



## **Mind & Life Podcast Transcript**

### **Mapping Transformation: Finding, connecting, and supporting contemplative social change agents**

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Jamie (00:01)

Hello, I'm Jamie Bristow, your guest host for this mini series of the Mind and Life podcast. And we've arrived at the final episode. Across these conversations, we've been moving through a field that's still taking shape, but already spreading further and faster than most people realize. We've explored particular approaches and families of approaches to in-led systems change. And in each conversation, we've been asking, what's actually happening here? Where are the edges of innovation? How are these ideas, practices, and communities connecting to enact change in the wider world?

In a sense, we've been trying to offer a few vistas on a broad and varied landscape. Again and again, one need has come into focus. The need for better maps. Not because a map can ever capture the full richness of a living territory, but because without some shared understanding of a field, it becomes much harder to orient. Harder to find one another, harder to collaborate, harder to see what is emerging. And harder still for those outside the field. Funders, institutions, researchers and policymakers to recognise what's already here and what support it may need. The need has become more pressing because the space is no longer small enough to fit in one person's head. There's now too much happening. Too many grassroots experiments, too many overlapping conversations, too many projects and programmes working across sectors and geographies, often only impartial awareness of one another. And so whilst one of the deeper purposes of this series has been to help this landscape come a little more into view, much more work is needed. Not only to ask whether inner-led change matters, or which approach is most promising, but to understand how far this wider ecosystem now extends and what it might need in order to mature. So to close the series, we wanted to step back, to move from the particular approaches to the wider field and speak with some of the people who have been trying to make sense of the territory as a whole. People who have been mapping it, connecting it, and in different ways, helping to build the ecosystem of inner-led change.

We're hoping this conversation will do two things: First, to give us some insight into what's already been mapped and what those maps reveal about the current state of the field. But second, we want to ask what mapping actually does for a field in formation. How does an emerging social ecosystem become more aware of itself? How does it develop greater coherence, stronger relationships and a clearer sense of direction? And what else might now be needed if contemplative and inner approaches are to meet the collective challenges of our time with greater clarity, connection and effectiveness?

This conversation is in one sense a bird's eye view, but it's also something of a closing reflection on the series as a whole. A chance to gather the threads we've been following, to notice what's beginning to take shape, and to ask what might help this wider field find its next level of maturity.

So to help us explore what ecosystem mapping and development might mean for this field, please welcome three people who have been trying in different ways to help it know itself.

**cathy-mae karelse**, PhD, a changemaker and scholar practitioner who leads Climate Youth Resilience, a global south-facing program that approaches climate resilience and systems change from the inside out.

**Rufus Pollock**, who is co-founder of Life Itself and the Second Renaissance Initiatives and is focused on inner-led social change to renew our civilization's foundations.

And finally, **Gretchen Steidle**, Director of Spirituality and Social Change at the Garrison Institute and Chief Weaver for the Conscious Change Collective, a network of practitioners

integrating inner work and social change. Welcome guys. Thank you so much for joining me. I'd love to get kicked off with you, Gretchen. Could you help us to understand what we mean by the term ecosystem? Because this is obviously a word that comes from ecology, thinking about the birds and the bees and the trees and the rivers. But now we apply it to humans and particularly to, I guess, fields of innovation and programs and things. So yeah, how do you understand this concept?

Gretchen (03:56)

Sure, thank you. I think the core of the concept of ecosystem is our interrelationships, the active interdependence between the parts within the whole. And sometimes these are visible in the ways in which we function and resources flow and actions take place. And sometimes those are less visible. But I believe ecosystems tend to be less about identity, but more about how different parts within a whole function and operate together.

Jamie (04:31)

Is it easy to spot an ecosystem or a field or identify where it begins and ends?

Gretchen (04:38)

Sometimes, but not always. When you think about a field, there's usually some core common ground or identifying characteristic that defines how folks are all within a space together. And that could be core values or theory of change or methodologies or shared purpose. And I suppose the way into an ecosystem is looking at where it's operating, whether that is a particular location or an issue or system where different practitioners and parts and players are enacting those relationships in real time.

Jamie (05:24)

And I guess people don't always know they're part of an ecosystem. I guess it's an idea we lay on top of what's naturally occurring in the world. And there's a point at which sometimes fields, I think, start to become aware of themselves, right? Before they, maybe a loose grouping, but then it gets a sense of itself and gets a bit more coherent over time. Is that right?

Gretchen (05:45)

Well, what's been interesting in what we've been exploring through mapping and convening people who are bringing the contemplative into their social change work is that they may be aware of the ecosystem of players within a particular social issue systems, say you're talking about the education system or the prison system. They know the different players and the parts that they're working on as they are addressing an issue or a challenge. But what has been fascinating is that they aren't always necessarily aware of the other players that are working within that system with a similar lens. And when you begin to be able to draw out a more uniquely defined community within a larger ecosystem that isn't always visible from the beginning. And that is where some of the most fascinating wisdom is coming from is when you start to recognize how your particular puzzle piece is functioning in a much larger puzzle that has similar values and similar methodologies and approaches and that begins to make visible perhaps a different paradigm.

Jamie (07:13)

Right, interesting, yeah, because we're used to thinking about sectors and industries, I guess. You know, have health sector or education sector, and what's less visible, yeah, is how actually there's a broader ecosystem that straddles these different sort of areas of society that are working in similar ways, that may have lots to learn from each other if they were connected or can see themselves as associated in that way.

Gretchen (07:39)

Exactly.

Jamie (07:41)

So Rufus, help us to understand what mapping means, particularly for those who haven't come across it in the context of human systems, who think about it more in terms of rivers and roads and bridges and things. How does one go about mapping a system?

