UNVEILING DIGITAL POSITIONALITY

EMPOWERING NETIZENS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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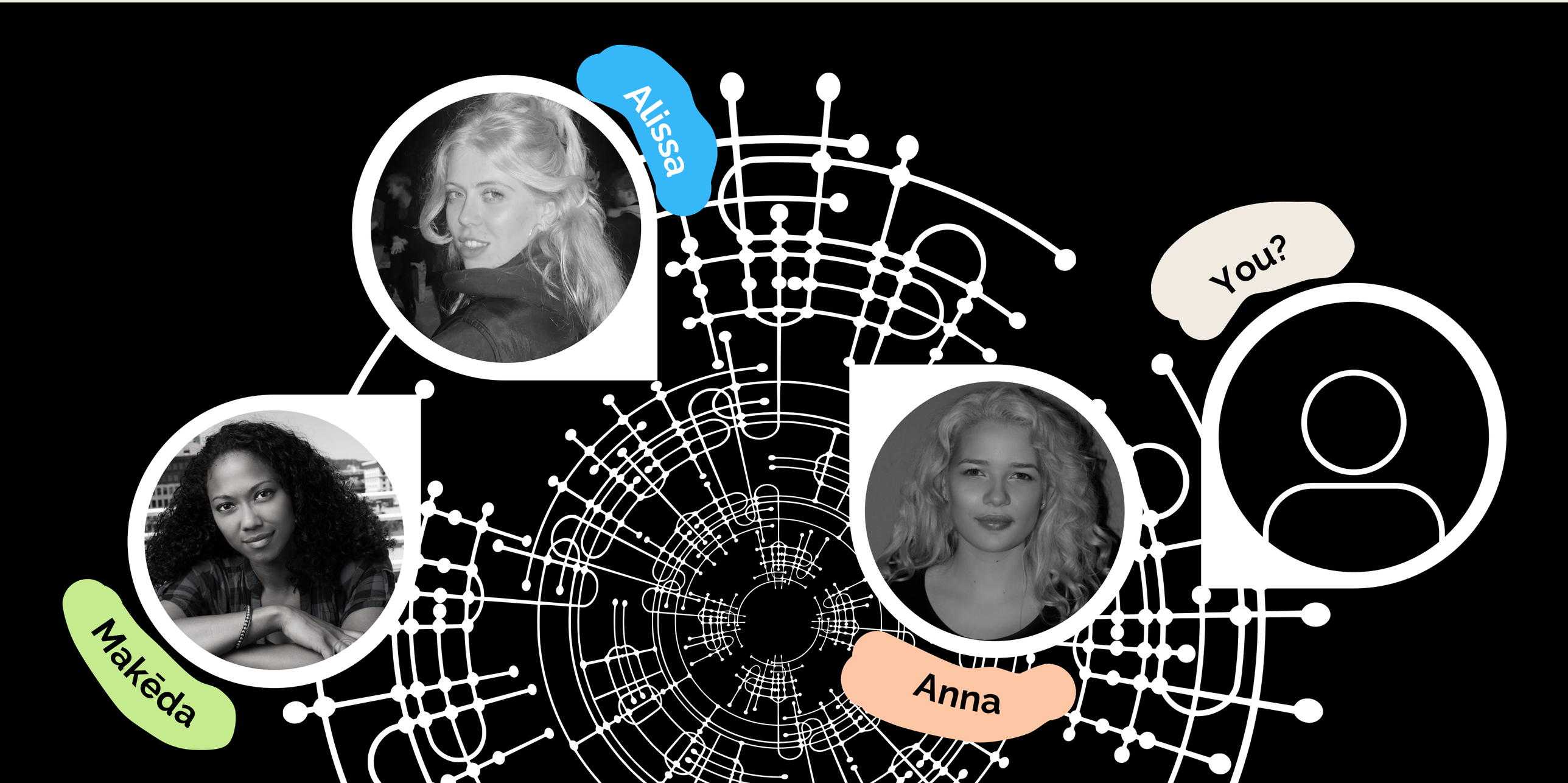
WHO ARE WE?



