Views on Unlearning and Radical Collective Change in the Deep Adaptation Forum

Report

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Introduction and context

This report aims to address the following research questions:

1. What radical collective changes do Deep Adaptation Forum (DAF) participants consider worth pursuing (if any), in view of our global predicament?
2. Do DAF participants consider that their involvement in DAF groups has been part of initiating such changes? If so, what may have enabled these changes? If not, what may have prevented them from taking place?
3. What are some meaningful personal or collective changes that participants report having experienced, as part of their involvement in DAF or DAF groups? Do some groups appear to bring about deeper changes than others? If so, why?
4. Is the idea of *unlearning* relevant to DAF participants' experience of involvement in DAF groups? If so, what role does this idea play in how participants articulate their experience of involvement?
5. Are there any differences in participants' views of radical collective change, personal change, and unlearning, depending on their degree of involvement in DAF?

In order to explore these topics, our research team (Wendy Freeman and Dorian Cavé) created and disseminated two surveys in various DAF online spaces:

- The Group Reflections survey (GRS);
- and the Radical Change survey (RCS).

The GRS was open to new responses from November 16, 2021, to February 15, 2022; and the RCS, from February 8 to March 22, 2022.

This report presents the combined results from both these surveys.

Methodology

Although the GRS and RCS together addressed the five research questions listed above, they differed in their focus, structure, respondents, and dissemination channels.

The Group Reflections survey (GRS)

The GRS focused on participants in three specific DAF social learning spaces[1]:

[1] I define a social learning space, following Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2020), as a particular experience of engagement that takes place among people in pursuit of learning to make a difference in their own context. Such spaces are defined by social interactions and relationships, which are structured

- the Earth Listening circle (EL);
- the Business and Finance interest group (BF);
- and participants in regular Deep Relating circles (DR).

EL is an online group that was initiated in DAF in October 2020 by two volunteers, who are part of the DAF Facilitators online community of practice. Its participants gather online, using videoconferencing software, on a weekly basis for 90 minutes. During this time, they engage in forms of guided collective meditation centred around the stated purpose of "listening to the Earth" and exploring one's connection with the wider natural ecosystems of the planet.

The BF interest group was started on the Professions' Network, one of DAF's platforms, in March 2019. Contrary to the EL, it was initiated by the DAF core team as an online forum or discussion space for DAF participants looking to connect with others on the topic of how to enact the ideas of Deep Adaptation within the context of business and finance professional sectors. Thereafter, volunteers decided to take an active role in convening occasional online events and discussions in the group.

As for DR circles, they are group calls which have been convened online since June 2020. They are organised on a regular basis by members of the Deep Adaptation Facilitators online community of practice[2]. In these calls, participants are invited to engage in a particular form of meditation. Deep Relating has been described as follows: "a relational meditation practice, or an approach to being in relationship with another person, or group of people, in a way that is grounded in a deep and detailed awareness of present moment experience. Participants are invited to speak from—and of only—what is arising in the 'here and now', which can include physical sensations (including what is seen and heard), emotions, and thoughts. Then, trying to articulate what is experienced as clearly as possible with the intention of inviting the other into your world for deeper connection. People are invited to notice when the impulse to 'tell stories' arises, that is, to explain, justify, or evaluate experience by referencing past or future, or prior assumptions or frameworks of meaning." (Bendell & Carr, 2021)

For all three social learning spaces, each group session is advertised online through the public DAF Events Calendar, and as such, is open to anyone who registers for free to attend. For this reason, their membership is not fixed. However, EL and DR sessions are attended by a larger

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by a desire to push a joint inquiry together, in an ongoing mutual engagement at the edge of participants' knowing. Critically, a social learning space exists because participants *care to make a difference* (their participation is not perfunctory or compliant, but driven by a need to get better at making the difference they are aiming for); *engage their uncertainty* (they participate from a place where their knowing tapers off); and *pay attention* (to whatever responses do they receive to the engagement of their uncertainty).

2 This community of practice is convened by means of a dedicated Facebook group and monthly online calls. Its purpose is articulated as follows on its landing page: "This is a 'share and support' space for people who are hosting, or would like to host, Deep Adaptation gatherings online. The intention is that we can share practices and approaches that embody the 'Principles of Deep Adaptation Gatherings', and support each other in holding these conversations, which are so much bigger than any one of us, and affect every aspect of people's lives."

number of regular participants than BF group meetings, and take place more frequently. Read more about attendance and membership details for each group in **Annex 4**.

Three identical versions of the GRS were disseminated among attendees of EL, BF, and DR, with the support of their respective main facilitators.

We chose these groups as examples of active DAF social learning spaces, focusing on discussions and/or relational modalities that appear particularly aligned with the mission of DAF - i.e. "enabling and embodying loving responses to our predicament" – while exploring this mission from different perspectives.

