

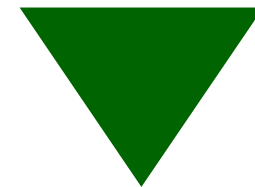
Sustainability: Learning and Change in the SoL Consortium



John R. Ehrenfeld
Harley-Davidson Meeting
April 2003

Moralistic

Humanistic



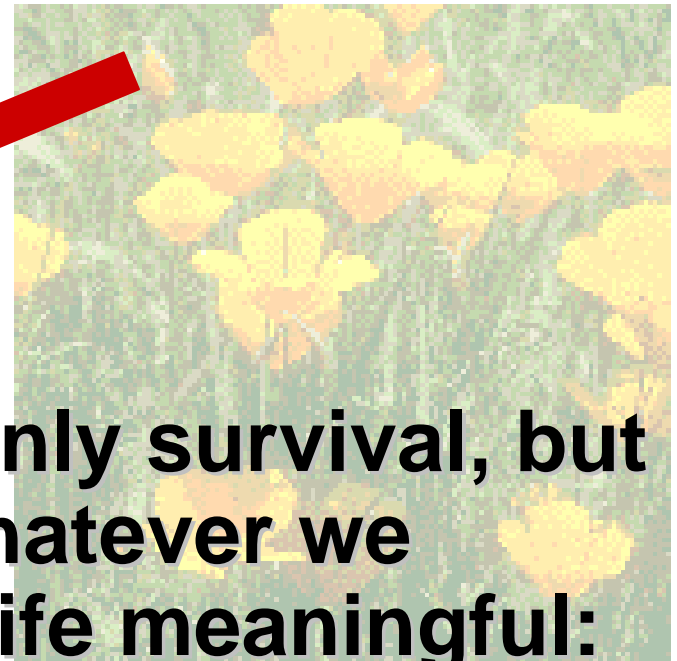
Naturalistic

Sustainability: Rethinking the Vision

- ◆ The real social question facing the world is sustainability, not sustainable development.
- ◆ Sustainability is a *radical* concept that stretches our current ideas about objective rationality.
- ◆ Producing sustainability requires transformational personal and organizational change.

What IS Sustainability?

Sustainability is the *possibility* that human and other life will *flourish* on the Earth *forever*.



Flourishing means not only survival, but also the realization of whatever we humans declare makes life meaningful: justice, freedom, dignity...

Sustainability Needs a New Design Process

- ◆ Sustainability requires choice and design.
- ◆ We cannot design a sustainable world merely by thinking the way we have for the last 200 or so years (objective rationalism).
- ◆ We must recover strategic domains that have gotten lost during this time.
 - ◎ Our sense of our place in the [natural] world.
 - ◎ Our sense of ourselves as human beings.
 - ◎ Our sense of responsibility for our actions.



Naturalistic Strategic Concepts

Source: Our sense of our place in the ecosystem

◆ Themes

- ◎ Protection (Preservation of nature and human life)
- ◎ Staying within limits (Conservation)

◆ Strategies

- ◎ Industrial Ecology (Nature as a metaphor for sustainability)
 - ☆ Biomimicry
 - ☆ The Natural Step's 4 principles
 - ☆ McDonough/Braungart design system
 - ☆ Natural Capitalism (in part)
- ◎ Eco-efficiency (in part)
- ◎ Eco-design (DfE, DfR, DfS)

Humanistic Strategic Concepts

Source: Our sense of ourselves as human beings

◆ Themes

◎ Authentic satisfaction

- ✧ Recapturing 'being' from 'having'
- ✧ Reducing commodification of 'everything'

