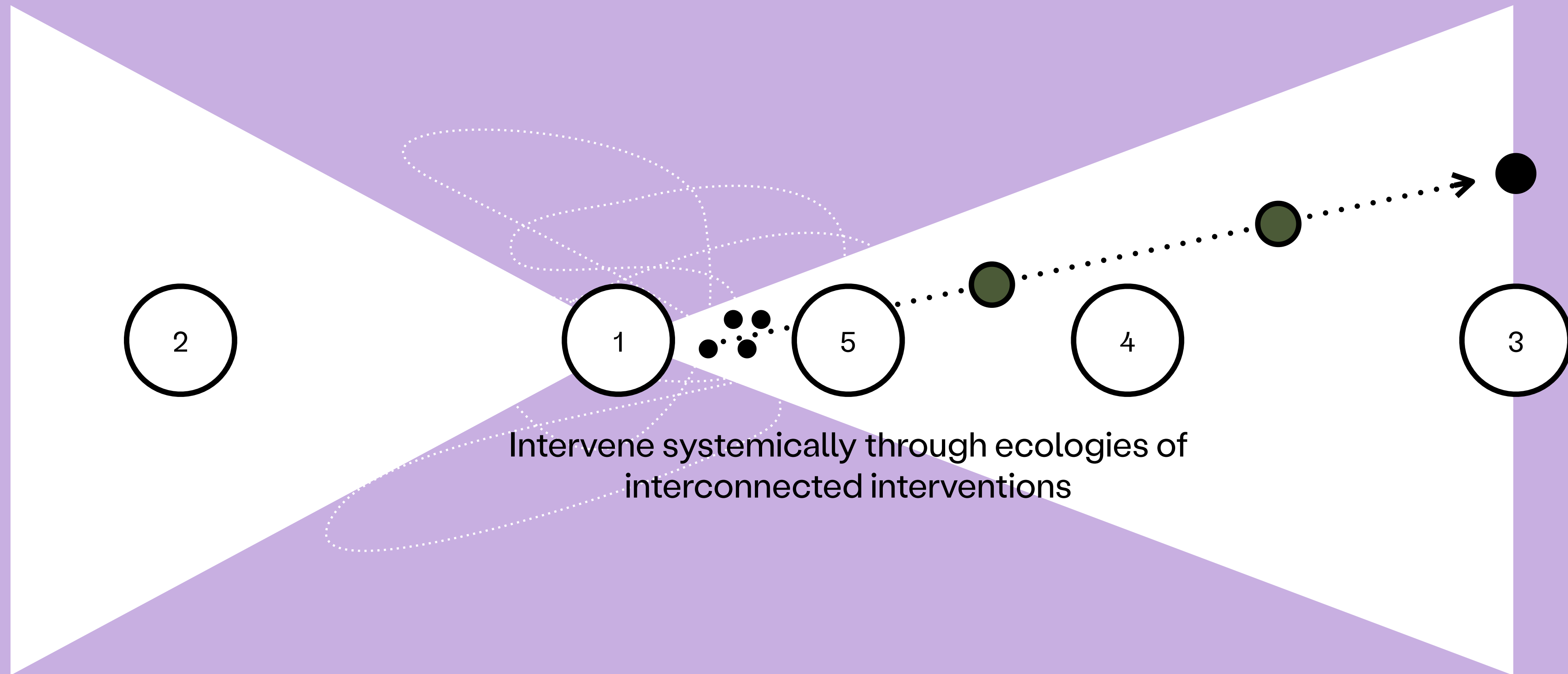
The open family

A different kind of work

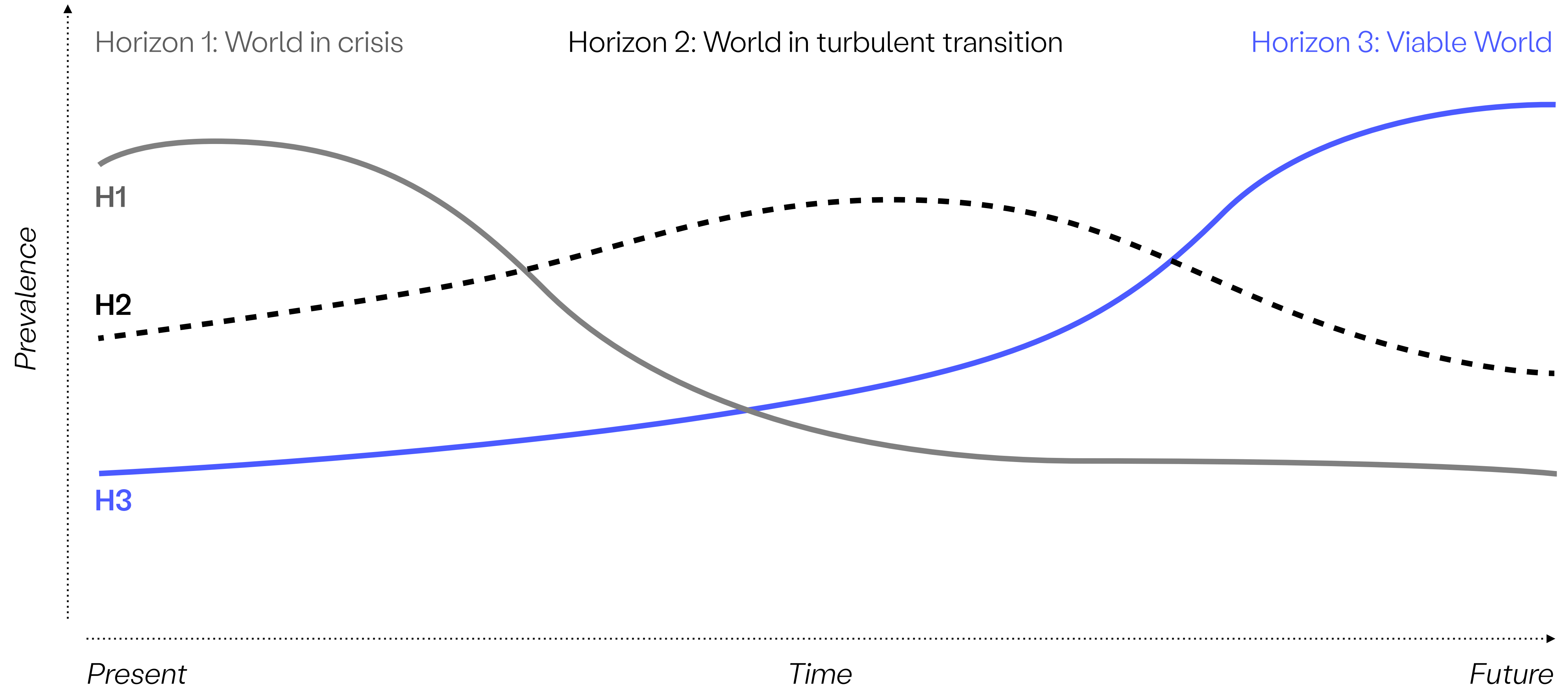


What might the
pathway look like?

