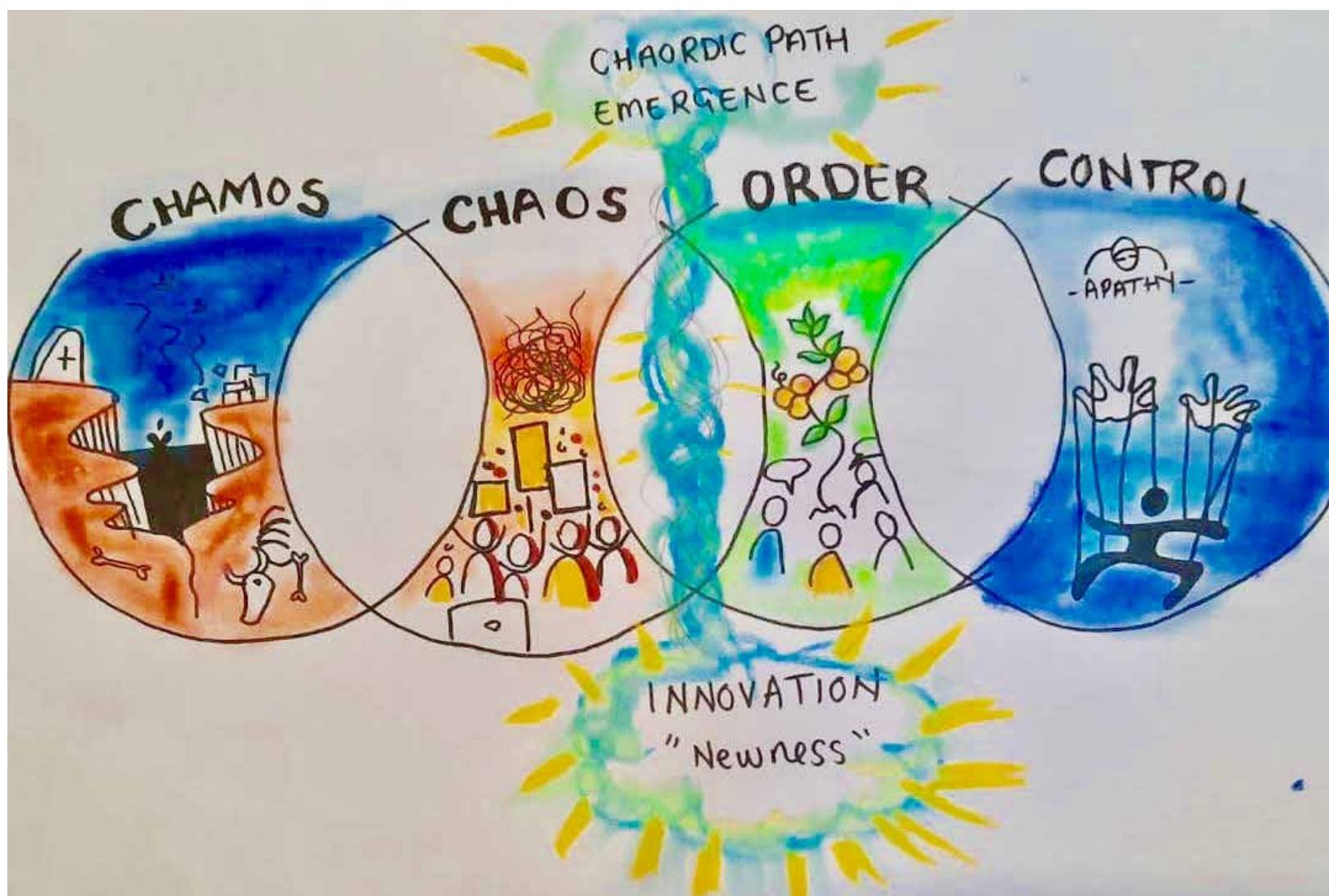# GATEWAY
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# CIRCLES TO RE-IMAGINE THE FUTURE

Session 2:
**From Discovery to Design**

# A JOURNEY OF RE-IMAGINING AND CO-CREATING THE FUTURE.

## *Chaordic Stepping Stones*



# CHAOS AND ORDER – WALKING THE CHAORDIC PATH

The image above shows us a mental model we can use to understand what is going on in our world and our system. .

We all like Order, we feel safe in a system where things are working well, where we know what to expect,  where we can plan for the future.

But the world itself is not usually like that.  Things do not stay the same.  Our systems and contexts are constantly moving and changing.