The GRS was anonymous, and composed of eight questions:

1. *Q1. Has anything meaningful emerged in you as a result of your participation in [EL/BF/DR]? Feel free to answer this question from any angle relevant to you.*
2. *Q2. Do you know why this has emerged?*
3. *Q3. What have you learned, or been learning, due to your participating in [EL/BF/DR]?*
4. *Q4. What might you have you let go of, or unlearned, as a result of your participation?*
5. *Q5. Have any changes occurred in your work life, your home life or your political activism as a result of your participation? If so, please tell us more.*
6. *Q6. Has the circle prompted you to set new goals and/or objectives for yourself in specific reference to your engagement with the process of Deep Adaptation or the DA Forum? If so, please tell us more.*
7. *Q7. Approximately how many sessions of [EL/BF/DR] have you attended so far?*
8. *Q8. What role do you self-identify with, in the Deep Adaptation Forum?*

For more details, please refer to **Annex 1.**

The Radical Change survey (RCS)

The RCS was disseminated more broadly in DAF than the GRS – notably:

- within the DAF Slack workspace, which is mainly used by DAF volunteers;
- and within the main DA Facebook group, which is mainly used by less active DAF participants.

Responses were anonymous, and there were four questions:

1. *Q1. Considering everything you know and feel about our global predicament - what, to you, is the radical collective change that is called for today? Feel free to define "radical collective change" as you wish.*
2. *Q2. Do you sense that your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum might be part of such change taking place, or might have been, to any extent? If so, how? If not, why?*

Q3. Do you sense you might have "unlearned" anything as a result of your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum? If so, what might this be, and why did it happen?

Q4. What role (if any) do you self-identify with, in the Deep Adaptation Forum?

For more details, please refer to **Annex 1.**

Analysis

I (Dorian) analysed responses to each of the surveys separately. In the case of the GRS, I conducted one independent analysis per group of respondents (i.e. EL, BF, and DR), before comparing their respective outcomes.

I used the software Quirkos to process responses to the open-ended questions, and systematically coded the responses to each question following a bottom-up, inductive approach. In other words, I refrained from following any hypothesis or relying on any theory beforehand, but instead attempted to categorise responses by putting myself in the respondents' shoes, following a "first-person" perspective (Watts, 2014). Then, I organised the emerging codes into themes that seemed to make the most sense to give an account of responses that would be faithful to all submitted responses. Part of the analysis of the RCS questionnaire relied on an explanatory framework I drew from the related literature, as I will explain in section 2.3.

For more details on the stages of the coding process, please see **Annex 2**.

In this report, I will attempt to provide answers to the main research questions above, and will reflect on some key insights from each theme using a "third-person" perspective (quotes from the survey responses are highlighted).

Respondents

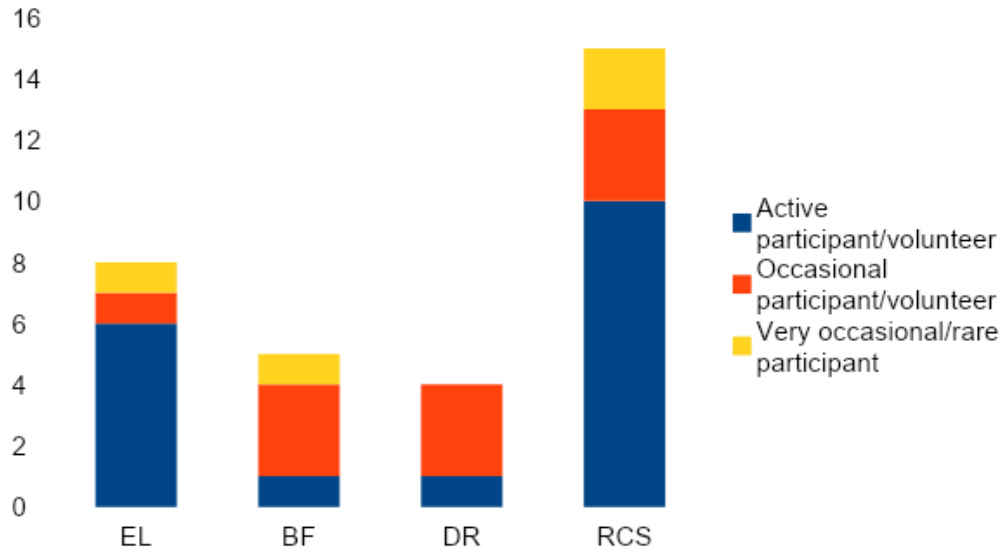
There were **17 responses to the GRS**, including:

- 8 responses from the EL group;
- 5 responses from the BF group;
- and 4 responses from the DR group.