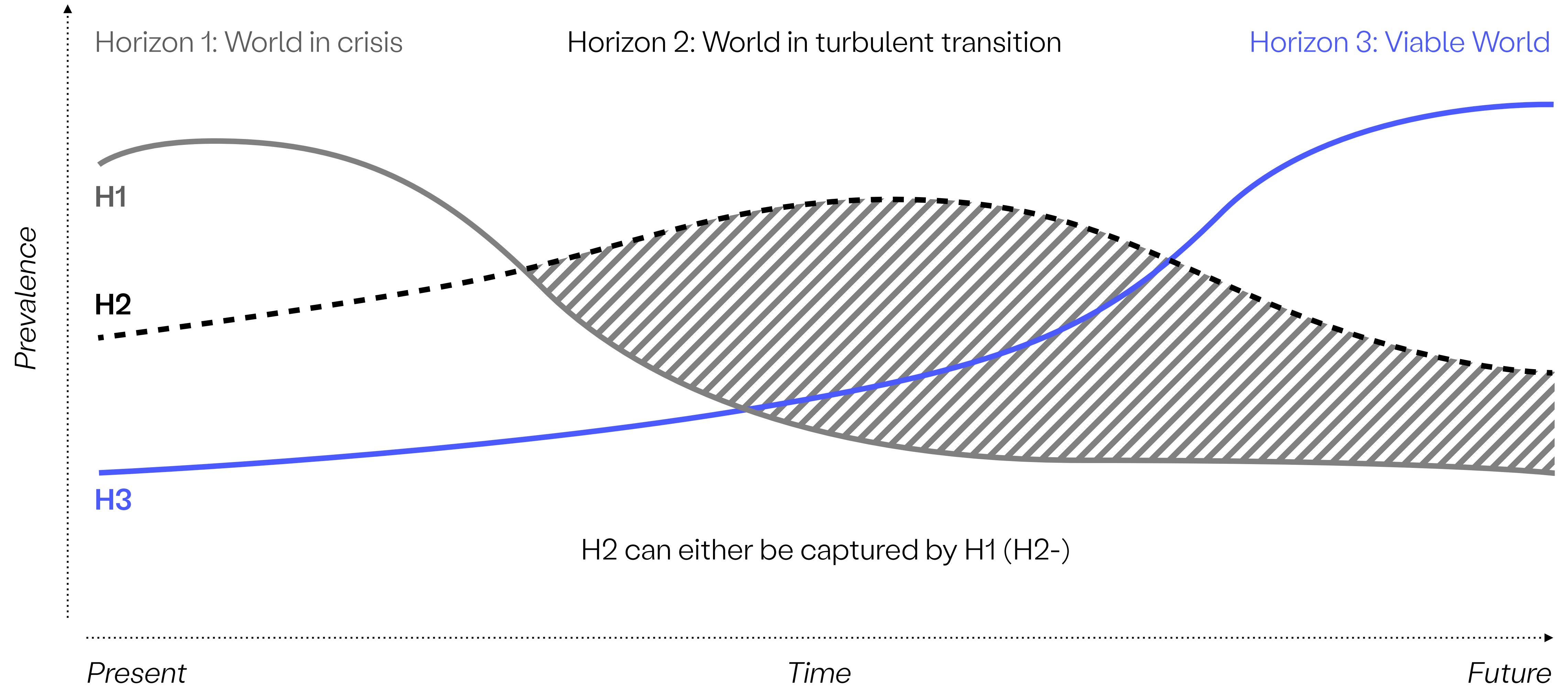
Example of a process



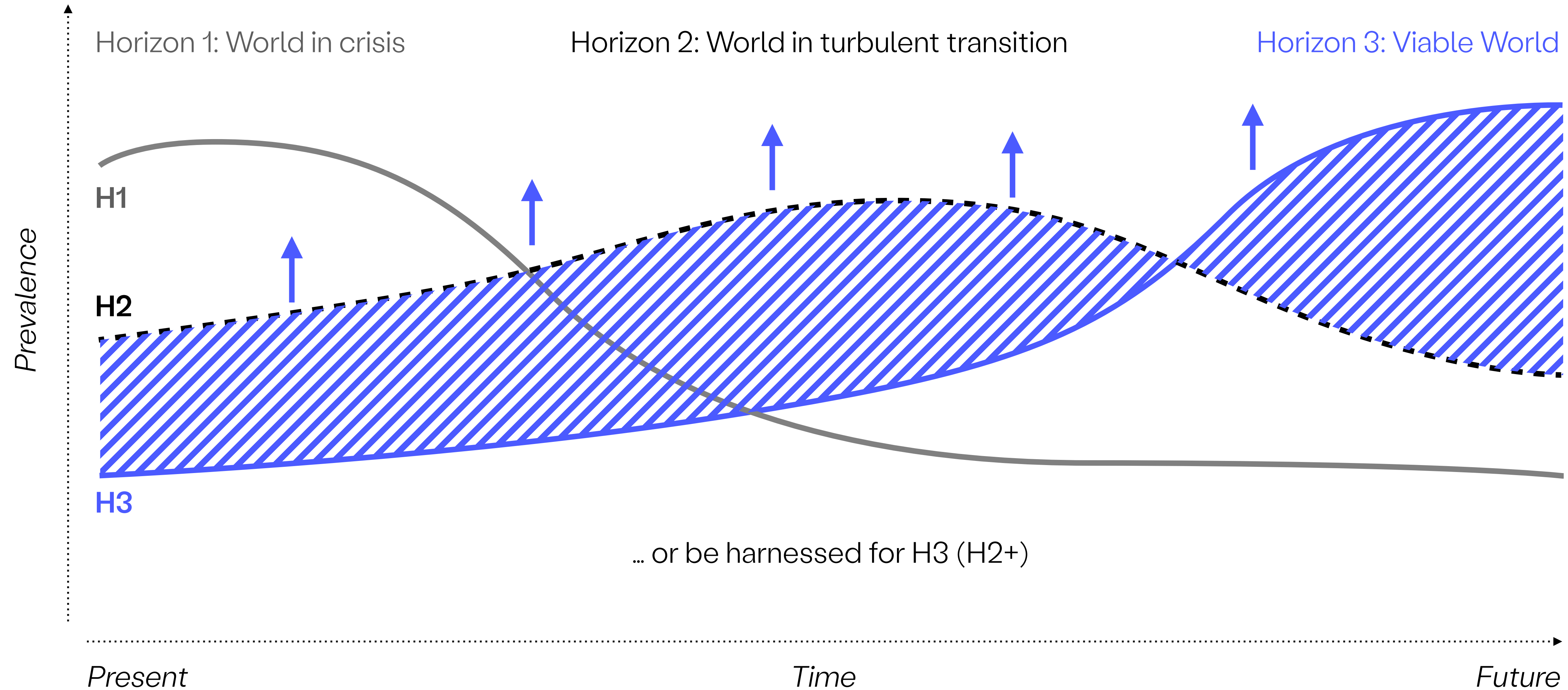
Three horizons



Three horizons: H2-



Three horizons: H2+



Move on?

Questions!

Exercise

Mapping a future

Step 1 — Decide on a big change for your future

“A future with no private cars within city limits”

Step 2 — Map out the consequences of your change

*To get started consider consequences for the **STEEP** categories. Alternatively, consider consequences in different arenas such as government, family life, crime, community, nature, cities, work etc.*

STEEP

Social

Technological

Economic

Environmental

Political

In groups (5 minutes)

Decide on a “a future where...” statement together.