◎ Emancipation

- ✧ Avoiding technological tyranny

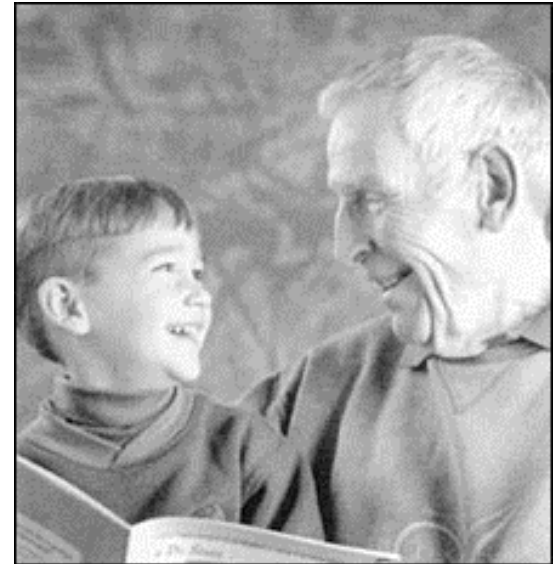
◎ Dignity, autonomy, freedom...

◎ Spiritual consciousness

◆ Strategy

◎ Induce 'mindfulness' in use

◎ Design 'convivial' modes or means of satisfaction



Moralistic Strategic Concepts

Source: Our sense of responsibility for our actions

◆ Themes

- ◎ Responsibility
- ◎ Justice
 - ☆ Eco-justice
 - ☆ Equitable distribution of access to resources

◆ Strategies

- ◎ Corporate social responsibility
 - ☆ Fair labor practices
 - ☆ Community involvement
- ◎ Extended producer responsibility



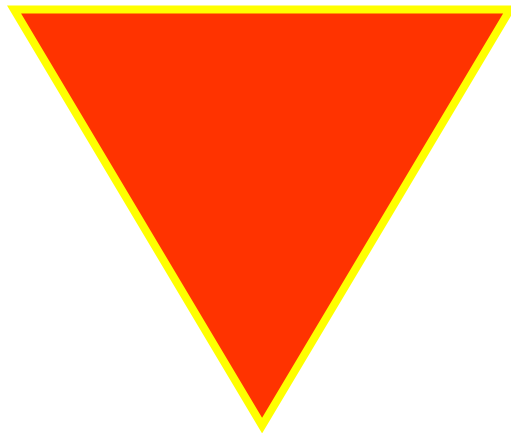
The New Sustainability Triad

Economy

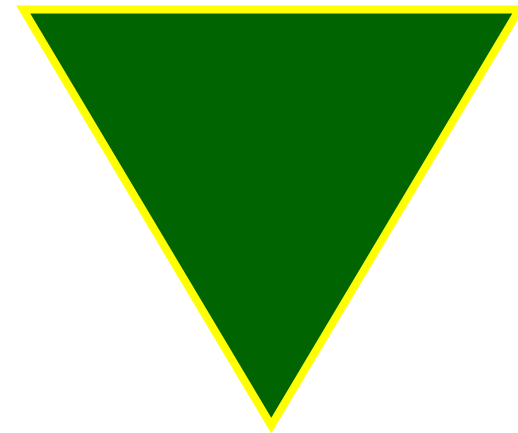
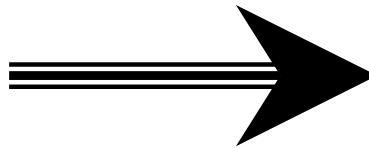
Equity

Moralistic

Humanistic



Environment



Naturalistic

The Brundtland Version

The Radical Version

Eco-efficiency is Necessary, But Not Sufficient

- ◆ Eco-efficiency is embodied in other strategic frameworks, like much of Natural Capitalism, (Porter's) resource productivity, or Factor 4.
- ◆ Eco-efficiency exists within the current paradigm that has created the problems we seek to solve, and can bring about only incremental, although important, changes. It has little or no transformational power.
- ◆ Eco-efficiency, self admittedly, fails to address the social dimension of sustainable development.