There were **15 responses to the RCS.**

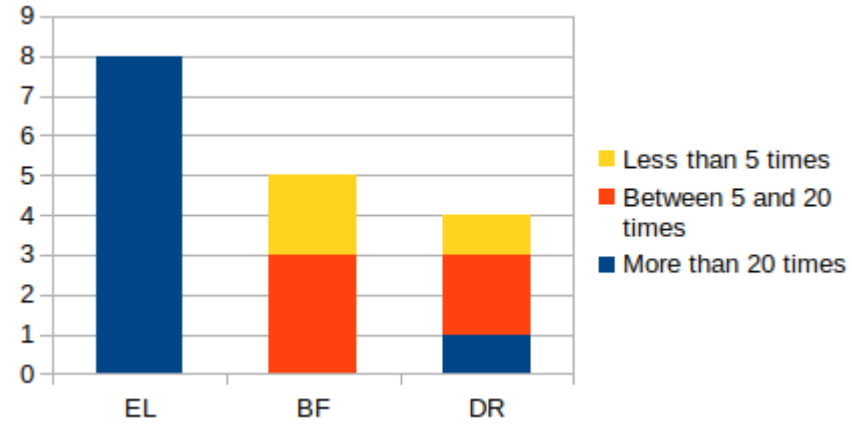
In terms of respondents' self-assessed degree of activity or involvement in DAF, there was a larger proportion (two thirds) of "Active participants/volunteers" among RCS respondents than among GRS respondents, who included "active" and "occasional" participants or volunteers in nearly equal measure, although most EL respondents were "active" and most BF and DR respondents were "occasional." "Very occasional" participants were a small minority in every questionnaire (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Respondents' involvement in DAF



GRS respondents were also asked to assess their degree of involvement or familiarity with the social learning space. EL respondents were much more involved in their regular group, as all of them had attended over 20 sessions, as compared with BF and DR respondents, of whom three had attended less than 5 sessions, five had attended between 5 and 20 sessions, and only one had attended over 20 sessions (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Respondents' attendance of group activities



Key findings

1. When asked to describe their conception of **what radical collective change would be needed** in the world in the face of the global predicament (regardless of whether it could be achieved or not), respondents to the RCS questionnaire voiced three main types of aspirations. In decreasing order of importance, these were:
    - Orienting towards connection, loving kindness and compassion for all beings;
    - A transformative shift in worldviews and value systems;
    - A radical reshaping of political and economic structures.
2. For each of these areas, a majority of respondents considered that **their involvement in DAF was helping - if even on a tiny scale - to bring about such forms of radical collective change.**
3. However, a **minority of RCS respondents found this question irrelevant, meaningless, or impossible to address**. As most of them self-identified as active DAF participants or volunteers, this seems to indicate that people may choose to become actively involved in DAF regardless of any wishes or expectations for social change.
4. The main factors mentioned by RCS respondents as having **enabled forms of radical collective change** to take place in (or thanks to) DAF include:
    - A caring, supportive community;
    - Useful relational modalities practised in the network;
    - A community of like-minded others that one can emulate;
    - The use of the Deep Adaptation framing and ethos within the network;
    - Access to useful information and resources;
    - Finding courage and inspiration by interacting with other DAF participants.
5. In terms of meaningful personal changes experienced by participants in the three DAF groups investigated here, EL and DR respondents reported having found in these spaces the occasion to practice **new forms of relationality, as well as more self-understanding, and improved emotional states**. These changes led them to undertake various new projects and initiatives. In contrast, BF participants reported more **cognitive and methodological changes,** and fewer changes to their personal or professional practice.
6. **Respondents from the Earth Listening and Deep Relating circles were keenest to become more deeply involved with DAF as a whole, and to further practice using relational processes.** These groups are also those whose activities and purpose correspond most closely to the main type of radical collective change sought by respondents to the RCS questionnaire. This could indicate a common perception, among

active DAF participants (representing the majority of RCS respondents), that **forms of relational change such as those pursued in groups like EL and DR are most critical in order to bring about radical collective change.**

7. The main elements that GRS respondents viewed as **helping to bring about generative personal changes** within their groups were:
    - Finding like-minded others with whom to engage meaningfully on important and sensitive issues;
    - Being with these others in a safe enough space, in which to build trust, thanks to clear principles of engagement;
    - The presence of trusted facilitators and organisers initiating these groups;
    - The use of specific relational processes and modalities, particularly those bringing attention to dimensions of the self that are usually ignored;
    - The regularity of meetings, which help to create a feeling of continuity.
8. The instances of **unlearning** mentioned by RCS respondents fit within three main categories. In decreasing order of importance, these were:
    - Ways of knowing, imagining, and evaluating legitimacy (epistemological);
    - Ways of being, desiring, hoping, relating, and existing in the world (ontological);
    - Ways of doing (methodological).
9. RCS respondents who viewed themselves as actively involved in DAF tended to **see their own process of unlearning (especially ontological and/or epistemological) as part of a process of facilitating radical collective change through their involvement in DAF** - except for those for whom the very idea of "radical collective change" appeared meaningless, irrelevant or too broad. Therefore, a sense of **greater personal agency** seemed present for respondents for whom an unlearning process was part of creating radical collective change.