WHAT IS DIGITAL POSITIONALITY?

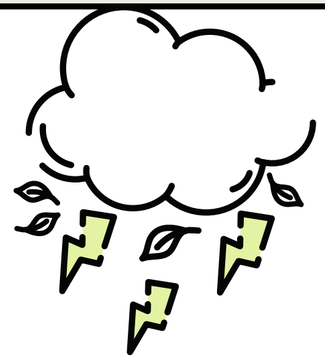
Digital positionality is like having a unique GPS for

- your **position in** the world
- your **perception of** the world

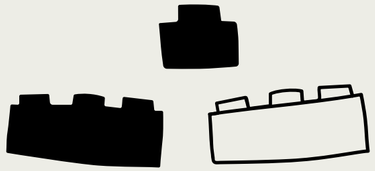
... in the digital age.

It determines

- your success or challenges in how you navigate this new world
- your ability to improve your life chances



amidst different (infra)structures

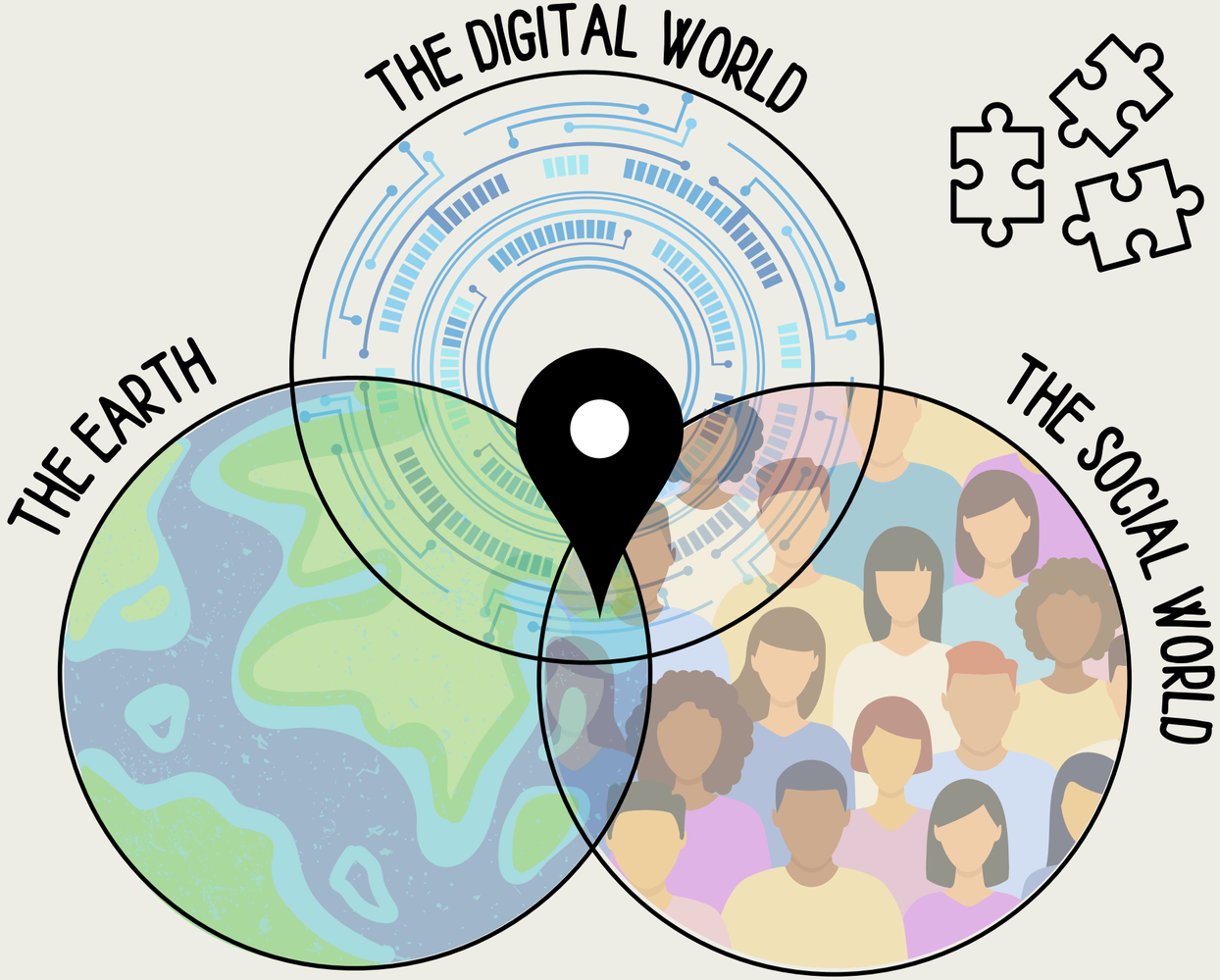


- Planetary
- Societal
- Technological

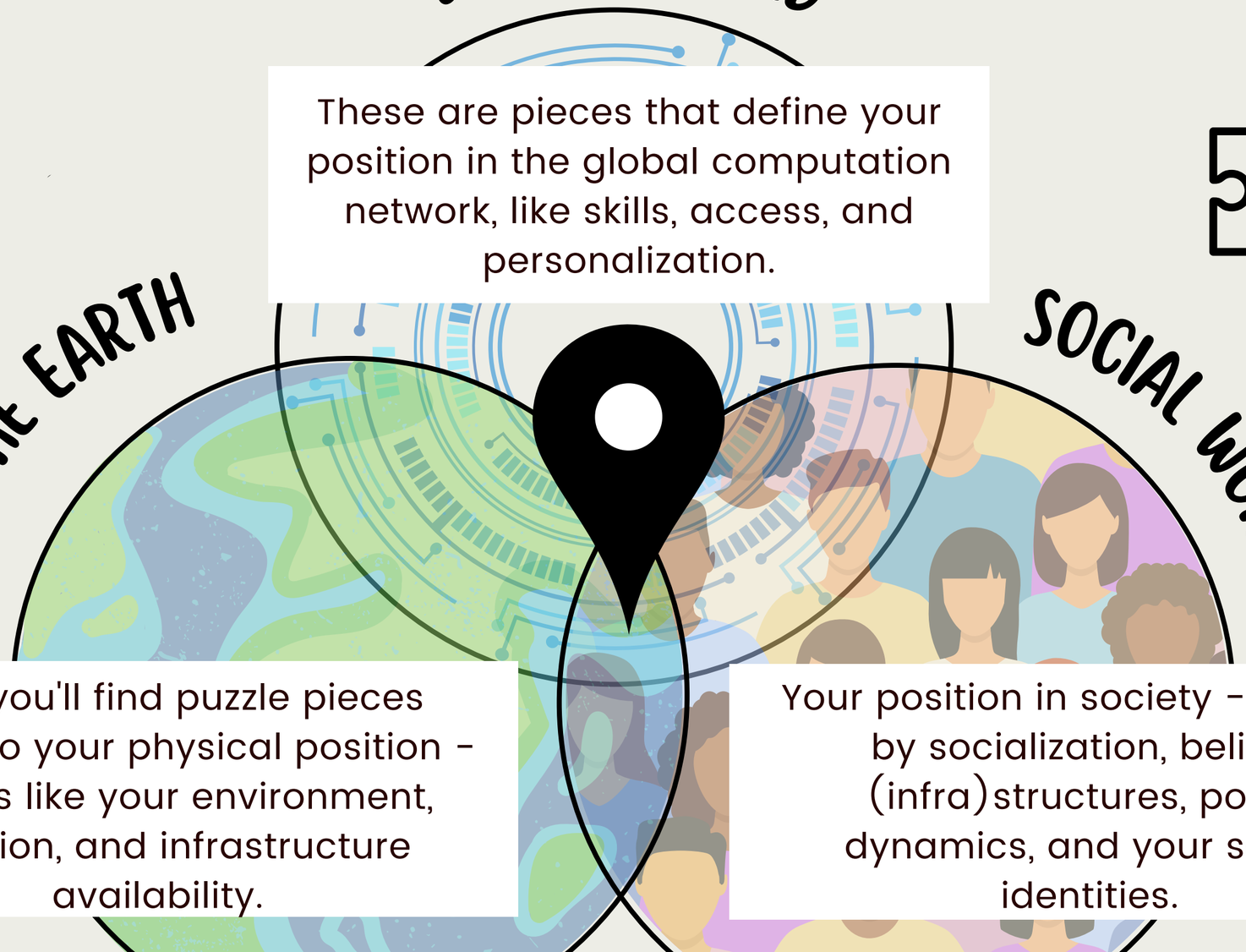
WHAT IS DIGITAL POSITIONALITY?