Rufus (07:55)

Well, I think I can take the question probably in two ways. But let's just start with the very basic, which is well, how do you do mapping? Well, if you're doing it of people and organizations, and you could also do it of issues. I mean, you could, you could depending on how rich your ecosystem mapping is, you know, you there's a variety of dimensions, but normally you're looking at interacting organizations and people. You normally start, in the simplest way, is you have a snowball type sampling approach where you have some idea for people who are in this ecosystem or area, broad area you're interested in. And then you go maybe talk to them or ask them who they know, and they tell other people and you go talk to them. Or, you know, maybe there's things on their website and they say, We're funded by X or whatever, but you start building a kind of network of groups. You can also just do Google searches sometimes and things like that or go to existing directories.

I think this is a point I want to say about the kind of field and emergence in that most of the stuff that we're talking about here and that I'm particularly interested in is where you're trying to map something that is not already so well known and may not be a defined ecosystem. And this is where this term 'field', and I like this Christopher Alexander term 'centers, not boundaries', that you have some sense there is a center, there is a field there.

So the metaphor, I think, is like, well, you know, I was originally when I was an economist, I was studying like conceptual fields. So I was interested in how do new domains of knowledge come

into being. Like, you there's physics, there's originally there's science or something, and physics and chemistry aren't different. And at some point, there's these distinct kind of fields, and you're either in the chemistry department or you're in the physics department.

Now, there's bad, very not great things, about that conceptual breaking up of the world at like a very deep level, right? Okay. But it's also we need some of that to make sense of things. And it of course ecosystems overlap, interleave, and they're fractal. So there's no like, you know, it's like you pick a biological ecosystem, you keep pulling on it, and you get the whole world, you get the whole cosmos. And at any given moment, you're interested in like usefully demarcating, and particularly I'd say centering. It's not like there's something in or out, but there's things which are close to the center of what you're looking at. And so that's often in your doing the mapping, you're trying to find actors or organizations or activities or ideas, if you're doing idea concept mapping, that are somehow closer to the center. And it's an it can be somewhat an intuitive process in these emerging areas, where as the very process is going along, you're getting a better sense of what the center is and then who you should go talk to.

But the idea of that map is that in the same way that we can imagine that there's somehow an 'aha' moment. When in olden days of maps of like, there, you know, the first maps of Western explorers of like, my God, there's this ocean. And we thought that was the Indies, but actually, it's a completely different continent, or any other moment of a map that kind of orients us. The idea is that we say there's something going on here. There's something, there's a 'there' there in a way.

Jamie (11:01)  
Right, a 'there' there.

Rufus (11:09)  
That aha can both happen to the ecosystem itself in that people no longer feel as alone or they feel connected and self-identifying with that. And also it can obviously increase coherence and collaboration. And there are other people I can collaborate with, that we can maybe reduce duplication. And, you know, I want to maybe end by—we all know on this program, and I alluded to in the kind of even the Buddhist danger of grasping for our concepts, right? That the concepts are always wrong—A map is never the territory. And our maps that we're making here are always going to be inaccurate and possibly even misleading. So whatever way we decide to cut our cloth is always one of many, many ways we could have decided to focus or choose a center. That's what the mapping is doing.

Jamie (11:54)  
Right. And what are some of the benefits for the field or for the ecosystem of having a map, beyond seeing others?

Rufus (12:00)  
Like let's say you're someone who wants to contribute to this ecosystem. You might be a funder, you might be ~ another participant, just being able to orient and see what's going on is hugely useful. I mean, just talking to our part, our mapping efforts began because we were like, we feel we're part of something at Life Itself, but what is it? You know, who are, you know, we've got this kind of connection with like Thich Nhat Hanh and Engaged Buddhism, but we're also interested in, I don't know, psychedelics research, we're also interested in deep cultural change. Who else is there in a way? So I think one is that, and that's we were kind of in the end a participant, but also trying to collaborate. But that could be true if you're a funder. So that just

being able to find others, it makes networks visible to themselves and to the outside world. I think the other thing is that you can visualize deeper patterns of what's going on. And, you know, what the kind of broader shifts that are going on. So here, like we're talking about inner-led social change. I don't think that term existed in the same way 20, 30 years ago. So there's a whole set of actors that come out. And then there's kind of this coherence and cohesiveness. And finally, I think that coherence and cohesiveness also makes a difference in the long run. And this is a vision for your field-building, to a more mainstream kind of credibility awareness.

So just to go back to the analogy, a lot of institutional structures in our world today. So let's say funding bodies for academia. Well, they're funding physics or they're funding chemistry. And whether you like those things or not, there are kind of buckets that people kind of create, these kind of conceptual categories that then they can fund, for example, or they can support. And when you can do that for people and say, there's this field, then it becomes a whole thing that can be in the box of funding categories.

Jamie (13:43)

Hmm. It can be a stream or a strand of their funding portfolio. Yeah. Yeah. We're starting to see that particularly in the last year or two. Some bigger funders who otherwise have climate or poverty alleviation might also have psychological, cultural, inner-change approaches. cathy-mae, what else can be done to help an ecosystem or a field to develop? What are the other needs? What kind of things are helpful?

cathy-mae (14:17)

You know, firstly, let me say I really like the idea of yours, Gretchen, of the puzzle and and your idea of how dynamic these things are, Rufus. That when we think of ecosystems, we tend to think of them as contained. And of course, the membranes are all very permeable and the interstitial tissue is very alive. So everything is very interconnected. And I think we're seeing evidence of that more and more. So 20, 30 years ago in the West, we used the notion of interconnectedness, but it didn't feel as real as we now have. I mean, yes, of course, we have interbeing, we've had this for decades, but we now have the mycelial network, right? Which is showing us the value and the power of collaboration. So when you ask the question, Jamie, about what is it that is actually helpful and what is it that can support ecosystem building and ecosystem mapping. In these times, collaboration, I think, is absolutely key. We're way past the times of anybody doing anything on their own, of individual celebrities, even within the climate space. And of course, that's part of the reason why we map. I think we're all speaking about identifying key players and increasingly identifying key players who are not only values aligned and in agreement. So I think the second area of bridge-building is becoming supremely important. How do we also identify people who are not naturally falling into our field of belonging? So I think these questions of how do we build the ecosystem in ways that isn't reproducing othering becomes really, really important to challenge ourselves around who is it that we find, especially with snowballing, who is it that we find more attractive and appealing than other people? How do we identify the gaps as well as the resourcefulness? So really leaning into the challenges more seems to be what we're inviting more of, you know.