In the rest of this report, I will elaborate on these findings by further exploring respondents' answers to the surveys. I will first turn to the results of GRS, then will address RCS. I will conclude this report by discussing the importance of these findings in view of other research carried out in DAF, and examine to what extent they help to answer the research questions presented in the introduction.

NB: Quotes from survey respondents are attributed using a code referring to each of the different groups (EL, BF and DR) studied through the GRS, or to the RCS (RC).

Detailed findings

1. The Group Reflections Survey (GRS)

The GRS aimed at investigating the following research questions:

1. What are some of the main changes that have occurred in the lives of people taking part in the EL, BF and DR social learning spaces, as a result of their participation?
2. What are the characteristics of the social learning space or DAF that participants feel have been enabling (or preventing) these changes?
3. Has participation in these social learning spaces prompted people to undertake new initiatives in DAF or beyond?
4. Are there any differences in how people answer these questions, depending on their degree of involvement in DAF?

I will attempt to address these questions for each of the three groups of respondents to the survey, before considering how these findings may help to answer this report's main research questions (see Introduction). Please refer to **Annex 2** for more details on the analysis process.

1.1 Earth Listening (EL)

Changes in respondents' lives

I identified four main themes speaking to changes occurring in respondents' lives as a result of their participation in EL.

- *New ways of being and relating*

Three respondents mentioned that their participation had enabled them to experience a deeper form of **connectedness with the Earth** as a living being, as well as with all other living species.

> *"I've learned that I'm a cell in Mother Earth's body. We inter-are. She wishes to communicate with me/us. She needs caring and attention. I can learn from the example of countless species on this planet. I am an animal."* (EL3)

> *"I try to let trees and birds, rocks and creatures speak to me regularly. That used to be just an occasional thing for me, but having others with whom to share has made me focus more on these connections. I spend more time going deeper than I did before joining the group."* (EL6)

Two people mentioned that their participation had enabled them to become **more present to the world** and less distracted.

> *"I'm learning to pay more attention - still too easy to just pass on by filled with distractions." (EL3)*

> *"[Earth Listening] can also mean connecting in with an experience of belong directly to the Earth in what might best be described as an immediate 'present moment' experience [o]f Indigeneity." (EL2)*

For six respondents, the guided meditations seem to have helped them to develop **new perspectives on their own existence,** including a deeper somatic awareness, even in one's daily activities.

> *"I have learned to listen for the wisdom available for me by attending to my garden." (EL8)*

> *"[I have learned] that while there can be turmoil all around, there is a permanence to nature's holding of us as an individual human being which we can always access if we seek it out." (EL4)*

> *"With Earth Listening that has been precisely the point; learning to tune in the wisdom, love, and energy of Pachamama, Mother Earth. On more than a few occasions that has helped to bring me out of my head, and into my body, which in truth I realize is but a particular manifestation of the mystery and magic of the earth. Simply inhaling and exhaling is such a beautiful expression of that miracle." (EL7)*

Two other respondents referred to a process of **relinquishing anthropocentrism and separation** from the rest of the living world.

> *"[I am letting go of] the delusion that I am somehow alone in and separate from this vast interconnected and interdependent sea of being, becoming, dissolution, and re-emergence." (EL7)*

> *"I am gradually unlearning human-centered thinking and object-orientation, prioritizing my relationships and including the non-human as subjects in them." (EL8)*

- *More confidence in "practising one's truth"*

Attempting communication with the non-human world, while it may echo practices at the heart of a number of Indigenous traditions worldwide (e.g. Ahenakew, 2019), can seem esoteric, fanciful, or even crazy within a mainstream Western context. Five respondents mentioned that engaging in the practice of the group helped them to find **renewed self-confidence and assurance, to relinquish some self-doubt or self-judgement**, and even to **discuss these activities** around them.

> *"I am also more likely to discuss my new activities and interests with my family, feeling more confident in who I am and what I know to be true." (EL1)*

> *"There is a level of assurance that has emerged through my participation… I let go of some self-judgement for what I like in contrast to what other people talk*

about, enjoy, or do. It has given me a greater sense of freedom of expression." (EL5)

"I've definitely let go of the idea that it is a bit crazy to talk to trees and birds and rocks, etc." (EL6)

- *More self-understanding, integrating, and healing*

Finally, four respondents stated that their participation in EL had helped them to **reach better self-understanding, integrate various aspects of their personality, and heal traumatic wounds.**

"I've been led to engage very deeply with my own history of sexual trauma, which Earth Listening also showed me to be an obstruction to my ability to connect to the Earth and to hear well. My body is my 'ear' to hearing the Earth and if that 'ear' is numb, dismissed, or self-absorbed, my listening is less sensitive." (EL2)