Draw inspiration from your work and today or roll a dice by scanning this

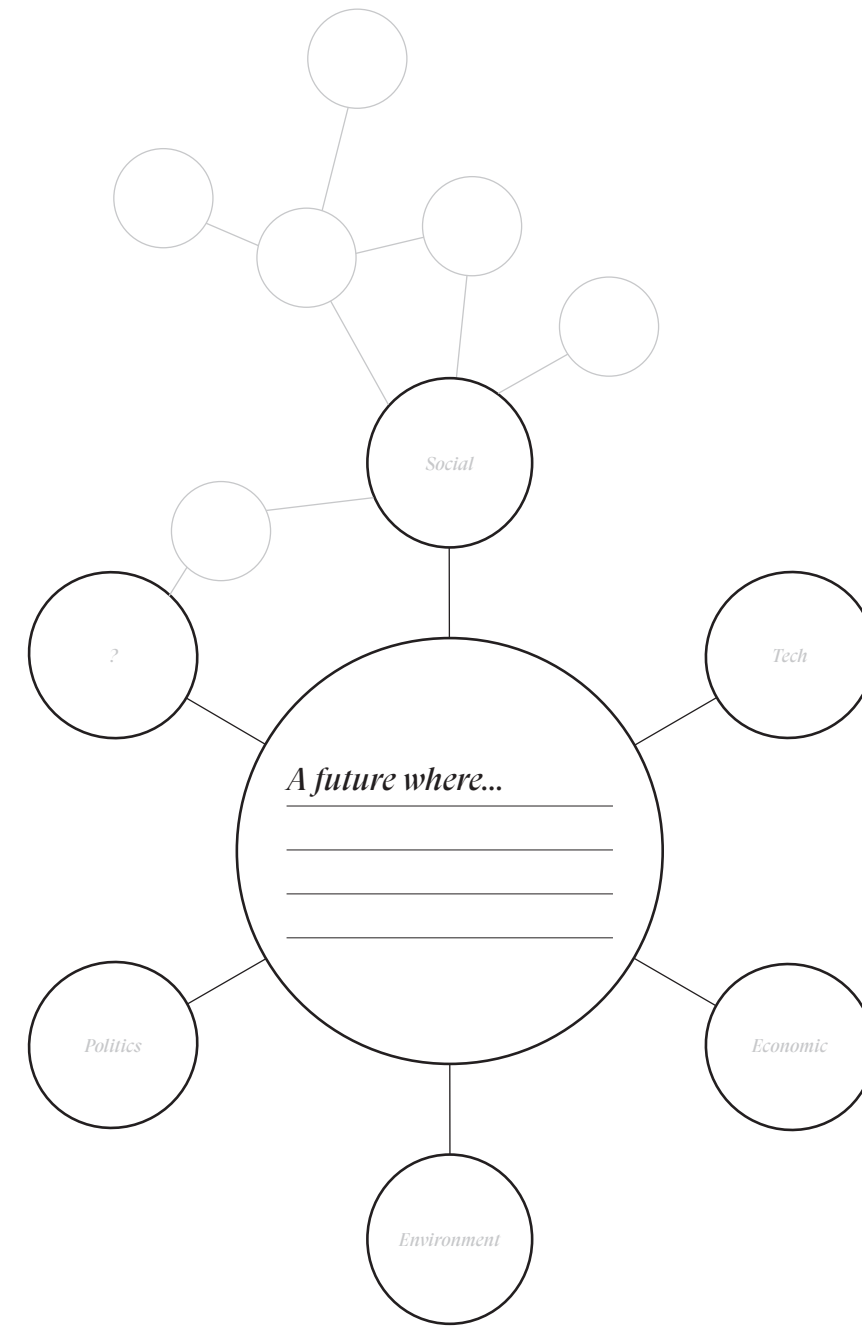


A future where a...

1. All species are recognized as citizens
2. Only kids can vote
3. All big decisions consider 7 generations
4. Everyone has a legal right to thrive
5. There are no private cars within city limits
6. It is the norm to have a ministry of dreams