Sometimes we respond to change and upheaval by attempting to control. This usually doesn't work and leaves us in a state of war between control and chaos.

The Edge of Chaos is where life innovates and evolves – where things are flexible enough for new connections and solutions to occur.

New levels of order become possible out of chaos.

'We speak a lot of the **chaordic path** in this Art of Participatory Leadership. The place between Chaos and Order - Chaordic.

The chaordic is born from creating the minimal optimal structure that allows just enough chaos to meet just enough order to find its route towards emergence and what is arising: towards what might be a new, more generative order.

However, the reality in places of collapse and crisis, is that chaos reigns.'  Too much Chaos depletes and leaves us less able to create the new.  The Greeks called this Chamos - where there is exhaustion, and incapacity to keep going on.

In our lived experience as a nation we know this well.  We have lived through decades of Chaos and we are exhausted. We long for order.

But sitting with and in the Chaos is an essential human capacity that needs attention.  This is how we will find our way through.

**The Chaordic Stepping Stones** are a simple tool to support the journey of crafting a response that acknowledges the chaos, without seeking to Control life. A tool that helps us sit through the pain and despair of collapse and chaos until we can begin to see something opening on the other side.

It is a simple tool to find a higher level of order - and possibility - in our initiatives

**Let us Try It.**
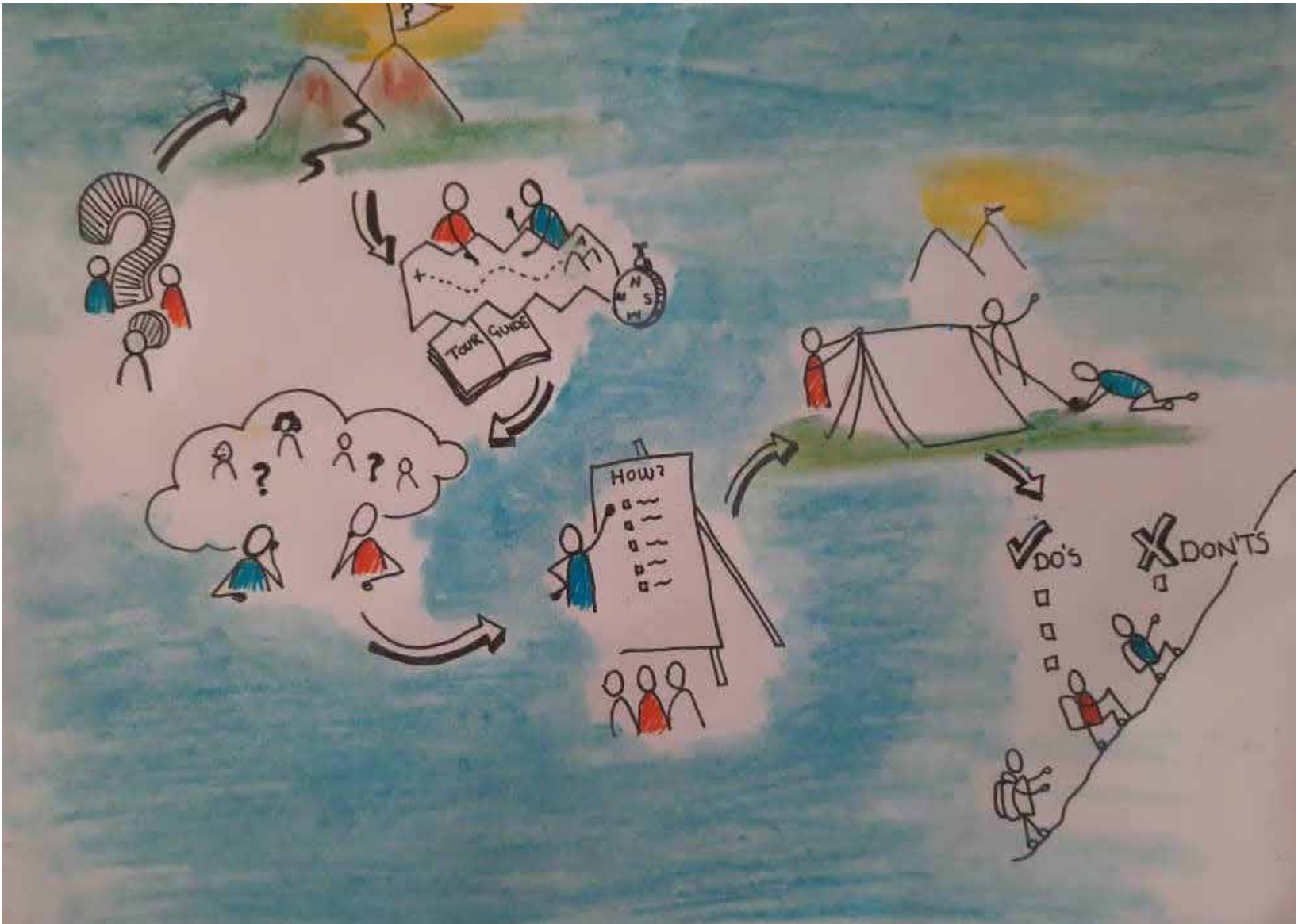
# THE CHAORDIC STEPPING STONES

The Chaordic Stepping Stones are clear strategic steps we can take when walking the Chaordic path. They are a way of bringing just enough structure or order into the chaos to keep us moving forward on the path. These steps allow us to progress gradually giving our project more form as we progress. The steps are as follows:

The chaordic design process has seven dimensions, beginning with Need and Purpose and ending with practice.

1. **Need**

2. **Purpose**

3. **Principles**

4. **People**

5. **Concept**

6. **Structure**

7. **Practice**

1.  What is the **Need** we are Responding to?

    Let us explore together what is the real need we are responding to in our community. The full need is often much larger than our initiative, but it is important to have a shared sense of what is motivating us in our endeavour.

    A need could be affordable healthcare for all, or food security, or a social safety net for the most vulnerable or the need for women's empowerment. We are unlikely to fulfil the fullness of the need but by understanding the need which we are responding to will help us as we continue to define our particular purpose.

2. **Purpose**?

    Out of the need we clarify our purpose. Our purpose is our specific contribution towards the identified need. It is more focused than the need. It is what we choose to focus on, and the end result that we aim for.

    An effective statement of purpose will be a clear, commonly understood statement of what we are setting out to achieve together.

    When properly done, it can usually be expressed in a single sentence. People will say about the purpose, "If we could achieve that, my life would have meaning."