"[I have experienced] deeper healing from childhood trauma through feeling held by nature… Is not possible to attribute to earth listening alone as have been doing so much to support my journey, but in a nut shell I feel more integrated as a person - all aspects of myself from professional to heart, soul and creative. And my love of and connection with nature is the thread through all that." (EL4)

"I believe Earth Listening (and the DA community) has been very beneficial in my synthesizing the wide variety of my interests into a congruent thread which is more understandable to others. In the business world, they call that a niche. In other words, sharing the wealth of my interests and resources in a comprehensive and congruent fashion is a gift to myself and others." (EL5)

Key enablers of learning and change

Asked to point out what may have enabled the various changes above to occur, respondents referred to various aspects of their participation in EL.

The process of Earth Listening as a **collective meditation,** as well as other elements of the calls that encourage a sense of **deeper presence and embodiment**, were pointed out by five respondents.

"Participation is deeply connected to the feeling realm rather than the strictly linear thinking realm." (EL4)

"There is a sense of Presencing as Otto Scharmer describes within the group which I believe is facilitated by the format of Check-in, Sharing from Meditation, and Check-out." (EL5)

The awareness of being in the presence of **like-minded others**, with whom one can develop a sense of **trust and belonging**, has also been important for most respondents.

> *"Working with a group of equally aware and awake folks has been one of the most important experiences of my life." (EL1)*

> *"To find a group of people with the same sensibilities is a great gift. The fact that it is within the context of Deep Adaptation creates a bond of awareness that needs no further explanation and therefore, a freedom and openness to loving and listening to what nature can teach us for how to live now." (EL5)*

For several respondents, the **safety of the space** enabled them to express themselves honestly, confident in the sense that all experiences were equally valued and respected. Indeed, the **diversity of voices and perspectives** was also considered critical and enriching by many.

> *"There is dignity given to each person attending and space to hold diverse experiences." (EL5)*

> *"We've been able to experience many sharings and perspectives and contributions that have enriched for me what Earth Listening means, and how it might be expressed." (EL2)*

> *"I love that this is an international group, because people from other cultures have different ways of reacting to similar experiences. Our interaction stimulates thoughts and perspectives that we might not arrive at alone." (EL6)*

Finally, five respondents also pointed out the importance of the **regular meeting time,** and the **role of the facilitators** in making these meetings happen.

> *"Each week [the facilitator] frames and primes an encounter with the nonhuman world." (EL8)*

> *"The weekly circle is a gentle reminder." (EL3)*

New actions or initiatives

Interestingly, every single EL respondent mentioned that the circle had been a source of inspiration and motivation for them, in various ways.

As a result of their participation, six respondents mentioned they had become – or were becoming – **more actively involved in DAF** at large. Two of them said EL was an important reason they remained in the network.

> *"I am now pressing to have Earth Listening become a Core Offering in DA proving we are an organisation that is not just human centric." (EL1)*

> *"Becoming a volunteer in DAF and sharing my love and appreciation of music and film that can move the spirit within us all." (EL7)*

> *"[EL] helps me feel connected to others in the Forum, which helps motivate and encourage me in my work in and for the Forum." (EL8)*

Four respondents referred to reaching a newfound clarity as to the nature, and style, of their **political or professional activities**. This clarity appears to have been translated into action for at least one of them, who undertook **anti-racism work** as result of their participation in EL.

> *"I became very involved in anti-racism work as a result of this work. I received the message in an early Earth Listening that as a colonialist, my relationship to indigenous people needed to be reconciled in order for me to hear what the Earth has to say with less obstruction." (EL2)*

> *"Earth listening has also made me want to refocus my paid work to be more about environmental protection. Which is possible but will be a gradual shift." (EL4)*

> *"I've always been quite active politically, but I think a new sense of urgency - but not a 'frantic' one - has come into my work, which has added a sense of balance. I used to just feel frantic and frustrated at times, which was never particularly helpful." (EL6)*

Finally, two other respondents mentioned starting **personal projects and educational endeavours** due to their involvement.

> *"I have created a series of 8 Zoom calls called Seasons of Our Joy: the ancient cultures experienced the cycles of the seasons consciously and aligned their own life cycles with the intelligence of nature. I ongoingly have a group of engaged participants who are bridging a sense of sacredness into everyday living, something that has been missing in our current culture." (EL5)*

> *"I sought out a Practical Animism course to educate myself about being in relationship with the non-human world. And I was led to begin a discipline of weekly Sabbath or mini-retreat, to be instead of do, and to connect to the sacred, myself, and the nonhuman world." (EL8)*

1.2 Business and Finance interest group (BF)

Changes in respondents' lives

I identified two main themes speaking to changes occurring in respondents' lives as a result of their participation in BF. One respondent said that no meaningful change occurred for them.