Picture the world as a puzzle with 3 dimensions

Each dimension adds unique puzzle pieces to your digital positionality (GPS)



WHAT IS DIGITAL POSITIONALITY?



These are pieces that define your position in the global computation network, like skills, access, and personalization.

Here you'll find puzzle pieces related to your physical position - factors like your environment, location, and infrastructure availability.

Your position in society - shaped by socialization, beliefs, (infra)structures, power dynamics, and your social identities.

OUTLINE

1. THE RESEARCH PROJECT & METHODS
2. SEMESTER 1: BARRIERS, AVOIDANCE & FINDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES
3. SEMESTER 2: DIGITAL POSITIONALITY AS A TOOL & A LENS
4. OUTLOOK: BECOMING AGENTS OF CHANGE

1. THE RESEARCH PROJECT & METHODS

DO YOU FEEL YOU CAN
NAVIGATE THE DIGITAL AGE
FREELY, SELF-DETERMINED, AND
SECURELY?

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

OCT 2022 - OCT 2023

Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (Wood, 2020)

HOW CAN WE VISUALIZE DIGITAL POSITIONALITY AND MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE TO NETIZENS FROM THE BOTTOM-UP?

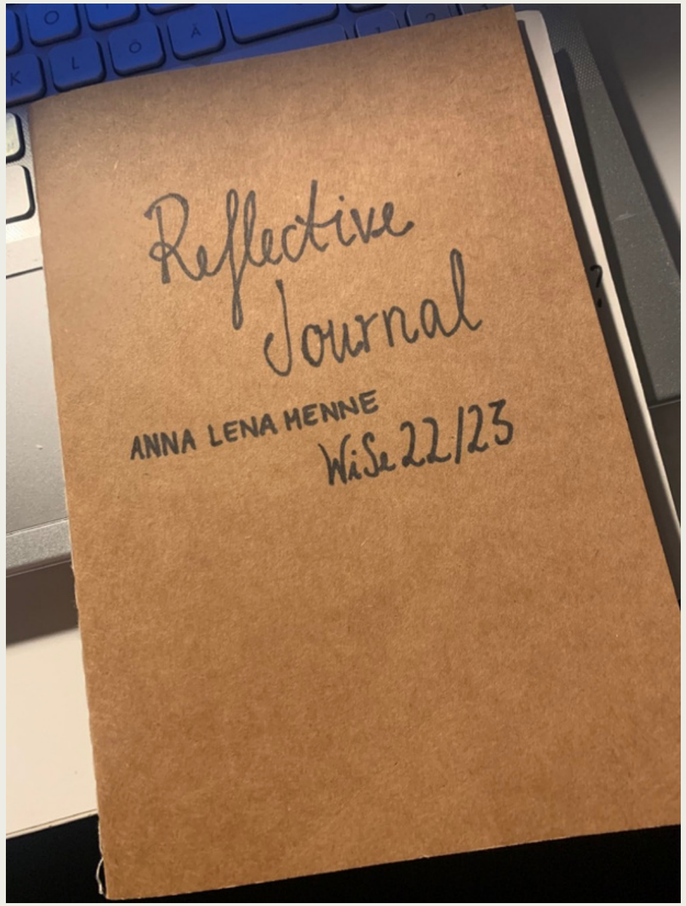
Create emancipatory individual, policy, and systemic **change (epistemic justice) through action** from the bottom up

Design a tool that enables people to reflect on their digital positionality

Wood, L. (2020). *Participatory Action Learning and Action Research: Theory, Practice and Process*. Routledge.