Mapping a future

Futures wheel

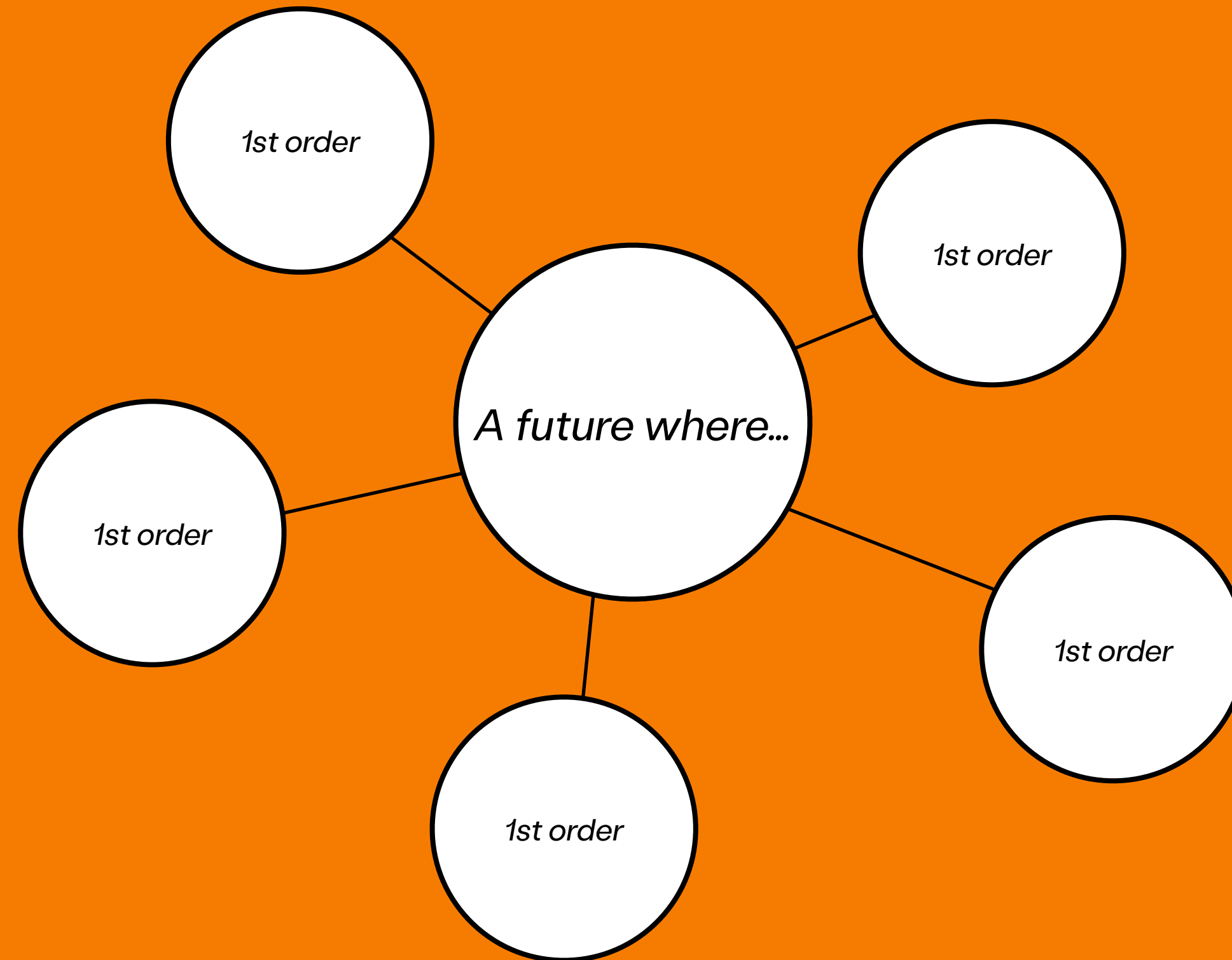


DDDC