- *Deeper and more systemic perspectives on the global predicament*

For all respondents save one, their engagement in the BF group was a source of **new insights on the topic of collapse and the world at large**, in particular as regards the severeness, complexity and magnitude of the global predicament.

“[I have learned that] business and life as we know it will not continue.” (BF2)

“[I have let go of] everything that I have believed in and that I thought would make the difference with the ways in which we choose to live our lives. And that the reality that there nothing that can change what is already in motion with climate change.” (BF3)

One respondent said that the broader awareness they had found by engaging in the group had made them want to become **more deeply engaged in addressing systemic issues.**

“I am much more interested and aware of the global context and implications of collapse which has made me more actively engaged in global issues.” (BF1)

Three respondents spoke of having gained a more refined understanding of **issues of economic injustice, inequality,** and the **broad field of social justice.**

In particular, one of them stated that the group had helped them to fruitfully engage with **Indigenous worldviews on the current economic system,** and that it had also led them to adopt a **less ethnocentric approach**, particularly with regards to how such knowledge and value systems ought to be shared within Western contexts.

“I've also been interested when indigenous knowledge is cited as being helpful in reframing how we think about economic systems… indigenous knowledge and value set[s] appear to come from a place of more wholeheartedness and egalitarianism. … I was disconcerted to hear someone, responding to interest in indigenous worldviews and economic methodologies, stating that we needed to bring 'these people' to liaise with us at (I think this is where the speaker works or worked) the UN. This felt like a typical white supremacist approach - I'd rather we went, humbly, to others whose knowledge can help us, and ask if they will share it. It feels inappropriate to summon them to 'our' spaces, created out of a broken system. I don't think I'd have realised this before taking part in these sessions.” (BF5)

- *New tools, resources, and projects*

  One respondent mentioned that **new projects** had emerged for them out of the work of the group, as well as useful **new tools and resources** that may help to address the impacts of collapse worldwide.

Key enablers of learning and change

When reflecting on factors that may have facilitated these changes, four respondents mentioned feeling more connected, less isolated, and reassured by being in the presence of **like-minded others.**

“It was nice to know others were thinking of the same issues as I was.” (BF2)

“[My participation] has given me a sense of being less alone.” (BF3)

Among them, one person also acknowledged the **importance of the group organisers** in initiating this social learning space.

Two other respondents, however, highlighted elements which might be viewed as limiting with regards to the group’s usefulness. One of them found the **group competence** lacking on certain specific issues, while another regretted that it did not reflect the **ways of interacting** that are consciously cultivated in other DAF spaces.

“There has been no serious study of the structure and function of our money, and the results of the values that are baked into it. … There is a great variability in knowledge among the members of the group, as well as lack of agreement on some issues.” (BF4)

“I think B&F is perhaps the group least modelled on DAF 'practices' and behaviours - perhaps it's the most 'business-like'! So that checking-in, reflectiveness, curiosity and respectfulness sometimes feels less in evidence than it would in other groups. That might be a function of the type of participants it attracts through its subject matter.” (BF5)

New actions or initiatives

Two respondents said that as a result of their involvement in the group, certain changes had occurred in their home lives or professional lives.

One of them mentioned that they had **reduced their working hours**, were in a process of **learning how to better engage with their family, friends and neighbours** on the topic of collapse. They were also exploring ways of taking meaningful action together with other DAF participants. Another stated that their **political activism** had benefited from conversations in the BF group.

“[I have learned] that all these dots needed to be connected and somehow shared with my local community. So as to come to terms with the deeply complex issues and strategies that needed to be addressed yesterday.” (BF3)

“In my other work I campaign on tax justice and corporate responsibility. Much of my thinking and work here has been informed by issues discussed in DAF B&F - and vice versa.” (BF5)

In contrast, two other respondents said that their participation had not prompted them to set new goals for themselves or to initiate new activities.

1.3 Deep Relating circles (DR)

Changes in respondents’ lives

I identified four main themes speaking to changes occurring in respondents' lives as a result of their participation in DR circles.

- *Finding fulfilment and inspiration*

All respondents mentioned that their participation had been a **source of mutual support and enjoyment, as well as inspiration.**

> *"[DR] has given me more confidence to know I am not alone in some of my needs and my longings." (DR1)*
>
> *"Most sessions I come away with some key phrases I heard spoken (by me or another) that have been meaningful to me at the time, and something to ponder over the days and weeks that follow." (DR3)*

Three of them even found that their participation **met an important need** that they could not satisfy in other settings.