ACTiON LEARNiNG AND RESEARCH

hear, understand and transform netizens as the experts of their own lived experience



Oct - Nov 2022

OBSERVATiON

Nov 2022

REFLECTiON

Nov - Dec 2022

PLANNiNG

Jan 2023

ACTiON

Establishing design principles: engaging with diverse social groups in Berlin, Germany

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

IN DIVERSE MILIEUS

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

ON DIGITAL INEQUALITY

2 WORKSHOPS

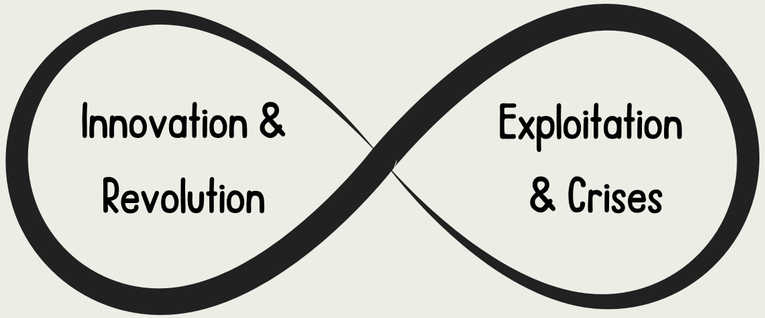
WITH DIGITAL NATIVES AT A SCHOOL IN BERLIN

