

Spiritual Futures: Beyond the Self

A New Horizon for Human Development
through the Lens of Indigenous Law



Damien Lafont, PhD & Natalie Deane
Based on the article "Spiritual Futures"

The Era of Self-Optimization

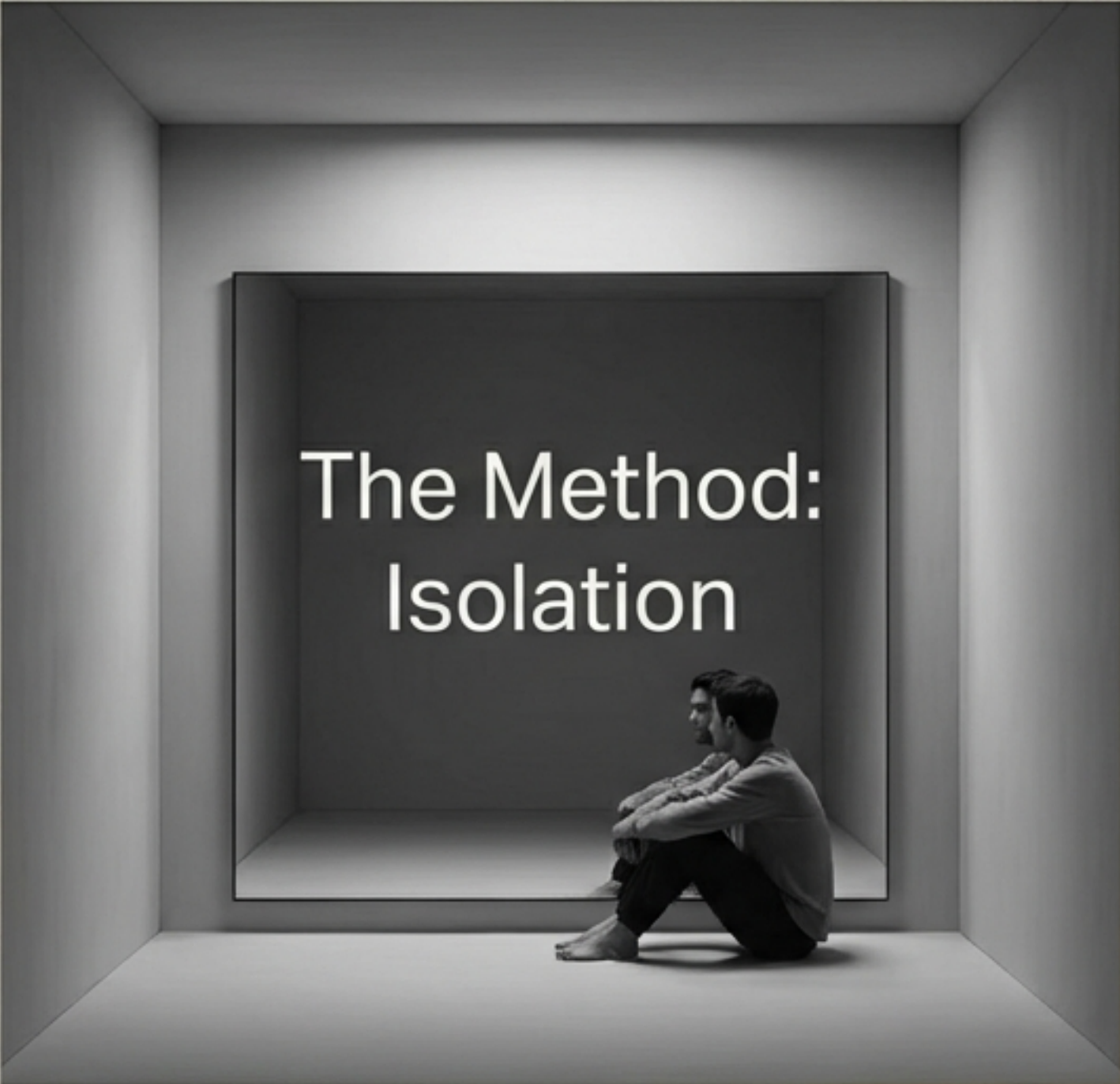
- The Goal: Meaning, interiority, and transformation.
- The Method: "Work on yourself."
- The Assumption: The individual is the primary unit of change.
- Context: We have replaced reductive materialism with intense interiority.