So I can speak later about the fact that we started with notions of let us find our people. And we're now facing the politics and the challenges of mapping itself. The fact that it certainly isn't a neutral activity, right. That there is a lot of embedded politics in what we're looking for and why we're looking for that there are there are many ~ narratives ~ immersed in the processes of mapping that we're wanting to become more aware of. So those are just some of the issues that

I think are very alive for us in terms of issues of collaboration, bridge building and world making. Yeah.

Jamie (17:36)

So having done some mapping and you have a better understanding of who's out there and what their needs are, are there common ways that you can meet those needs or common needs, I guess, like need for resources, need for reference material, need for connection opportunities in community? Are those some of the ways in which ecosystems can be supported?

cathy-mae (17:55)

Certainly. I do think though that when we're looking at resource creation, we want to involve the very people who we are mapping in the first instance. Of course. And I think this notion of you know, this question of where is the center, what is our positionality, be being really clear on who are the we and and who sits outside the circle. So so we're very keen to... the words of co-creation and collaboration and community are easy. I don't think anybody today would disagree with those. But how do we practice co-creation?

And so when we've listened to our global community, we've heard needs that actually have challenged us, you know, where where young people have said, actually we don't want to sit in meditation or do too much breath work. We relate to storytelling and art and theater and dance and music. So that's the genre we work in. And so our responses are to design programs that can develop what we call joyful pathways to policy making. So that we're shifting the narrative, we're challenging the norms, and challenging the norms also in relation to mapping and actually providing services rather than resources, ~ services and pathways that engage people so that they become part of the mapping themselves.

Jamie (19:30)

Right, okay, great. Well, perhaps let's come back to some more detail on what actually you've been getting up to with the Climate Youth Resilience programme. But I'd like to invite Gretchen first to give us a sense of what she has been doing at the Garrison Institute, mapping spiritual approaches to social change. Is that right, Gretchen?

Gretchen (19:49)

Yes, so the Conscious Change Collective has been a process of mapping organizations specifically more narrowly that are integrating inner work, spirituality, or contemplative practice into their social change programs and those who are working towards systems change where the inner is essential to their core values and their theory of change because we wanted to study that realm and we wanted to bring together a community that is working from that orientation to be able to explore what we might be able to do together that we cannot do alone. So from the beginning it was always more than just a mapping project. It was to be building and supporting a generative field, but it's necessary, as Rufus was saying, to help the field become visible to itself, so many folks in this space are feeling isolated working within their particular social issue, even though they have these common threads of shared values and methodologies. Folks working in prisons versus working on climate versus working in classrooms aren't necessarily seeing that they are connected as part of a larger field.

We have started with the process of mapping them in the Conscious Change Collective map, which now has identified at least 400 organizations around the world that are at this intersection.

And we have probably another hundred that'll be added to the map within the next few weeks. And from there, it has been, well, let me back up.

From the beginning, it was critically important that the process was field-led for the benefit of the field. And so we invited in a very diverse group of field co-creators and senior advisors that helped and continued to help shape every aspect of the design of our core values, how we go about the mapping, process the map design itself, and the sense-making that has come from the map.

Jamie (22:16)

Hmm. Yeah, on this mini-series, we've tried to profile some particularly influential approaches or families of approaches, as I mentioned. But it's really good to underline just quite how much grassroots activity there is out there. Could you tell us a little bit more about what these organizations are? Sketch, if you can, your sense of the field, having done all this work.

Gretchen (22:44)

Sure. Well, let's just from the first glance of those, here's another problem, maybe this is relevant or not, but you can invite folks into the map, but it needs to be a participatory process of being able to self-identify and be willing to participate. And so though we've identified a large number of organizations.

We had smaller subset that's actually followed through and providing the details of the in-depth profile that allows us to study who they are. But looking at about 168 of those profiles in the very beginning, and noting, as Rufus said, this is a snapshot that is not, it is not the whole. There's plenty of organizations still missing that we endeavor to incorporate and include. So what I share now is just a moment in time in the early phases of building this. But what we have seen is we have kind of an equal distribution across organizations that are brand new, less than five years old, and those that are 20 years on in their work, some 40 years of operations. We have about three quarters are NGOs or nonprofit organizations, but a wide distribution of all sorts of other kinds of forms. But about 60% are organizations operating with 10 or fewer people. And so it there a lot of them are very small grassroots organizations, ~ or working in ways that only need a few people that are connected in with different strategies that are reaching broadly. Most their reach is about a thousand people, in terms of their services, each year. Although, you know, we've got about 25% that are reaching between 10,000 and beyond 50,000 people in terms of their services. So we do have a pretty significant number of organizations that are really just emerging into this field right now, which I think is quite interesting. They're predominantly from North America and Western Europe, though.

We are spread out across all continents, but we need to do a lot more work in identifying organizations throughout the global south. And that will require additional investments in local communities that can help us work in an appropriate local context in building community in those places. And I'll also say that an interesting piece though, we found this network stretches across all sorts of faiths. Forty-four percent are spiritual and not religious. And another thirty say they are just straight secular without even identifying as spiritual, but yet they're still utilizing deep inner work in what they are doing.

Jamie (25:56)

Right, and a minority being aligned with a particular religion. So do you get a sense that these 400 organizations are all doing something slightly different from each other? They've all got their own innovative program where they've combined different elements or other themes? Could you

say that 30 % are using mindfulness-based approaches or is it really just very, very heterogeneous or like, you know, diverse?