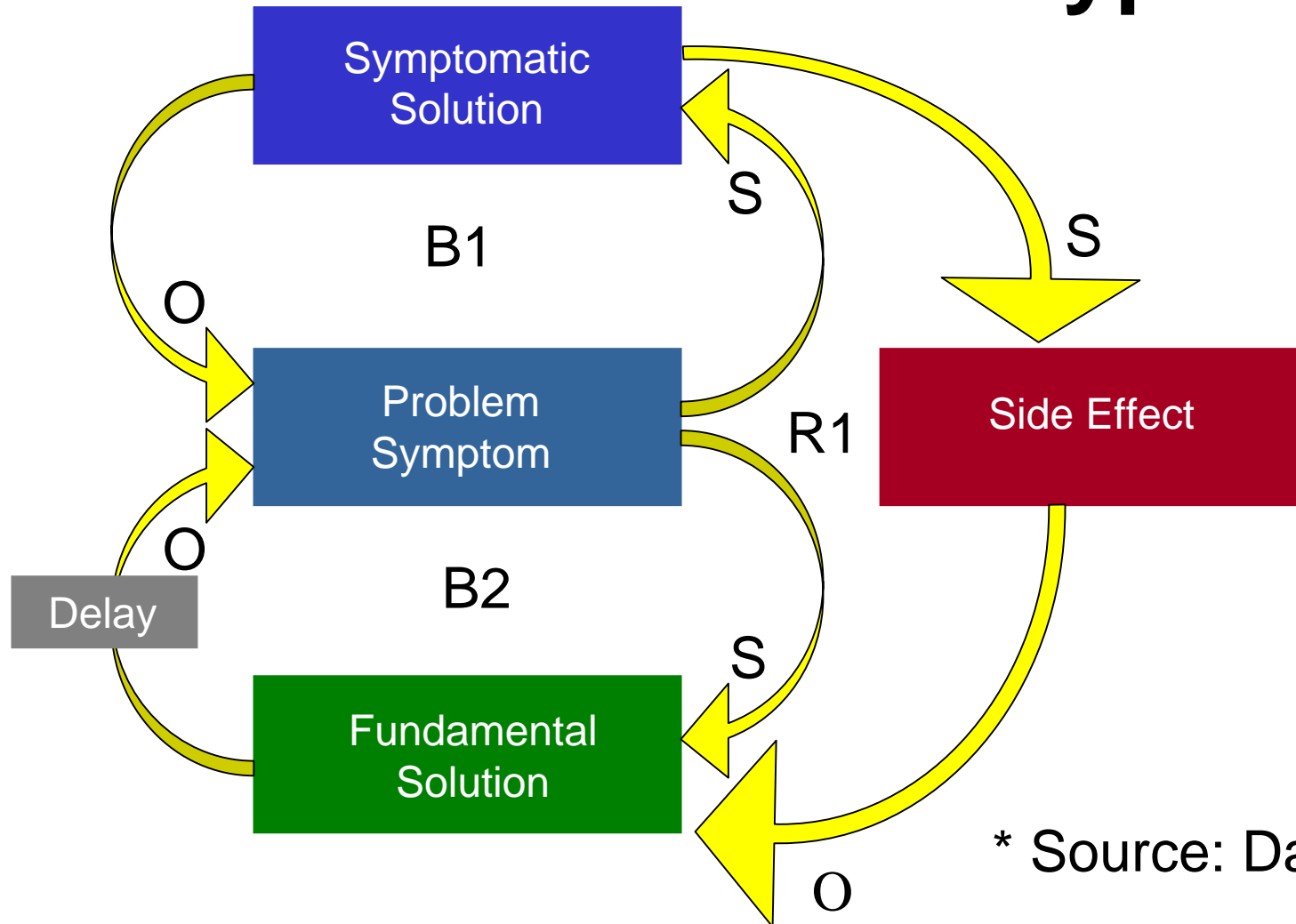
$$\eta = \frac{\textit{Value Added}}{\textit{Environmental Impact}}$$

“Rational” (Business-as-usual) Solutions Have a Place

- ◆ Sustainable development
- ◆ Resource productivity/
Factor X
- ◆ Eco-efficiency
- ◆ Triple bottom line

But beware of *shifting the burden* and ultimately making things worse!