Seeking Oneness, Practicing Aloneness



The Goal:
Connection



The Method:
Isolation

"The self is asked to transcend itself while remaining the primary site of effort."

The Internalization of Obligation in Canela

Why Self-Development Feels Like Exhaustion

When relational coherence is treated as an internal state, its absence feels like personal failure.

The Result: A developmental ceiling.
The self collapses under a weight it was never meant to carry alone.

The Cycle: More insight → More work → Repetition → Stagnation.

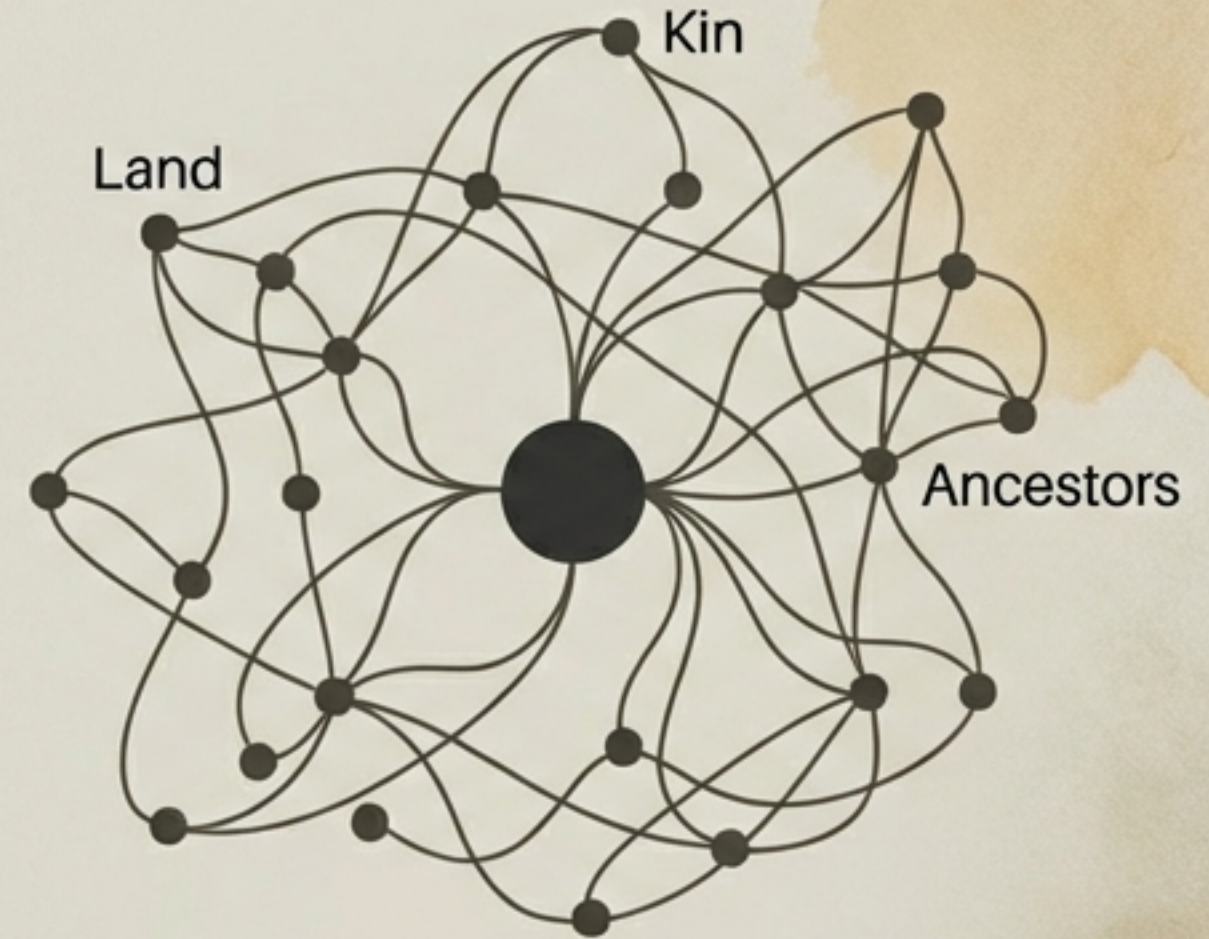


The Structural Error



**Western View:
The Autonomous Unit**

Enters relationships later.



**Relational View:
The Relational Person**

Constituted by relationships.