Gretchen (26:19)

Extremely diverse in terms of program model, but we're finding coherence across common values and theories of change. So what is emerging as a sort of coherent worldview across many of them is a few things. One, that the inner and the outer are integral and inseparable. Two, this embrace of our interdependence and our interconnection and, naturally, then what you see is that most of these models are deeply relational versus transactional in the way that they go about what they are doing.

They are shifting systems by embodying their values and changing mental models and perspectives within systems. That changes then the culture of systems. Many of them, through that interdependence, are fostering a sense of mutual responsibility, reciprocity, an engagement of a reverence for the beyond human in terms of their connection to nature and responsibility for the earth. And another piece that seems pervasive is a recognition of trauma throughout systems that needs healing, and that that kind of healing and this kind of social change work needs to happen within community.

Jamie (27:45)

Very interesting. Thank you, Gretchen. cathy-mae, your initiative is global south-facing. Gretchen was there talking about the limits of what they've done so far with the Garrison Institute study and the ambition to go further around the world. Could you tell us a little bit about Climate Youth Resilience? First, just maybe introduce what it was responding to, what particular sort of field or ecosystem it's trying to... Because it started with a mapping project, right, and then has moved into other things. But I'd love to hear about the work in general, but particularly how you made it Global South-facing, what that then meant for the map and what you found.

cathy-mae (28:23)

Thank you. And it is a good basis that you're starting from, Gretchen, in identifying these habits, right, of the Global North to tend to map the global north. So we, in response to the first part of your question, Jamie, deliberately are wanting to nourish the inner worlds of young people. So when we speak about bridging, it's similar work in bridging the inner and the outer, because we know that that split is also conditioned. It's not something that we're born with. But in doing so, because we're so keen on shifting narratives and shifting dominant narratives, we became what we call 'deliberately Global South, Indigenous and queer-facing'. And that's about responding to young people and where the conversations are at for them. And it's young people saying to us in an initial survey that we find that the Global North narratives are dominant, that people don't necessarily respect us in the Global South. We have the problem of hierarchies, and young people are not heard and are not listened to. And also spoke about the fact that Indigenous knowledge has been suppressed and eclipsed and often annihilated for so many decades. And so it was really in honoring this desire to foreground Global South voices and experiences that we quite deliberately looked for those organizations, those youth groups, those movements in the global south. And when we say Global South Indigenous and Queer Facing, that's not a moniker of exclusion. We, kind of, our ethos is we love all our young people, but it is something which is naming what often does not get named in the Global North. And young people are hugely responsive to that, including young people from the Global North. So there's a huge understanding and an interest and investment in wanting to shift these dynamics globally. You know, it's not as if there is a vying for attention. If anything, the relationships that are growing appear to be much easier.



Because of the respect for Global South and Indigenous and queer knowledges that are coming through our ambassadorship, the Dance for Change programme, education and the economy, where young people are understanding themselves as key players in all of these spheres.

Jamie (31:06)

And what did your map find? Can you paint us a picture of the map itself? I should have asked Gretchen actually before we move on, how do people find your map? We'll provide links in the show notes, but I thought it'd be nice to mention it here in the middle of the show as well.

Gretchen (31:21)

You can find the conscious change collective at [consciouschangecollective.community](https://consciouschangecollective.community).

Jamie (31:29)

And cathy-mae, where can we find your map just before you describe what it shows?

cathy-mae (31:34)

So, our website, which is where you can find the map, it's [climateyouthresilience.org](https://climateyouthresilience.org). And I want to say, I almost want to encourage people, please don't look yet, because one of the challenges we found is the Mercator projection and the fact that Google Maps does not feature Palestine. And we started doing this work pretty much at the start of the genocide. So we were interviewing young people in Palestine, but unable to map their organizations.

So one of the immediate problems that we encountered, we now have the beautiful work of River Újhadbor. And the work here is helping us understand, ask the questions about what exactly is it that we're mapping? You know, because when we put these dots on pages, we don't know if there is a sense of belonging and safety for young people.

In these places that we are identifying, or in these organizations, or what the conditions are that they are meeting as they are doing work of organizing young people. So we found that there is a preponderance of organizations across Europe and in North America, and we then had to search very conscientiously for the organizations in the Global South. The minute you start looking, the minute you know you are in the networks, the minute we have people from the Global South employed or doing the mapping work for us, huge, huge number of organizations.

Jamie (33:16)

Because now you've got to a place where the majority of responses are from the Global South, right? And most of those are from Africa.

cathy-mae (33:24)

Most of these are from sub Saharan Africa. At the moment, Asia Pacific has the most young people on the planet, in that region. And Sub Saharan Africa, I think by 2030, has something like forty percent of twenty-two year olds. So the world is looking very different, and we're really wanting to hear from those people in terms of their experiences. So in our ambassadorship programme, most of our applications, we get like about a thousand applications. And this year we've enlisted 125 young people. Most of them would come from Asia Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa. So yes, lots of interest in working across regions. You know, people are young people are like so forgiving and they lead courageously, and there's like, you know, no chips on shoulders, but very grateful for spaces that are not forcing our versions of contemplative

practice onto them. Very grateful for being co-creators in the space, in how we understand, as I said earlier, the processes of mapping itself. And we really want to workshop that.

Jamie (34:37)

So tell us a little bit about what you've found out about young people's inner lives, the resources they have and the approaches that they have affinity with. Because many of these are change agents, it's young people in general that you're wanting to support with inner approaches, but a lot of these people are really on the front line of stuff, in countries where actually it's quite dangerous to be a climate activist, right?

cathy-mae (35:01)

Exactly. So we have both the political dangers and we of course have climate impacts. And so something which is not it's not a popular thing to say is something that emerged very early on is that people, and I'm generalizing here, people in the Global South don't speak about eco anxiety in the ways in which it's spoken of in the Global North. And a number of our young people from those areas have said, 'we don't have time for eco-anxiety'. We're busy meeting the challenges and the impacts of climate on a daily basis. And we're talking about crop failure, heat, floods, rain, you know, all kinds of things.