Shifting the Burden Archetype*



* Source: Daniel Kim

Shifting the Burden Examples

Problem Symptom	Symptomatic Solution	Fundamental Solution	Side Effects
Bank failures	FDIC, FSLIC	Prudent banking practices	Responsibility disappears
Poor employee performance	Manager steps in	Skills training	Erosion of confidence & relationship
Declining sales	Increase marketing	New products: culture change	Decline of R&D
Low self-esteem	Drug Use	Personal development	Addiction; erosion of self

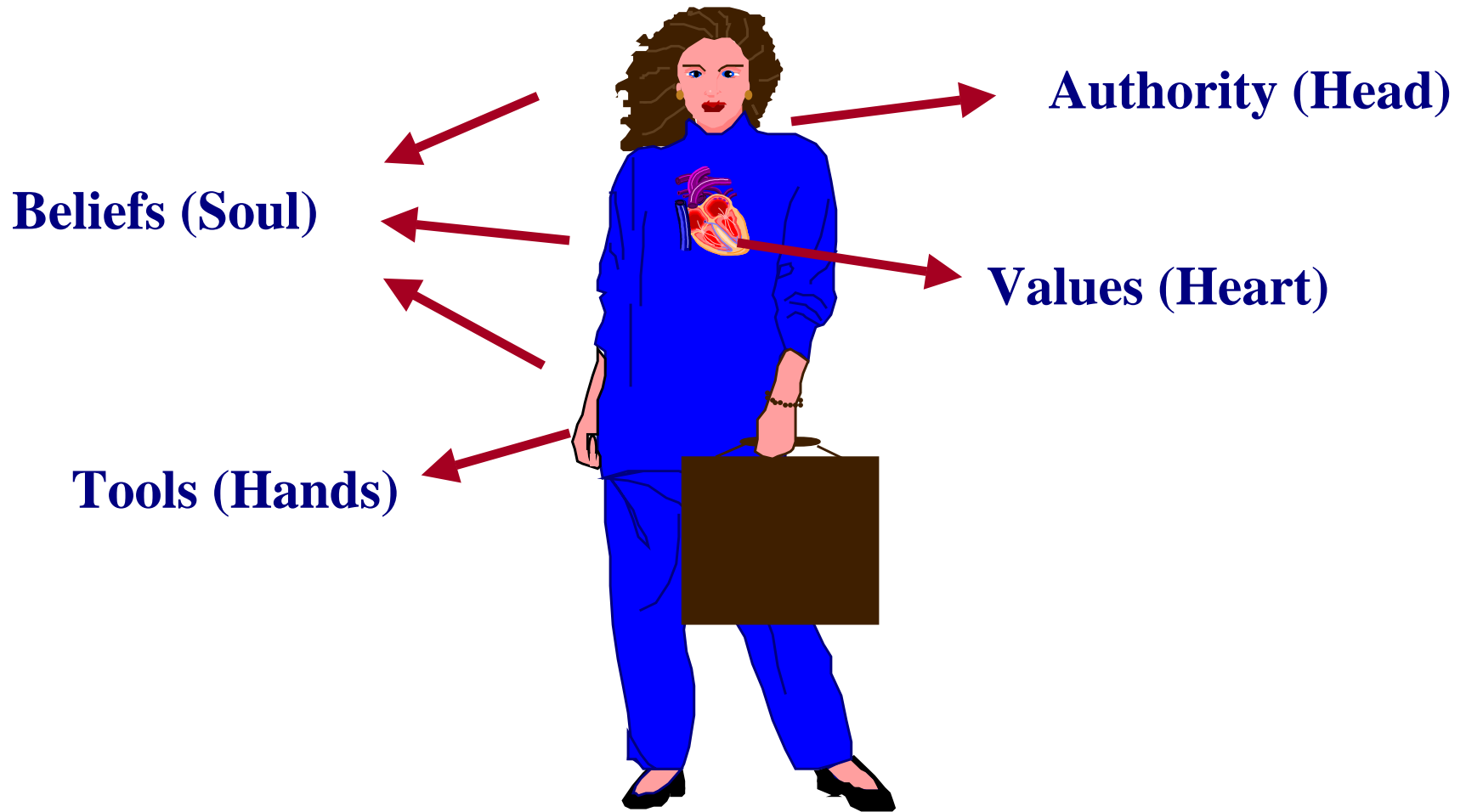
Unsustainability: A Side Effect of Shifting the Burden