> *"Each time I have participated in a Deep Relating circle it has felt VERY meaningful and illuminating. I think I have only done 5 so far, and regret the times I have missed them, as they enrich my life very much. What emerges most for me is that I have experienced a lack of mirroring from my significant others in my life time and I am quite 'hungry' for this kind of interaction and usually surprised and delighted at just how similar we all are and how quickly I can feel comfortable and intimate in this setting." (DR1)*
>
> *"I engage in Deep Relating regularly because it gives me what I need to continue in less nurturing areas of my life." (DR2)*
>
> *"Feeling supported in my collapse awareness so that I am not looking for that support from others in my life who are not ready for that conversation." (DR4)*

- *Finding more self-confidence and self-acceptance*

Three respondents also stated that their involvement had enabled them to reach **helpful new ways of considering their identity, aspects of their personality, or way of life.**

> *"I have let go of the need to define myself and to go in with an empty slate and be able to just see what emerges." (DR1)*
>
> *"I am more comfortable with not working and not conforming to societal 'norms' of consumption, BAU, thinking the future will be the same as the present." (DR3)*
>
> *"Getting comfortable with my own silence." (DR4)*

- *Finding more self-understanding and personal growth*

All respondents stated that their participation had enabled them to **learn more about themselves,** and to **become better aware of their needs, feelings and emotions.**

> *"Less confusion as to 'what is missing' in my life, and how to get my needs met." (DR2)*

> *"In general, [what has emerged is] a greater sense of myself, and an improved ability to voice my feelings and emotions , and thus be aware of them as they happen… Learning to express feelings, emotions, and awarenesses/noticings, like in meditation, but with answerability, and less falling asleep!" (DR3)*

> *"Understanding my part to play in this time in a different way." (DR4)*

Some found that they had become better able to **live with uncertainty**, and to **let go of judgement and blame.**

> *"I love the idea of a clean slate and no agenda, and for the most real topic to arise in the moment. I am letting go of hope and expectations each time." (DR1)*

> *"Less blame of self and others." (DR2)*

- *Learning to artfully relate with others*

Finally, participation in DR circles seems to have helped all respondents to **become better at being in relationship (or relating) with others.**

> *"[DR] has just carved out a bit more depth in me I think, and ability to be present and listen with my family." (DR1)*

> *"I have used the practice to communicate with others at moments when I wouldn't previously have known how to say what I wanted to say, and to do so in a way that others are able to hear without feeling 'confronted'." (DR2)*

> *"[I have learned] how to 'be with the other in their world' - deep listening, awareness of how I am when I listen to others... This allows me to better deal with strong emotions in day to day life and respond in a more compassionate way. I think." (DR3)*

> *"[A change that has occurred for me is] a softening, a capacity for greater spaciousness with others." (DR4)*

For some respondents, this increased capacity led them to **discover new ways of relating**, particularly in conversation.

> *"I have observed how difficult it can be to remain full present and to give my 100% attention to someone else as they speak, without going off into thinking about what I will say next. I have learnt to hold back and to listen with more presence and to allow space between the dialogue." (DR1)*

> *"[I have learned] how to engage with others in an authentic relational way." (DR2)*

> *"Sometimes I can let go of conversational style - of thinking my next thing to say instead of just listening." (DR3)*

One respondent mentioned that their **understanding of relationality** had evolved as a result of their practice.

> *"I had some important missing pieces in my understanding of how to relate to people that have been filled in by this practice. … Deep Relating filled in these conceptual 'missing links' and also offered me the opportunity to practice it, and get more skillful at it-- so I can call on it deliberately at other times as well." (DR2)*

Finally, respondents also said that their participation had given them insights into the **similarities and differences between their inner worlds and those of other people**, which they found helpful.

> *"[I have learned] that there are many ways of feeling around our current predicament." (DR3)*

> *"[I am] coming to understand the similarities in the internal dialogue of each of us that prevents connection." (DR4)*

Key enablers of learning and change

According to respondents, some important factors that enabled these changes to take place have included:

- **regular spaces** in which to practice these relational skills and forms of awareness, in the presence of other "collapse-aware" participants;

  > *"[This has been enabled by] simply being in a virtual room with others who are collapse aware (even when it doesn't come into our dialogue)." (DR4)*

- the **safety** of these spaces, enabling participants to be able to voice how they feel without fear of judgement;

  > *"[This has been enabled by] the 'safe enough' space to share exactly how I feel." (DR3)*

- the presence and skill of the **facilitators**;

  > *"I think the skill of the facilitators is largely to thank for feeling safe and secure and for this kind of experience to emerge. They set the intention so well and make the room 'pregnant' with expectation of meaningful*

> *engagment, which means it does come to pass, if participants are fully able to allow it." (DR1)*

- and finally, the **process and principles** underpinning Deep Relating itself.

> *"The principles and practice of deep relating support me to understand my own, and others', inner processes." (DR4)*

New actions or initiatives

As a result of their participation, two respondents said they were exploring **possibilities of connecting more deeply to others in their life,** be it through the practice of Deep Relating, or otherwise.