So interestingly, also in the Global South, people do their work when they have work, and they then have, what are they called? They have service work. They set up their own organizations that they volunteer in over weekends. And the culture in the Global North is a lot more boundried in terms of time and not kind of - it's that old system of clocking in and clocking out. So the cultures are very different, generally speaking ~ but those kinds of patterns, you know, you spoke earlier about patterns, Rufus, those kinds of patterns become more and more evident the more breach we have into these different spheres. A lot of resilience. I mean, this is the thing. We are very clear, we are not teaching young people how to be resilient. They are incredibly resilient and adaptive. And there is huge compassion in these areas of communities crumbling or facing disaster. You know, whether that is from political systems or from climate and yeah, environmental collapse.

Jamie (37:02)

Rufus, could you tell us a little bit about the mapping work that you've done? You've had a number of iterations and some of it's been funded by the European government or European Commission. So yeah, explain perhaps what the scope is and how it might differ from what we've already talked about here and yeah, what did you find?

Rufus (37:22)

Yeah. So Life Itself, we did probably now four or five different ecosystem mapping exercises, maybe six. There's been one which is a kind of stream in which there's versions, which I would now call the Second Renaissance ecosystem map. So the first version of that was in 2019, 2020, with a report called The State of Sense Making. Then there was the PIP report in 2021, 2022, which is in version of two of that, which is 'paradigmatic, integrated, pragmatic' approaches to social change. And I can say more about that in a moment.

Jamie (37:57)

paradigmatic, integrative and pragmatic.

Rufus (38:02)

We also called it PIE for 'engaged', but yeah, to answer the initial question, and then there was this work with the Erasmus program, the European Union, along with the Hague Center, IFIS, Eskaret, and Emerge. We like led with a grant-funded project, an Erasmus program project, starting in 2023, basically, and finished last September. It was focused on mapping the European PIP.

We also did a project with Commonweal that Commonweal supported with their ORA project, Omega Resilience Awards, that was focused on mapping in the Global South specifically for the same kind of PIP ecosystem, pragmatic, integrated, pragmatic approaches, social change. As Gretchen mentioned, funding limitations are a constant sort of side. We managed to self-fund at a very minimal level the initial mapping, and then we had the EU mapping project, which covered about, that was, we had a list of about a thousand organizations, the actual published list where we actually gathered a lot of data was about three to four hundred. But yeah.

Jamie (39:07)

Right, so help us understand what PIP is, relative to, say, spiritual approaches to social change. Integrative, I understand, is the inner-outer bit, right?

Rufus (39:17)

Inner and outer, yeah. So well, what, let me just ask you a direct question. So what is paradigmatic change? And so that is change where you have some conscious attention to shifting the paradigm. And what we would particularly say is like the worldview paradigms, like core views and values. So, you know paradigmatic change is from a world, for example, where you have systematic patriarchy to a world where you don't.

Now, that involves a whole bunch of institutional and economic changes, but at a foundational level, it's some shift in views about sex and gender differences and what they mean and how they should show up in society, and even about human nature. You know, like men or women are somehow fundamentally different in this way, and better or worse, normally, there's also value-laden aspects of it.

And you know, the other more classic paradigmatic change that's more at a social and structural level has been like Marxism, you know. Change the ownership of the means of production. This is an example, Marxism, of a pure outer-led change approach. So it's not PIP. It's paradigmatic, but not integrated, is a good example.

Jamie (40:21)

So they're pragmatic as well in many ways. They're about sort of organizing and doing the grassroots work, but they're missing that integrative piece that would exclude them from this map.

Rufus (40:31)

Yeah, exactly. I mean, pragmatic, the P, the last P is the least important, in a sense, but it was trying to distinguish, let's say, academic groups who are wonderful but are just thinking about those things or doing research from groups who are trying to act doing something on the ground. Right. But yeah, I think the most important point in that... And that came the point of that, by the way, the PIP point, and also interesting about the mapping, is we didn't know when we started the mapping - We were doing it sort of by, like, you know, this Wittgenstein-esque similarity. You know, you don't know exactly what your heffalump is that you're looking for at the

beginning. You know there's this group that's emerging, this field. What does it feel like? And that started in 2019, 2020 with this kind of like, we're part of this kind of evolving thing, but what is it? No one really knows quite what it is. What is the center? And then we were talking to people and doing this, and of course there are dangers of snowball sampling, and all these other things, but you know, we were doing a way doing this for ourselves initially, just trying to understand what was going on for us.

And that's where we then, the PIP kind of emerged. I have a lot of kind of effort of sitting down in this kind of loop that you go through of, like: okay, I've got this list of organizations, but you know, is Greenpeace on here? And if so, why not? Or, you know, not in a bad way, that you're trying to exclude people, but if the map equals the territory, it's not a very useful map. And also if you're trying to distinguish a field, yes, of course, ultimately it's the whole world, the whole ecosystem is involved, but you kind of need to create delimitation in a way to be useful.

And that's not trying to exclude anyone. That's why I like to talk about centers. People are more close to this center and there are other centers.

Jamie (42:00)

Yeah, I tend to talk about base camps even within the inner-led change world. There are sort of multiple, sort of more coherent hubs or centres than one gathered around trauma, for instance, where everyone has very trauma-led language, another that's around mindfulness, etc. Yeh.

Rufus (42:16)

Exactly. And so the PIP came out of this 'paradigmatic, integrated, pragmatic', was like, a bit of a gestalt trying to say, 'what was it that when we then looked at this list that was allowing us to say, 'this is what is kind of a commonality of these organizations and also a basis on which we can kind of say whether people are more or less close and therefore find more''. And so that was 2022. And then we basically produced a second Renaissance map in 2024.