We need to relocate where development happens.

A Different Articulation of Spirit

Based on the law-based teachings of Bob Randall.

Used with permission of Barbara Schacht Randall.

Key Shift: Moving from Spirit as Attribute (something you have) to Spirit as Law (something you obey).

“Spirit is not an inner possession. It is a relational field.”



Kurunpa: Spirit as Field



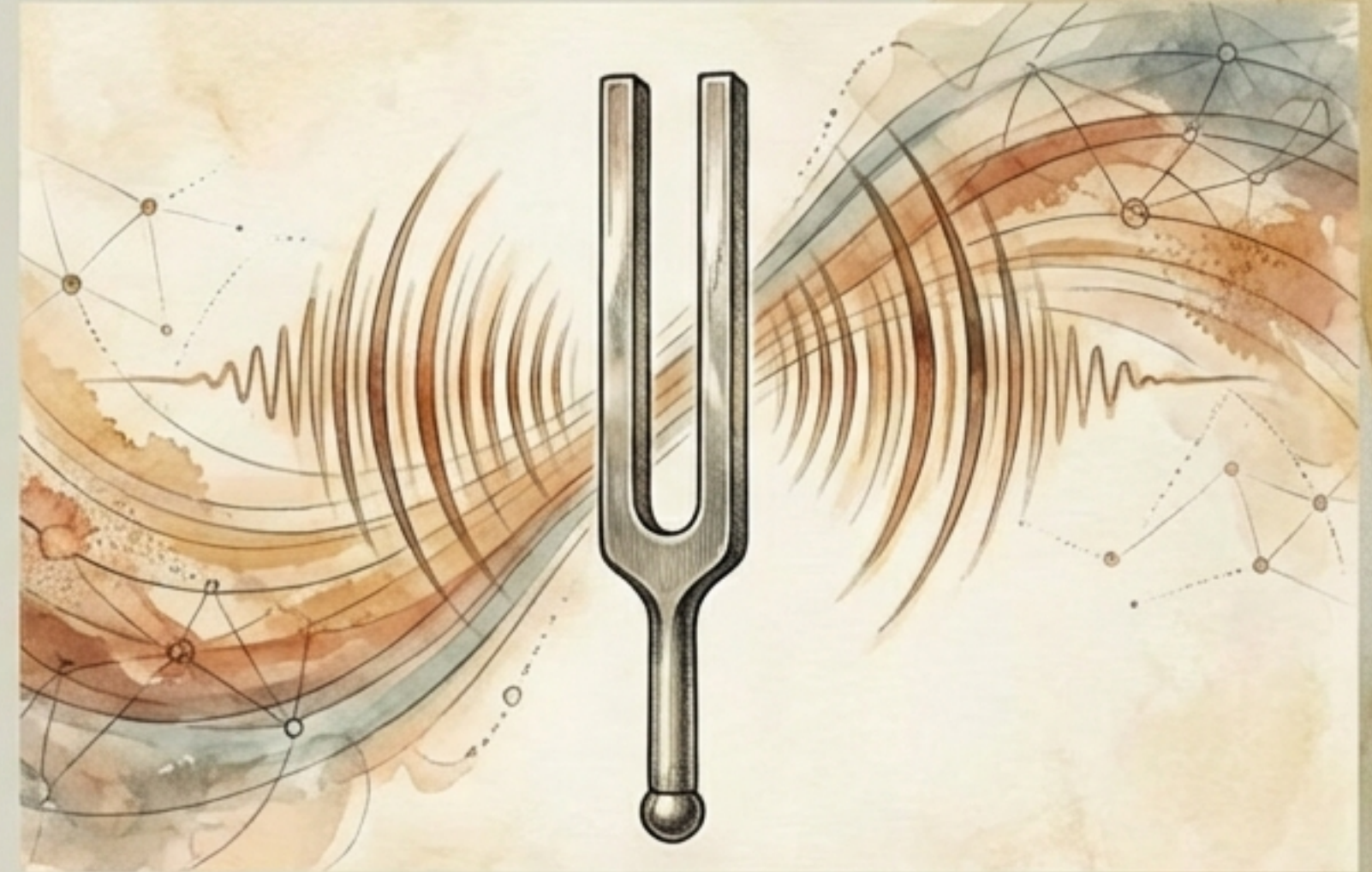
Kurunpa is a living field that precedes the human.