2. SEMESTER 1
BARRIERS, AVOIDANCE & FINDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

BARRIERS AGAINST CRITICAL REFLECTION

1. Endless Loop of Crises

Capitalist Paradigm: Individual Gain and Competitive Markets



Result: The Future Seems Inevitable

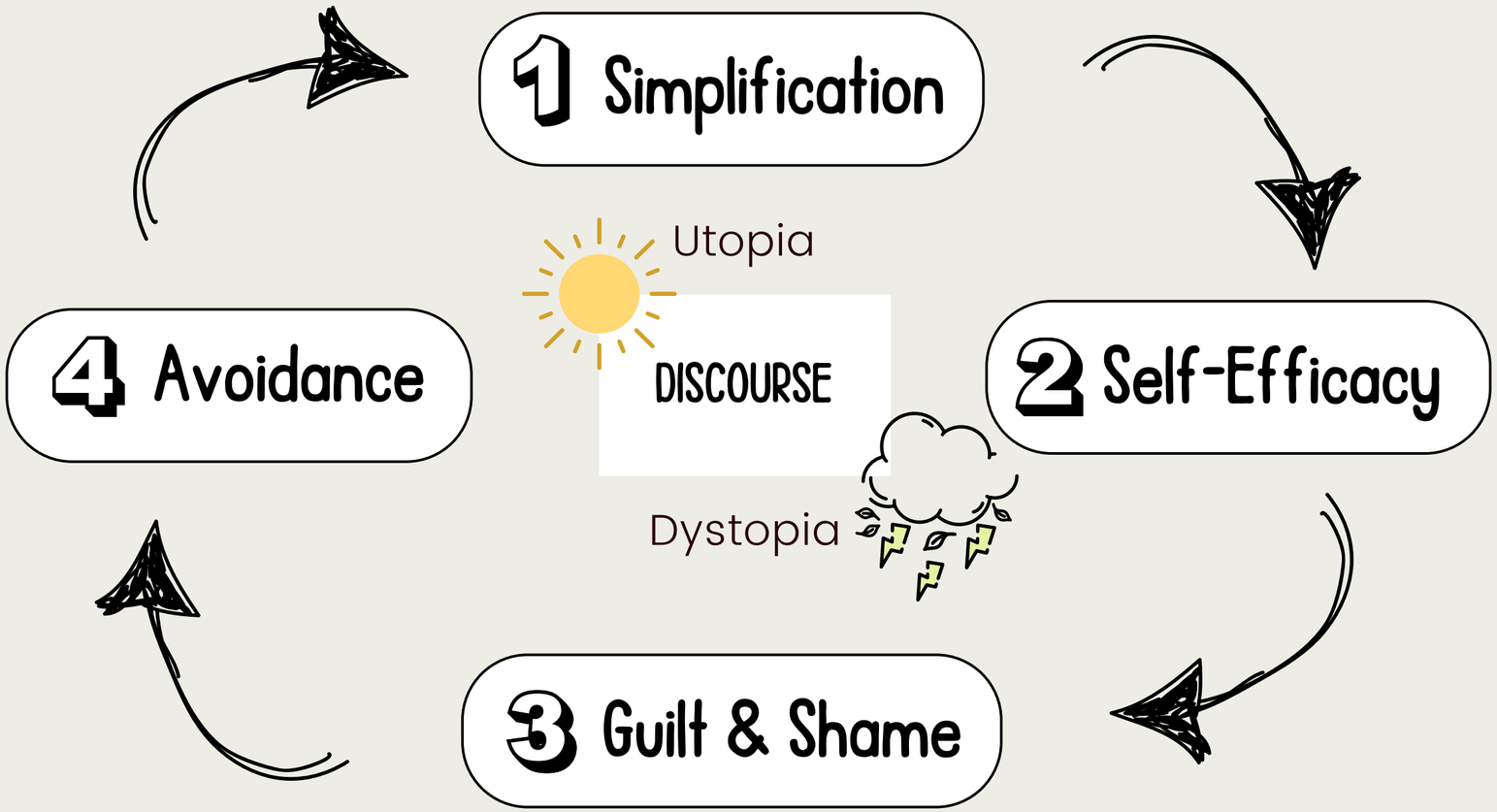
2. Black Boxing of

- The Mysteries of ICT
- The Mysteries of Others' Personalized Environments
- The Mysteries of Power Structures in Society

Result: Maintaining Inequality

THE CYCLE OF AVOIDANCE

1. Reliance on technology to simplify our lives due to positive discourse
2. Dependency erodes our Self-Confidence
3. Feelings of Guilt and Shame Arise due to negative discourse
4. Avoidance of Critical Reflection Through Rationalization Strategies

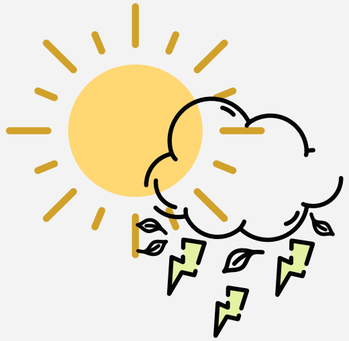


A self-exploitative pattern, limiting our ability to take action.

REPRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

Worries (20+): Reproduction of European Discourse and Agenda Setting

- Losing touch with sociality and humanity
- Surveillance, big tech, dependency and fear of AI
- Rationality, efficiency and superiority of technology
- . . .

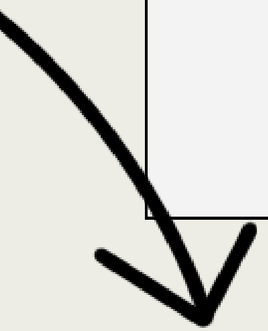


Accessible	open access, different capabilities, digital and analogue
Qualitative	centre individual and meaningful reflection
Autonomous	enable people to self-direct (educative component)
Exposing	visualise exploitation, domination, social relation

ADDiCTiON

"I know that I am 110% dependent on it [...] It's definitely something worrying and a bit creepy, but **I know that I'm already too deep in it to get out**."

"I **confess** when my phone is not there, it's like **withdrawal symptoms**."