That was trying to really be much more accessible. Cause, the thing is, this is also about marketing to some extent, in the sense that you're trying to get these concepts or you're trying to do mimetic gardening, right? In all of this. In field building, you're trying to get an idea out into the world, like we just said, like inner-led social change, or as I said, paradigmatic approaches. You know, my fundamental interest in this kind of foundational changes in our societies. And so the Second Renaissance map was a lot more accessible. I mean, it had design work and it was kind of like, ye oldy mappy thing because, you know, for example I did some really good information - I'm a data driven guy originally - I did a lot of work, you know, I had really good visualizations and data driven analysis but no one liked these kind of complex visualizations that were there. But the Second Renaissance map which is really like a much more, only like a 100 and fifty organisations, but really kind of distilling that that was in 2024. And then like you know there's a COHERE mapping. But I think there the interesting part about the mapping, you know, we did a lot of versions of that map. And this is like, I think, the part that, you know, mapping can mean just it can mean this like normally two parts. There's like cataloging, right? The three parts. There's normally I now we wrote this up for people, but like there's cataloging or directory collection. Then there's sort of sense making or analysis in the sense of trying to, okay, I've got all you know, normally you begin, you've just kind of got this kind of basket of stuff. It's like you're as you're going out and collecting empirically lots of species and samples, and then you're trying to like order that in some way.

Both to continue collection because you've got resource limits and also, you know, you can't, you know, you don't have time to go and read up on 20,000 organizations. And then you've got a presentation visualization part where you're then making those insights accessible to other people. And you really want to do, I think often all of those if you're trying to map for emergence or build fields. And you know, for example, I see people put the Second Renaissance map up in pre slide presentations or on Twitter and other things, but they never did that with the PIP report.

So it's just I'm making this point because your mapping is in the service of sense-making, which means you then need to kind of present the insight. And now that is gonna be contentious potentially.

Jamie (44:55)

Because there's always interpretation as you're doing that sense-making,

Rufus (44:59)

Right. You always make your choice of who's in or who's out, how to lay out the map.

Jamie (45:03)

So across all of this mapping, in one way it's a tighter scope because you, as well as inner led change, it also needs to be paradigmatic in some way. That's my main interest. But in some ways, my sense is it's also broader that there are some initiatives that you've included that aren't really leading with contemplative practices or personal change processes, but they're informed by the importance of the inner in some way. As you say, it's a spectrum.

So it's slightly different from what we were talking about earlier. Can you give us a sense of how you see things? Like what are the continents on your map? How does it look?

Rufus (45:43)

Thing is, there is a kind of purpose of why you're doing mapping, right? Now that may be varying, but at least in my case, I'm interested in movement building for deep civilizational renewal. Like things are not going great. I have children. I don't want them to die in a war. You know, I don't want anyone's children to die in a war. I want a world where we're not going off a cliff climate-wise or otherwise, you know. And so I'm interested in field building because, in a sense, cathy-mae said, and I think we all say, you know, we're not going to do it on my own. Rufus is not going to do it. Life itself is not going to do it. It's going to be many, many people working together, many organizations. And then there's this question of like coherence. And, you know, I think there's this kind of metaphor that one can have, like, you know, if you go to Mars, there's no atmosphere. And so if you were to build a village or a city on Mars or whatever, you'd need to create some kind of membrane to have an atmosphere that then you, you know, you'd have that people can breathe below it.

And one way to think of it is imagine you've got your membrane. If you make a really big city, your membrane is really thin. If you imagine it stretching. And so the air has got very low oxygen. It's kind of like you're at the top of Everest. So there's a lot of people, but there's not a lot of energy and coherence, maybe. Whereas if you have a very small town or village, the membrane's very thick and you have a lot of air and energy and coherence.

Jamie (47:04)

Right.

Rufus (47:05)

And so overall, in your field building, of course, you always need it at different scales. You want broad fields that maybe share some stuff. But the coming back to the PIP, like this commitment to paradigmatic change, is like a main, you know, out of what we were thinking was like, okay, that's really core. Because I think it's amazing that there's way more inner-led stuff. But you could be doing in-led stuff to help gang violence in a city. You could be doing it for like kind of mental well-being and flourishing, you could be doing it for resilience against climate change. And there is commonality and connections and valuable that you see an ecosystem of that. And the overall coherence of that might be quite low. In the sense that there isn't an overlook shared theory of change, shared thing. And so I'm not saying that any of them aren't valuable.

And a kind of approach we're looking at that we've almost narrowed down is like in Second Renaissance map, it's like, okay, and still it's not true that all of the people share that by the way in there, but there's that sort of more or less conscious commitment to an integral type approach, you might say, which is the integrated. And if you know integral theory at least, you know, it's very much a paradigmatic change model, right? There's very much like there's these cultural evolutionary stages in a way. And so that is more or less shared. But you you've Plum Village on there. You're asking, like, what's on there?

Jamie (48:23)

Yeah.

Rufus (48:25)

You've got like Plum Village, you've got ~ Evolve World, you know, an Emergent Dialogue, you have Monastic Academy, there's Science and Non-duality, there's Buddhist Geeks, Planetary Dharma. And the map is partial. And I want to re-emphasize that as you know, people contact us about things. Doing mapping is a politically dangerous activity! So we ~ do ~ our best, you know, to include people and so on. But that was like on the West, and then on you know, you have things like The Alternative, you know, there's Inspiral, there's Wellbeing Economy Alliance, there's the Dark Mountain project, which I would say. Not that Dark Mountain, for example, doesn't have an inner dimension for sure, but it was, you know, I'd put it more on the kind of more outer lands, though it also has an inner dimension.