Problem Symptom	Symptomatic Solution	Fundamental Solution	Negative Side Effects
Global Warming	CO2 Trading	Renewable Energy	R & D slips; irresponsibility
Material Use Growth	Eco-efficiency	Industrial restructuring	Eco-system collapse
Mal-distribution	Tax policy	Cultural change	Irresponsibility; gated cities
Unsatisfaction; alienation	Commodity consumption	Self-development; convivial technology	Addiction; loss of competence

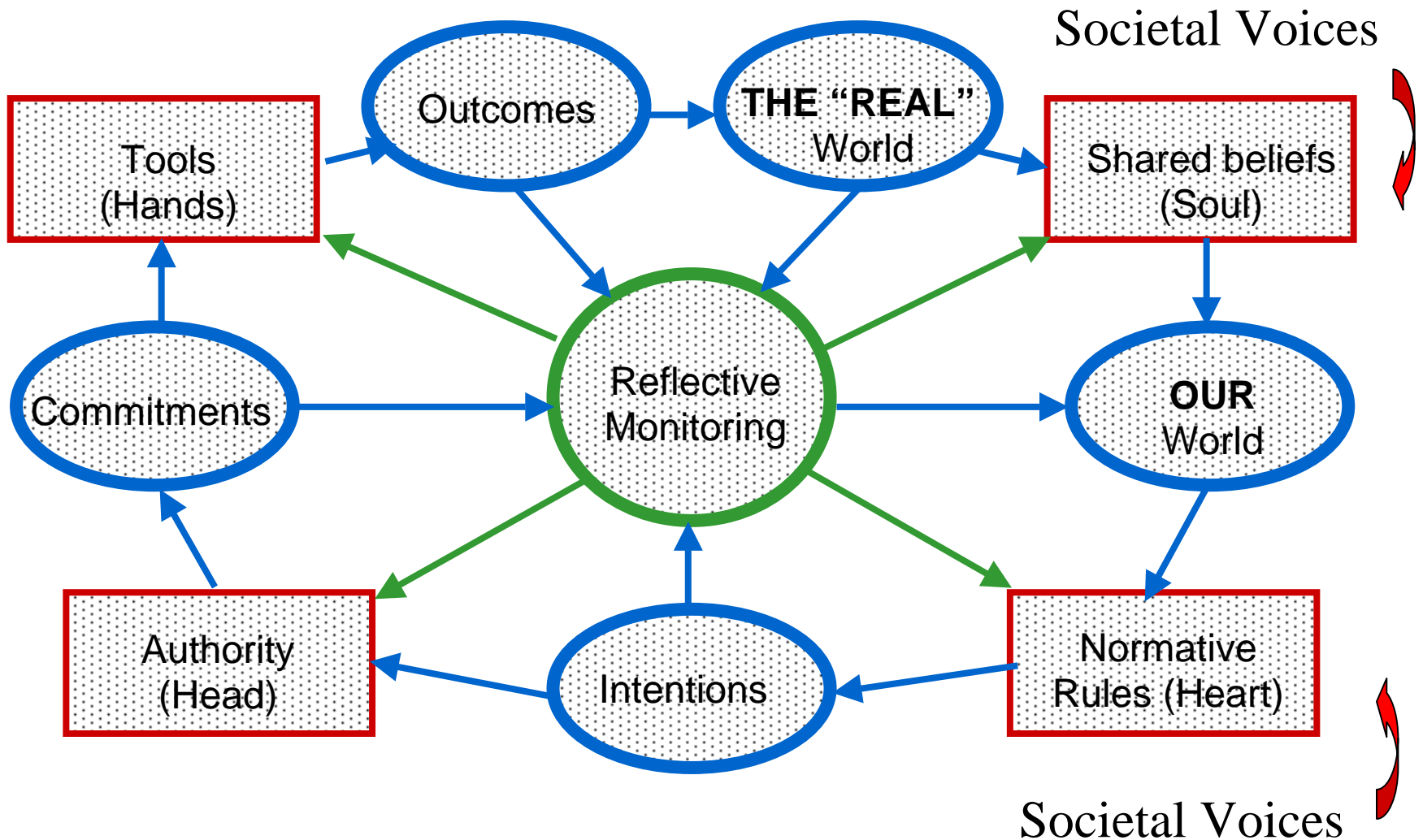
Sustainability Strategies “Dissonate” with Current Cultures