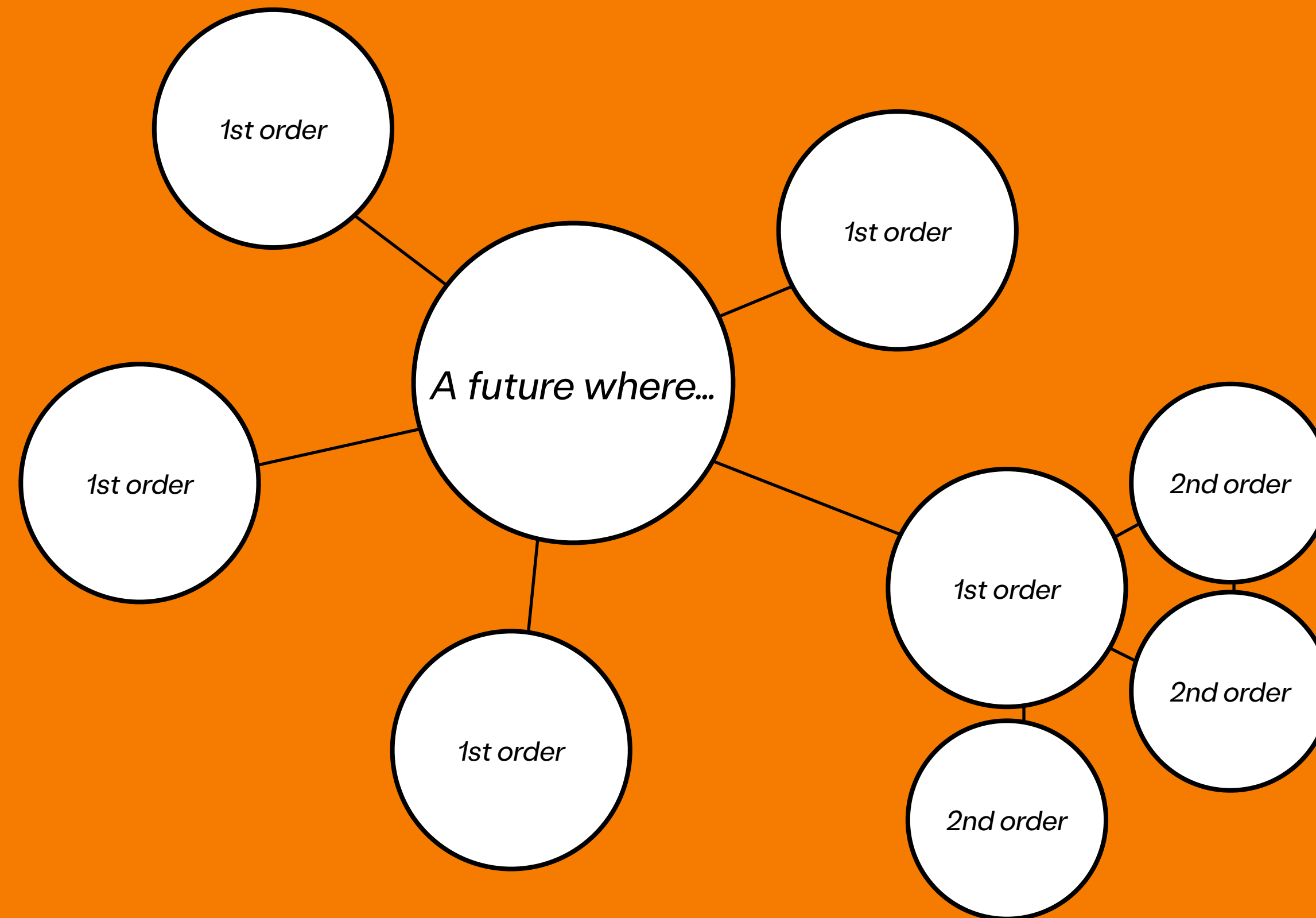
Add statement



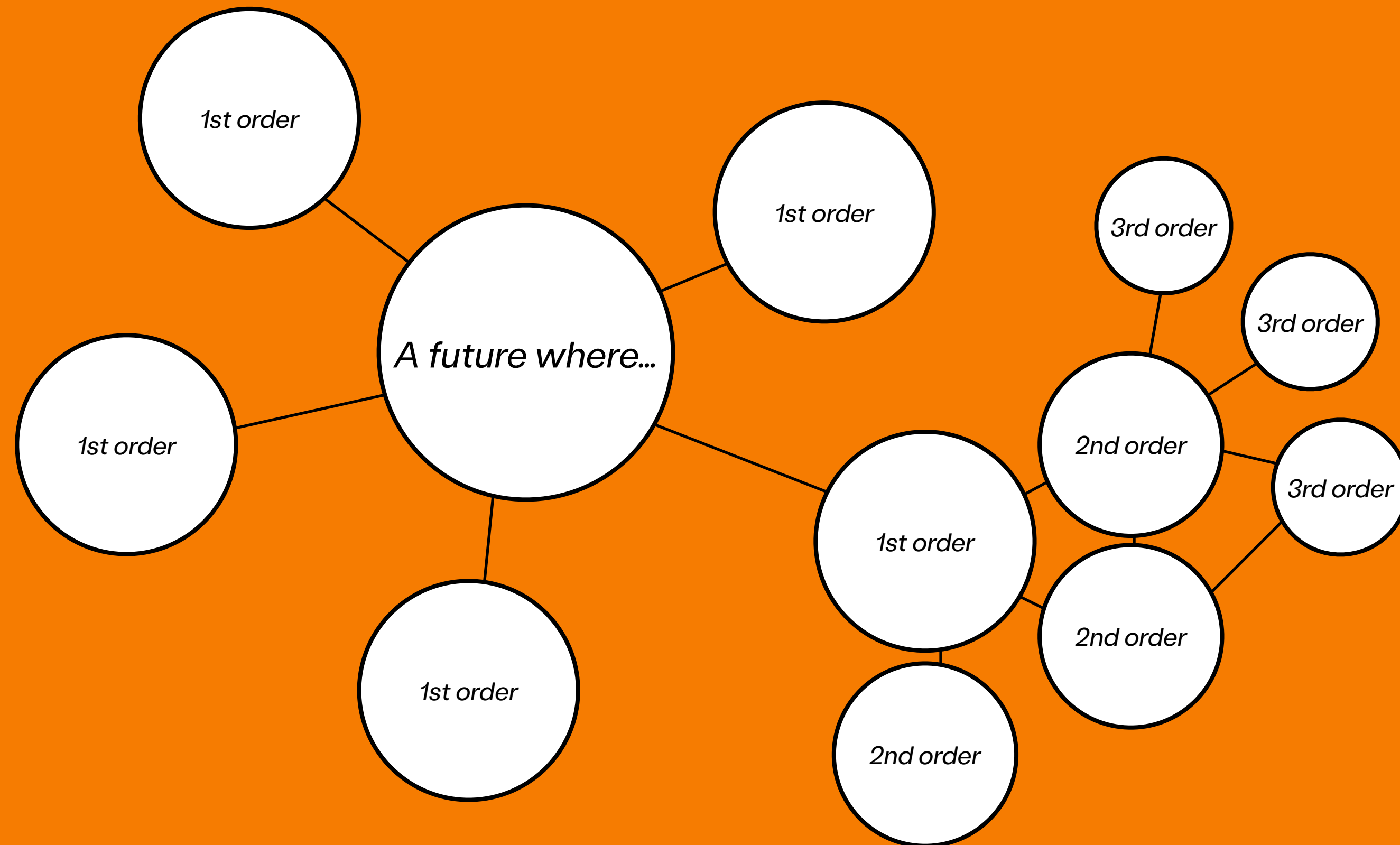
Add first order consequences



Add second order consequences



Add third order consequences



Reflections?