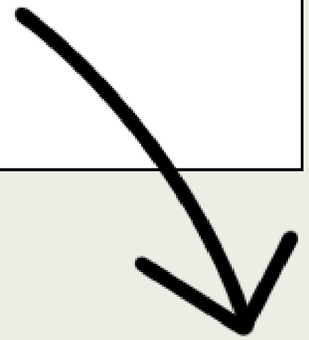


Activating	engage emotion in an enjoyable reflection journey
Empowering	uncover and heal self-abuse, sustain transformation
Recognition	promote empathic self-assessment

TRANSFORMATION

INITIATING THE BOTTOM-UP PROCESS

"For her (points to a blind woman), it's natural that voice control is better than for me. I'm currently struggling to... how can I explain it... understand these different perspectives. **What is very annoying for me is important for others**."



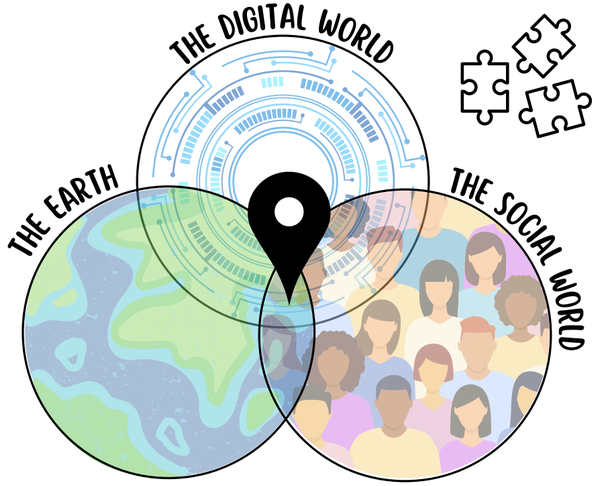
Dialectical	incorporate diverse and shared digital experiences
Imaginative	promote social change through further resources
Open	continuously revise the tool based on users experiences

3. SEMESTER 2
DIGITAL POSITIONALITY AS A TOOL & A LENS

DIGITAL POSITIONALITY AS A TOOL

BECOMING AGENTS OF CHANGE

Enabling netizens to **recognize their digital positionality** at the intersection of the Earth, the Social, and the Digital World.



E-BOOK

COMIC

Comic by Radunkel

BACKPACK

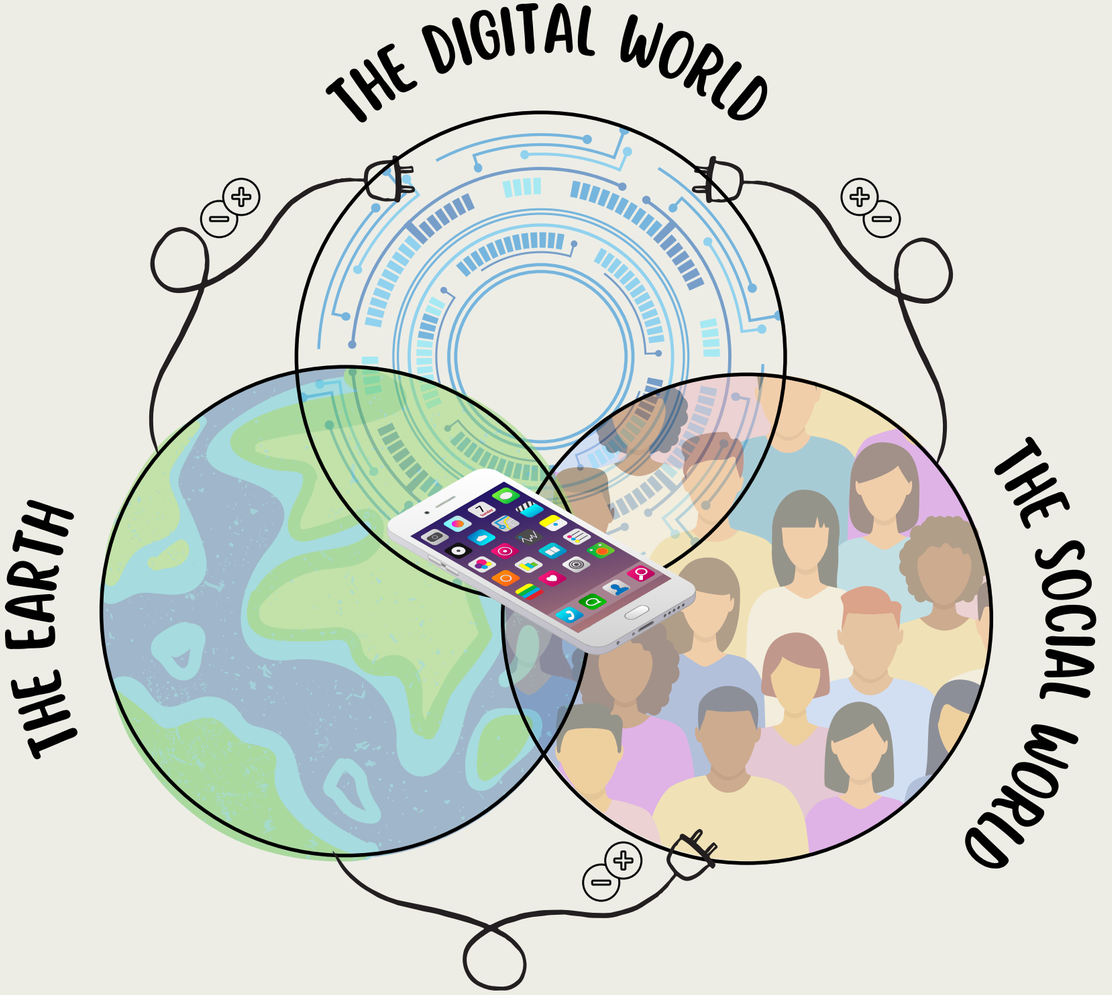
Check-in:
How are you feeling?