But yeah, I mean, I could, I could talk more. But what I mean is that, you know, I'm not saying maybe the most interesting maps, at least, might be actually the most sometimes a little bit contentious. Because you're trying, I think if you're trying to do field building, I mean there's sometimes there's mapping like who can I go support, or you know, where are the, you know, how can I be... who's the major influencer in this network or something like that? Classic social network analysis. But in a certain way, you're trying to catalyze this 'aha moment', like, okay, this this thing there, and that this is what they stand for. So this aspect of conscious commitment to paradigmatic change, combined with the inner and outer, and particularly inner-led, I think. I mean, I'm an inner-led guy, you know, I'm a primacy of being. We need the inner, we want both, we need inner and outer, but, right now, I don't think we need more tech. Or we need more even like citizens' assemblies. So those are, I mean we do want them, they're great. I would love more tech and more citizens' assemblies, but really that inner dimension is so crucial and so missing.

Jamie (50:09)

Interesting. So Gretchen, you mentioned in brief some of the things that you'd like to do in including further work, making it ~ a richer, more globally balanced picture. Could you take us through a little bit about what you'd hope for the future, both for what you've been working on and for, I guess, ecosystem development more broadly?

Gretchen (50:29)

Sure. ~ thank you. So, you know, this mapping is newly underway. You know, we've really only been at this for six to nine months with the conscious change collective and the active phase of growing it. So certainly that's an area that we'll continue to really understand the broader network of organizations at this intersection. But what's also really critical and powerful in the field building work is being able to create the connective tissue such that this is more than just membership in a map, but really a generative field, an impact network that is capable of complex systems change in working collaboratively. And so there's there's many dimensions of creating the supports and the infrastructure to be able to do that, the communications platforms so that people are connected, the sense-making that comes from being able to look at the wisdom contained within the field. That we are, you know, just the map profiles themselves are a massive database of insight and wisdom of how these organizations are operating, how they see the mechanisms of the inner work to actually influence the social change.

So there's so much richness there for us to understand the field more deeply. And we're doing that in a lot of different ways. We've brought together the communities of actors that are working in particular sectors like education, criminal justice reform, democracy, and climate, to see what is the common ground among them. And that's surfacing even more nuanced insights about their particular theories of change and methodologies. It's helping us build a clearer picture of the ecosystem within each of those sectors that allows those practitioners themselves to see what part of a whole that they're operating in. And it is beginning to open up opportunities for coordinated action and possibly new collaboration. And ideally, even new solutions building together that would work at a more ecosystem systems level. Because I think one of the challenges remains is that the lack of funding for organizations or funding that comes on a annual grant cycle leaves organizations in the position of self-preservation and competition instead of being able to share resources for a much broader amplified impact together. So we are hoping that through the connected communities that we're building that are sharing insights and seeing how they fit into a larger ecosystem puzzle, that we may also share resources and shift the way resources are employed to achieve change together. And so that's sort of the next frontier of this work of the understanding and the coordination towards complex systems change. And we can do that on a social issue basis, working in these different fields, but we could also do that within a particular geographical place-based system.

You know, if we have a hub in a particular city, what does an entire contemplative approach to issues within a city look like if everyone was coordinating? Or what could we study across modality? If we brought together all of the practitioners using yoga for social change around the world, what would we learn and how might we work and coordinate together? So there's a lot of ways now that we build the map with these different elements that we can take these cross sections and begin to convene, to sense make and to coordinate action. And ultimately we hope that'll lead to a greater wisdom sharing and collaboration.

Jamie (54:31)

Thank you Gretchen. Convene, sense make, coordinate action. That sounds like fun. And as well as exactly what we need to realize potential here. cathy-mae, what do you think the

ecosystems that you work in need now? What's next for your work and indeed inner led change?

cathy-mae (54:52)

Yeah, I am wanting to say differently the words that are coming from Gretchen and Rufus that we're very interested in movement building, that we recognize that the mapping in itself is serving a purpose of change, but we're also aware of expanding consciousness. So I think we're wanting to work in ways that break with this notion of control and work a lot more with emergence rather than theories of change. So we follow a process of emergence, for instance. And I'm just gonna go back to you, Gretchen, to say one of the ways in which we built into the global south and global majority communities was by appointing regional conveners across Asia-Pacific, Sub-Saharan Africa.

The SWANA region, Latin America and the Caribbean. And it was really about having people in those areas where we have a sense of the pulse and a sense of presence and a much greater way of learning from the many histories, the the legacies of struggles, of change, of social change. We also are very aware of that young person's guide to systems change developed by the 50% developed by young people, we're wanting to lean a lot more into the resources and deliverables of communities that we are interested in engaging with. So within our regions, there is also collaboration with indigenous communities and practices. And so when we're speaking about movement building, I think all of you have spoken about affinity groups and the importance of people actually being able to come together. And suddenly when you're speaking about your work in a kind of familial context, all kinds of things spark. But as I said earlier, we're also interested in leaning into this bridge building and world making so that we're inviting in the cosmic notions of uncertainty, of actually knowing that you know, dark matter, like something like 95% of the universe, really leaning into through our practices, the not knowing. And that I think is a huge guide for us. So the joyful pathways to policy making is in part for this year, it's designed as dance for change. You know, we want to get young people, mobilize young people across the world using the maps, using the collaborations, mobilizing young people to dance, but that's linked.

To a youth charter and a letter. How do we get governments to recognize what young people need across the world? You know, because there's some common things like safe spaces, etc. So I would say, Jamie, our emphasis is very much on deepening the collaborations, building movements, exquisite listening. We're interested in beyond the deep listening. We really are wanting to hear.

Not only via the voices, but via the unspoken and the unseen, the directions in which the mapping gives us the foundations to move from. So we're into the dreaming and imagining, and a little bit of utopias in terms of, you know, I'm from apartheid South Africa, right? Involved in the liberation struggle and then in nation building, knowing the possibilities of change, the lived experience.

Of mass change and knowing that that also came about through a very interconnected world. It was not simply the struggles within South Africa. So leaning very much into interconnectedness, back into the interconnectedness, the Petri dish of all of these ecosystems working alongside one another and really wanting to challenge ourselves so that we don't become comfortable with just those who think like us. It's like we're hoping for the best, people. We're hoping for the best. But you know, I think we need to be brave and bold and take courage from our own experiences of expanding consciousness.