- ◆ **Transformational culture change is needed to embody “beyond-rationality” strategies.**
 - ◎ **Sustainability goes beyond the triple bottom line mode of thinking.**
- ◆ **Organizational learning is critical.**
- ◆ **Change must come in the heart and soul of organizations as well as in the head and hands.**

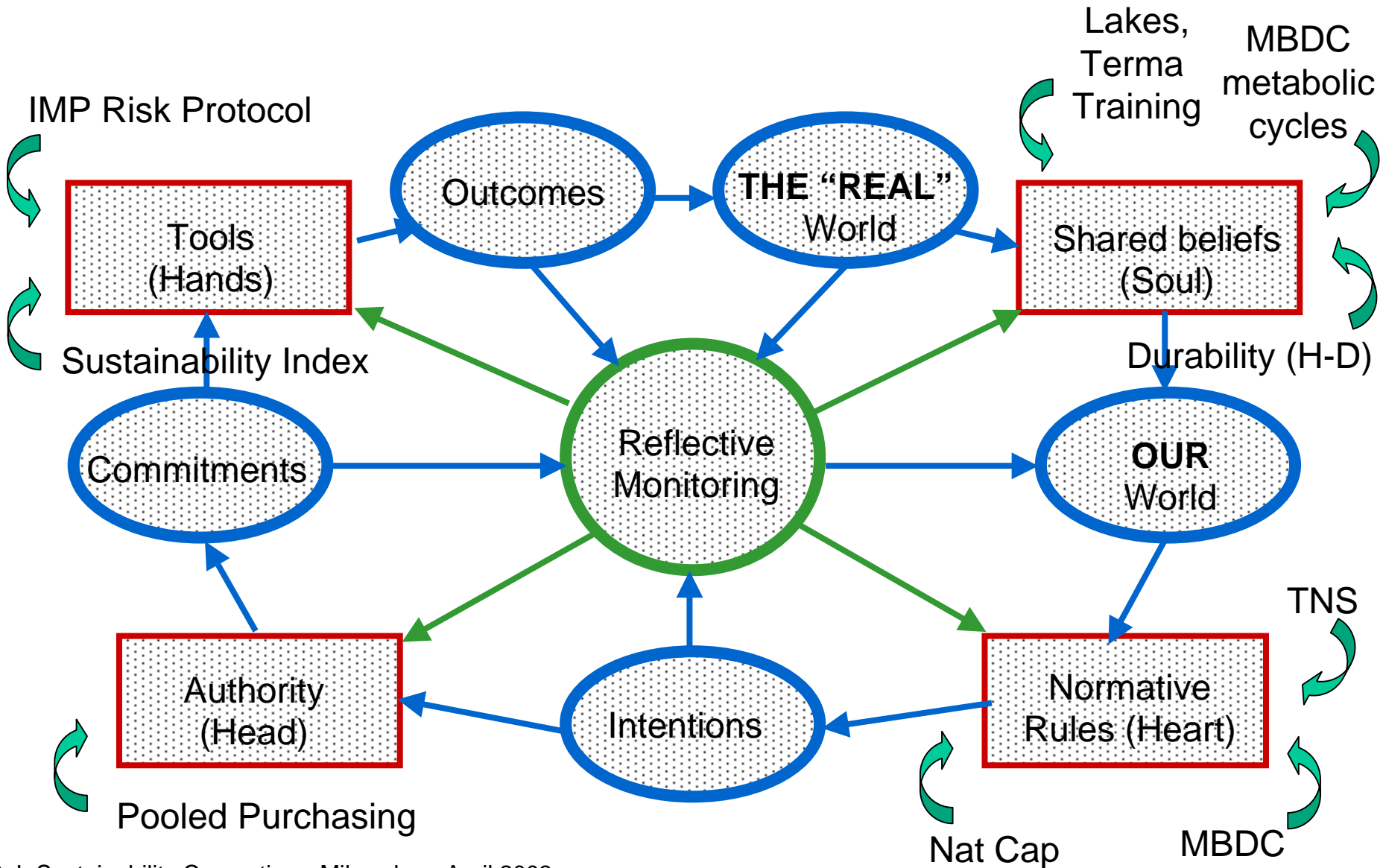
The Locus of Culture in the Corporate Body