NETIZENS CAN EMPOWER THEMSELVES TO CATALYZE A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE CHANGE (BY WORKING TOGETHER)

DIGITAL POSITIONALITY AS A LENS

Our Crises-Ridden Existence is NOT inevitable

...it's a human creation



WHAT IS DIGITAL POSITIONALITY?

Booster of Individual Agency

Internal (You)

A Tool to Identify Opportunities and Challenges Across Multiple Dimensions

External (Structures)

A Lens to Understand, Navigate and Shape the Historical Systems of Exploitation Around Us

Incentive to Collectively Act for Change

4. OUTLOOK
WHAT'S NEXT?

RETHINKING AGENCY

START WHERE YOU ARE	to get where we're going
BE KIND TO YOURSELF & OTHERS	We all live within oppressive systems. Becoming present to our collective reality can feel overwhelming. Cultivate kindness; change can be difficult.
SEEK OUT THE GLITCHES	Regularly challenge assumptions, defying the prevailing narratives in your society with curiosity.
BEWARE OF THE BINARIES	Be cautious of rigid categorizations, stereotypes, and polarizing distinctions. Avoid oversimplifying situations into binary oppositions. Embrace that reality is often complex and nuanced.
ACKNOWLEDGE PERSONAL POWER:	Explore your positionality and lean into your unique influence. Recognize that the power to affect change lives within you.

RETHINKING AGENCY

PRACTICE ACCOUNTABILITY	Consider that best intentions do not always match impact. Be willing to find your growth edge.
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT	Understand that our actions shape the Earth, the social world, and technology. We possess the power to shape future perspectives and histories.
CREATE SPACE FOR TRANSFORMATION	Recognize that without conflict and contradictions, we cannot move beyond our current structures. Breakdowns can lead to breakthroughs.
COMMIT TO RECOMMIT	Learning is a cycle. Accept that we may fall into old patterns and return to the comfort of familiarity. Stay focused on what can go right and look toward the future.
PULL THE PLUG	Pace yourself through your journey. Prioritize moments of pause and reflection in order to catalyze sustainable transformation.

WE ARE FUTURE ANCESTORS !

DIGITAL POSITIONALITY

Coming Soon:
+ Ebook
+ Comic
+ Emotional Regulation and Rules of Thumb

Find us here:

www.digitalpositionality.com

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