    An example of a purpose could be 'To empower women to become self-reliant, confident contributors to the community.'

3. **Principles**

    The next step is to define, with the same clarity and common understanding, the principles by which the team or community will be guided towards fulfilling that purpose. Principles typically reflect values and describe how people want to be together in their work.

    Be careful not to write principles that are like slogans especially when underlying differences might exist. It may take care and time to come up with real and deeply felt and understood true principles and agreements.

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## 4. Participants - Who needs to be a part of this?

From here, the next step is to identify the participants whose needs, interests and perspectives must be considered in developing the initiative.

A typical question in this moment can be: Who else needs to be involved?

## 5. Concept

Now we proceed to define our concept, creatively searching for and developing a general concept for the initiative: What is the way that we will achieve our aims, in alignment with our principles?

In our example the purpose was to empower women to become self-reliant confident contributors to their community. The concept for this could be a chicken breeding project in which women are taught chicken rearing, but also supported with inner development and in which new chicks are paid forward to include more and more women beneficiaries.

One purpose can have many different ways to reach its aim. It is up to the project team to identify the one that works for your team at this time.

## 6. Structure

The foundational pieces have now been crafted. It is now time to agree on the structure that can hold the purpose and the concept: How is the team and project organised and structured? This includes defining the different team roles.

## 7. Practice

It is time to Practice and to Do. What is on paper will be informed and evolved through the actual experience on the ground.

It is important as you go ahead to continue to be in shared reflection and learning together:

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- What is working?

- What is not working?

- What are we learning?

- What needs to be adapted to what we are learning?

The process is iterative. At any time you can come back to this whole process and through the on-going practice refine and clarify on the basis of on the ground learning. Over time, the elements become deeply integrated.

# HOW TO WORK WITH THIS

1. In your team take the time to go through the ideas of the **Chaordic Path.** You can use the Gateway Chaordic Path video.

2. Then go through each of the **stepping stones** together.

   If you are a big group, people might spend time in small clusters with each question and then share in the full group. Make sure you do one question at a time with the whole group before moving on.

   Don't worry about it being perfect. Let this first meeting create an initial draft map of your initiative.

3. Finally outline your immediate **next steps** to begin this project. How will we begin now and who will do want? Make clear agreements for what is to be done, and also when you will meet for the next step in the process.

# GOOD LUCK
# MAY YOUR WORK BE
# JOYOUS AND FRUITFUL!

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IT'S US AND IT'S NOW: WHATEVER THE QUESTION COMMUNITY IS THE ANSWER.