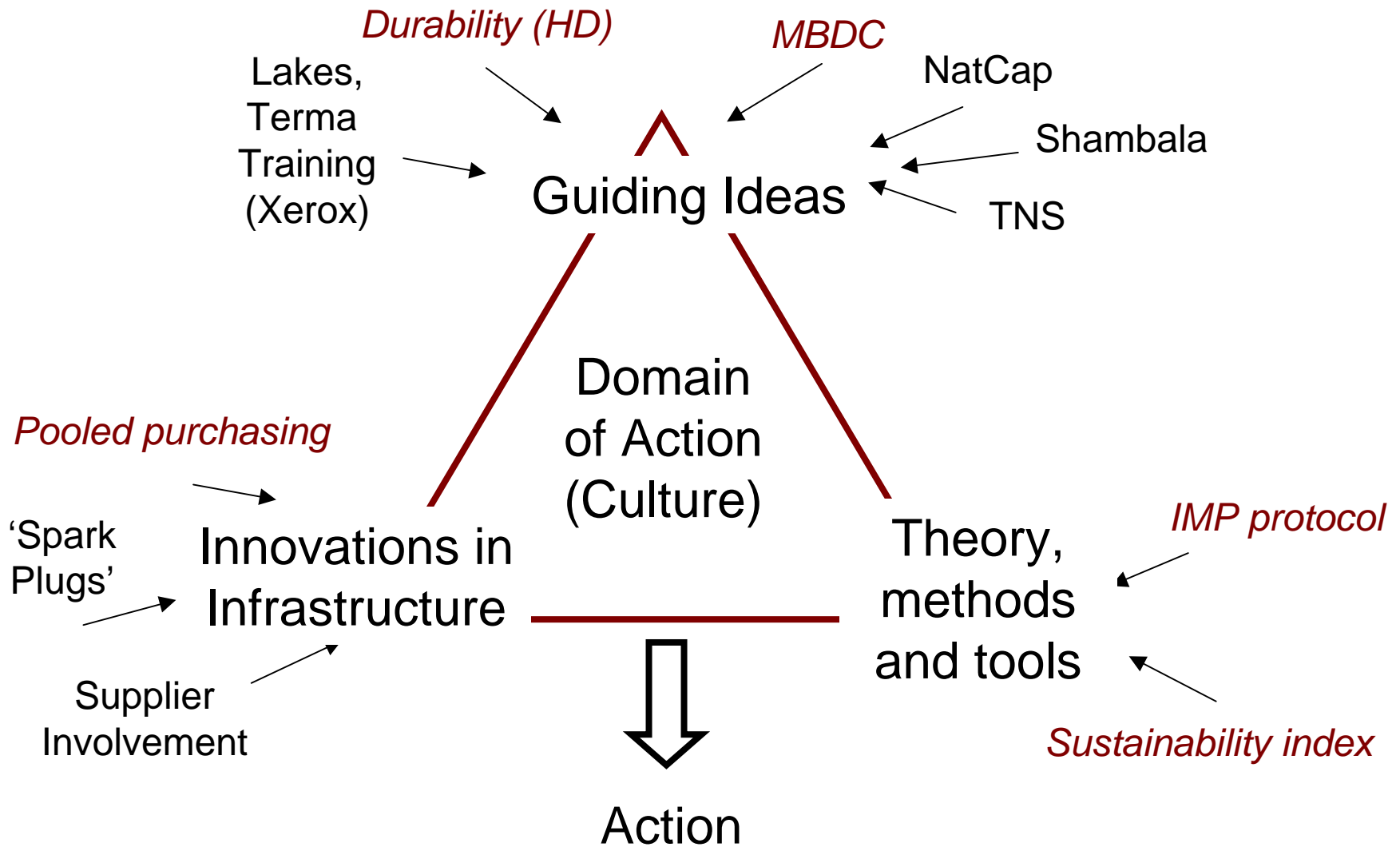
A Model of Action, Learning and Change



SoL Consortium Examples

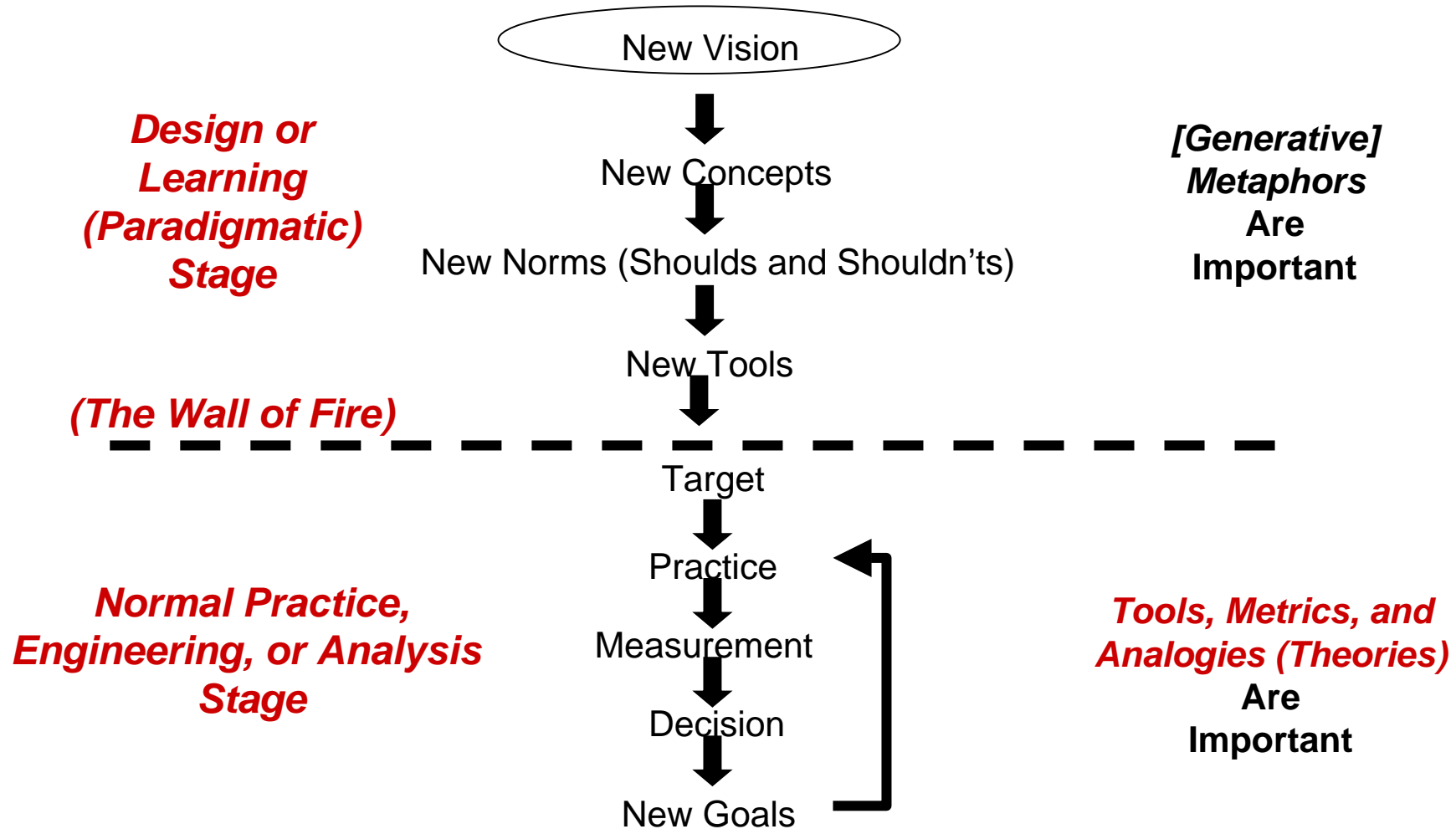


Using Another Framework*



*Source: The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook

Learning vs. BAU





*Sustainability:
A Vision We Can Share*