Jamie (59:28)

I love that. Courage grounded in exquisite listening. So Rufus, as we move towards the ending of our time together today, where do you see paradigmatic, integrative, pragmatic work going? What do you see emerging or what do you hope will happen now?

Rufus (59:48)

Yeah, I would now just say civilizational renewal is like what we hope for. There's a kind of something dying. There is a way, you know, there's work that I want to acknowledge of modernity, of all the great things that it brought, but also all the shadow that it's had. The exploitation of nature, of others, of a narrow ways of knowing and being in the world. And there's something that can be born, maybe many things, maybe not one thing.

That can be born. And so I think the challenge at the moment, someone said to me earlier, is we don't yet have our back against the wall enough in general. I think, you know, if you look at also where like power, like people who have money, philanthropy or otherwise, put their money, there isn't like some even I'm in philanthropy, but they're not like reallocating assets, you know, out of AI companies into like, you know, regenerative agricultural something, you know what I mean?

Like, what I dream of is I think we're at that moment. We're getting close to that moment. I once asked a Zen master, like, 'when do people change?' And his answer was, 'when they have to'. And I think that's true of civilizations. And, you know, it's both a tragic point. And I hope the next time, if we make it through this one, that we don't have to wait for it to get really bad. That's one of the things we'll learn as a species, is the wisdom to see. And, you know, in that word, you know, the Chinese character for crisis has 'danger' and 'opportunity'. And what I guess is, there's an opportunity arriving. And I think why what the people on this call and what people listening to the podcast are doing is we want to be ready and we're readying ourselves, both supporting the kind of emerging, you know, it is emerging these little things, but there's going to be a sudden, like an avalanche. Things are not linear. There's like something happening, and suddenly there's going to be a demand for this kind of thing. And you see it even in the amount of kind of just collapse stuff and acknowledgement, and just like the heat wave. I'm sitting here, it's thirty-five degrees. It has never been this hot in South West France. I'm next to Plum Village right now, that's where I live.

Jamie (1:01:52)

This time of year anyway, yeah.

We just broke records by two degrees in the UK.

Rufus (1:01:58)

Yeah, this time of year, never this hot. And you can see that arriving in consciousness of the planet and, not everywhere, but I think that those impacts. So I think there's this moment coming, and that's where all this mapping and all this other work is towards. I think it's like, okay, because that is a confrontational moment. What I think is the going from seeing symptoms to really acknowledging the source of the illness that we're confronting, which is in deep in our in how we've lived and how at least in the West. I want to go the Global North has lived and been and treated the world.

For good or ill, and I think often that modernity has sped, you know, to many, many, mostly elites around the world at least, running that. Yeah, running on modernity, you know, like run

that model of like how we think about the world, how we operate, you know. So I think that I'm kind of like, in some way I have hope. I'm also kind of honest about the darkness, but I'm like, there is a dawn. You know, and I've always joked that we should have t shirts printed, you know, it says winter is coming. But on the back it says spring is coming too, you know.

And I think that's what the maps are so beautiful that we're seeing on here is because they're kind of maps of the potential of spring, of the things that are there just growing out of the soil that need to be nourished and nurtured, but which are part of the future coming, the rebirth of, I hope, of our civilizations.

Jamie (1:03:15)

Yeah, it reminds me of the quote from the economist, Friedman or one of the neoliberals, talking about how you make use of a crisis by having ideas lying around that people will pick up in a moment of wanting to do things deeply different. And so that's, I guess, what these maps can bring us. There are now hundreds of innovators, of projects, of people developing the practices, the cultural codes, the ways of being that could be picked up by a society that really has the appetite to change. But for them to find that, they need to be surfaced, visible, like findable on a map.

Rufus (1:03:55)

Nourished, nurtured.

Jamie (1:03:57)

Nourished so they become legitimate and ready to scale. So, yeah, it might seem now that the kind of scale that we need to get to is unachievable, but when tipping points are reached, we want to have these things ready to go, right? I think that might be a good place to leave it. Gretchen, cathy-mae, would you like to...?

Gretchen (1:04:17)

I just love to add, there are ideas that we can pick up and run with and solutions, but there are also communities that we can then plug into and feel a sense of belonging. And I think that's really critical of maps, is that they're fostering community and this kind of inner-led change is relational, it's interconnected. And when we embody and live from that place of understanding our mutual responsibility to each other, then that will be the paradigmatic shifts that we're looking for and need to enact in order to live differently.

cathy-mae (1:04:53)

The only thing that I would add to those beautiful words, Gretchen and Rufus, are that we definitely are wanting to emphasize heart-based inner led change. Because there is something about the power of the heart which we're not understanding sufficiently. And we know that the seat of consciousness, that the mind is located in the heart, in many, many traditions, not only those from the East.

Our work really has to lean into this incredible power that we are sitting on, but to which we have become so limited through our conditioning. So really stretching ourselves through our practices and throughout these kinds of connections to imagine and dream and lead very differently. I think our power is quite untapped. So yes.

Jamie (1:05:52)

What a great ending to this mini-series for the Mind and Life podcast. It's been such a joy to go on this journey over these six panel discussions. And I've learned a tremendous amount. I hope those who have managed to listen along have also. The inquiry continues as we've been exploring here. If you'd like to follow my work, you can find me on my website, which is just [jamiebristow.com](http://jamiebristow.com).

And good luck to David Cresswell, who's going to be picking up the Mind and Life podcast as the host starting in the fall. As to the conversation we've just had, we're going to put links in the show notes. I'd like to say a big thank you to cathy-mae, Rufus and Gretchen and to everyone who spent their time listening to us. Thank you for your attention. I really wish you all the best as things progress in this field and meet the challenges that we're all starting to feel.

Yeah, go well everybody. Take care.