- 1. Distributed:** Present in people, land, and ancestors alike.
- 2. Responsive:** Affected by human conduct and care.
- 3. Not Yours:** You do not have spirit; you participate in it.

From Accumulation to Attunement



Growth / Accumulation in Suisse Int'l



Attunement / Resonance in Suisse Int'l

Development is not about becoming 'more' or 'higher.' It is about becoming 'tuned' to the relational order that already exists. in Suisse Int'l.

Participation Over Optimization

The Logic of the Field:

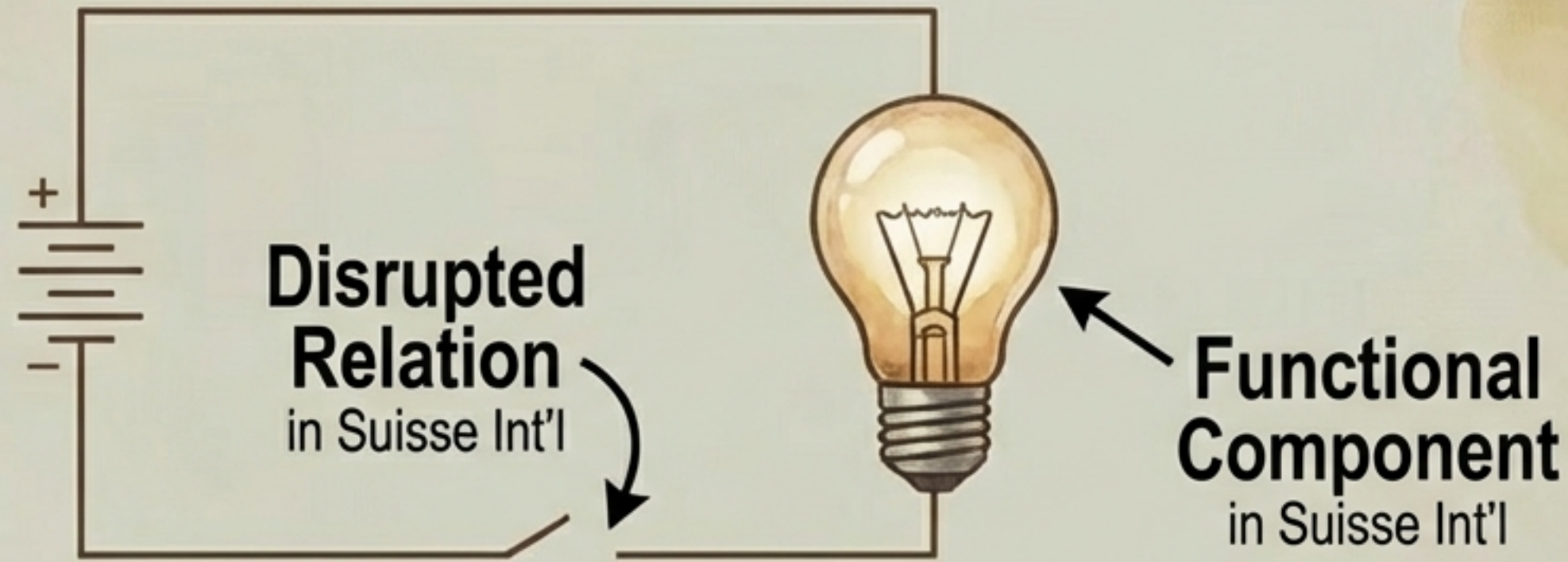
- Kurunpa is affected by conduct.
- Actions that fracture relation = Diminish the field.
- Actions that care for kin/land = Sustain the field.



Ripple Effect.

Action is not about individual virtue. It is about maintenance of the whole.

Misattunement is Not a Deficit

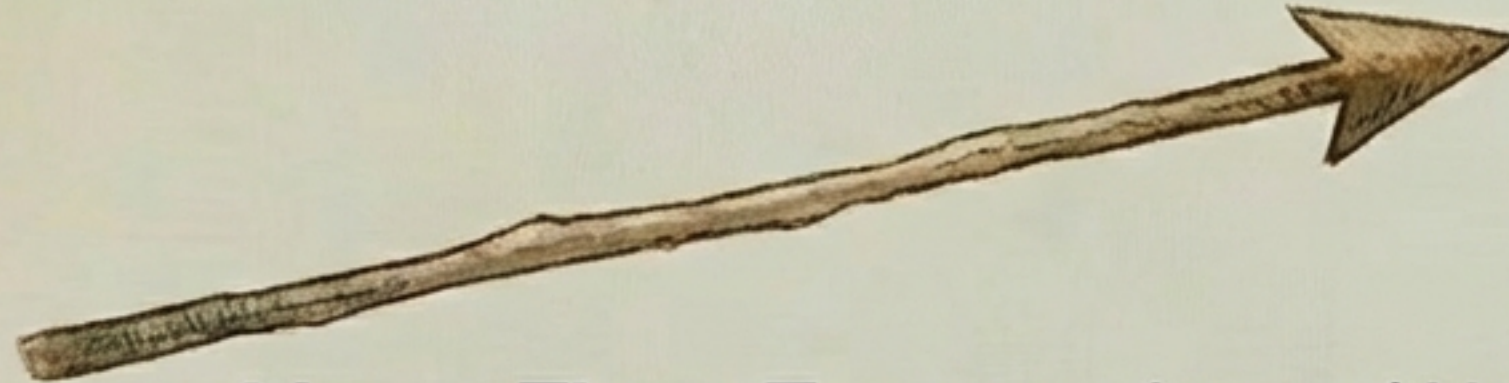


When we struggle, it is not a lack of 'insight' or 'discipline.'

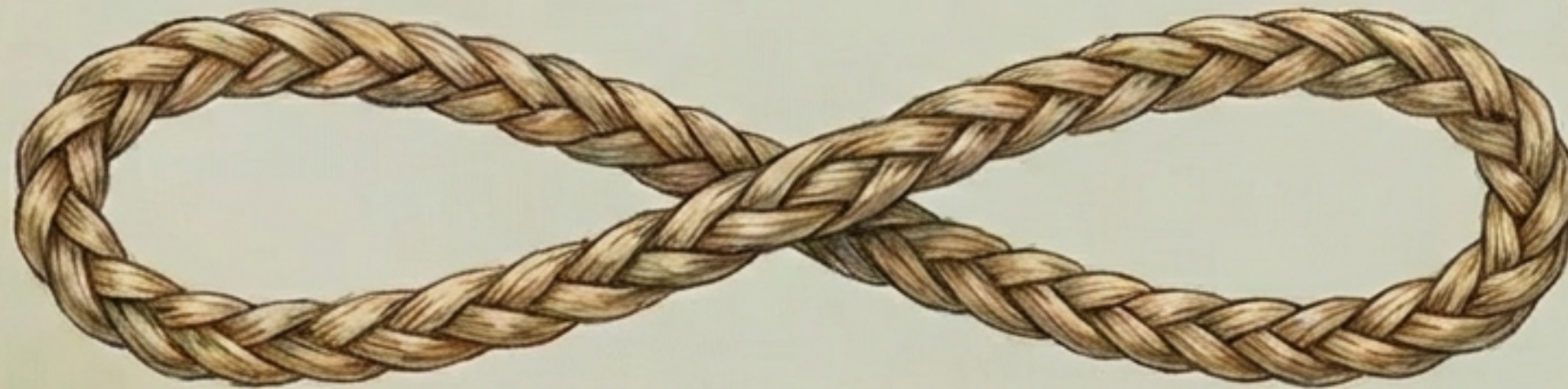
It is a signal of disrupted relations.

The Remedy: Repair the connection (to land, others, ancestors).
Don't just 'fix' the self.

Survivability, Not Transcendence



Linear Time: Transcendence / Novelty



Relational Time: Continuity / Transmission

Can we maintain the relations necessary for the next generation to survive?
The measure of a spiritual future is not 'higher consciousness.' It is 'livability.'

The Shift in Practice



Two Worlds of Development

The Self

Unit: The Individual
Metaphor: Ladder
Action: Growth
Goal: Transcendence

The Field

Unit: The Relation
Metaphor: Web
Action: Attunement
Goal: Continuity

What Develops is Not the Self

We must stop asking the self to carry what belongs to the relation.



Spiritual futures are not destinations to be reached, but conditions to be maintained.

Sources & Custodianship

Custodianship:

Explicit acknowledgement of Bob Randall (Tjilpi) and Barbara Schacht Randall. These teachings are law-based articulations, not empirical data.

Authors:

Based on the article by Damien Lafont, PhD & Natalie Deane.

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