> *"Yes, I am investigating ways I can hold my own circle with my freinds/family, but this is just at the beginning stages and I feel i need more practice first!" (DR1)*

> *"I want… to find more relationships in my life where we connect on a 'relational' level." (DR2)*

For three respondents, their involvement in these circles had prompted them to **want to learn more about the practice** of Deep Relating or "circling," and **how to bring it to others.**

> *"Feeling interested in learning how to facilitate these spaces for others." (DR4)*

Finally, two respondents said their participation had made them **more interested in contributing to the Deep Adaptation community.**

> *"Feeling more connected to the DA community and therefore more confident to be more active in the community overall." (DR4)*

1.4 Respondents' degree of activity in DAF

One of the research questions this report aims to address is whether there were any noticeable differences in how respondents answered the GRS questionnaire based on their degree of involvement in DAF. What can we observe in this respect?

Earth Listening

In the EL group, most respondents (six out of eight) defined themselves as "active" participants or volunteers in DAF. A slightly distinguishing pattern I noticed had to do with answers to the question: "*Has the circle prompted you to set new goals and/or objectives for yourself in specific reference to your engagement with the process of Deep Adaptation or the DA Forum? If so, please tell us more."*

As a result of their involvement in the group, three of the active respondents mentioned engaging more deeply in the network, and three others said they had gotten involved in other initiatives beyond DAF (e.g. writing books, taking courses, or becoming engaged in anti-racism work).

The respondent who self-defined as an "occasional" participant or volunteer stated that the circle had "kept them connected to DAF," as they would otherwise have left the network. It had also made them want to change the focus of their paid work, for it to be more about environmental protection. As for the respondent who self-described as a “very occasional” participant or volunteer, they said they were reading more about Deep Adaptation to become better informed about it and gain a grounding in DAF.

Therefore, regardless of their self-assessed degree of involvement in DAF, EL respondents unanimously considered that the circle had proved a source of inspiration for further involvement in DAF or in their personal endeavours. Respondents more peripherally involved in DAF so far were also drawn to participate more deeply due to their attending these group sessions. The importance of these sessions in respondents’ lives also transpires from the regularity of their attendance: all of them said they had been to at least 20 EL sessions.

Business & Finance

I observed few differences in how the five BF respondents answered the questionnaire as regards their level of involvement in DAF. It may be worth mentioning that the only “active” respondent who took the questionnaire noticed that the norms of interaction in the BF group did not seem to strongly reflect the culture that is more prevalent in DAF at large; the same respondent also remarked on a pattern of gender inequality in the group, as they considered that male voices were dominant in BF conversations.

Only one respondent (self-described as an “occasional” DAF participant or volunteer) said they were seeking a deeper engagement in DAF as a result of the BF group activities.

Deep Relating

Of the four DR respondents, three were self-defined “active” DAF participants or volunteers, and one self-described as an “occasional” participant. It bears noticing that all three “active” respondents had attended more sessions than the “occasional” participant. The former all said they wanted to learn more about Deep Relating and circling, and how to facilitate these practices - while the latter said they were keen to start the practice with friends and family. In sum, all of these respondents were keen to explore the practice of Deep Relating further.

On top of this, two “active” respondents said they were also keen to increase their involvement in DAF as a result of the DR circles, which was not the case of the “occasional” respondent.

***

In sum, there were very few noticeable differences in how various respondents answered the GRS questionnaires depending on their degree of involvement in DAF.

Generally speaking, participation in the EL and DR groups seemed to correlate more strongly with an active involvement in DAF, and with a desire to become more deeply involved. Considering that most of the "active" respondents in both these groups had attended over 20 sessions (in EL) or over 5 sessions (in DR), it is possible that these groups played an important role in encouraging participants to become actively engaged in the network.

On the other hand, it appears that BF respondents were less likely to be actively involved in DAF, or to want to engage further in DAF as a result of their participation in the group.

2. The Radical Change Survey (RCS)

The RCS aimed at investigating the following research questions:

1. What do respondents consider to be the "radical collective change" that might be needed in the world nowadays?
2. Do respondents consider that participating in DAF has been part of bringing about such a change? If so, how?
3. Is the idea of "unlearning" relevant to respondents? If so, how do they understand the notion, and how do they view it as part of their experience of taking part in DAF?
4. Are there any differences in how respondents answer these questions, depending on their degree of involvement in DAF?

2.1 Radical collective change

First, it should be mentioned that the way the first question of the RCS questionnaire was framed purposefully invited respondents to take it as a given that radical collective change was needed in the world – and to engage in a thought experiment as to what might be the nature of such a change: "*Considering everything you know and feel about our global predicament - what, to you, is the radical collective change that is called for today? Feel free to define 'radical collective change' as you wish."*

In response to this framing, two respondents said that they didn't feel capable of answering the question. For both of them, this impossibility reflected a lack of conviction that they were able to bring about such change. One of them considered the question irrelevant, in part because they thought nothing may prevent generalised collapse from happening, and in part because they did not seem to view pursuing such change as being intrinsically worthwhile.

> *"I don't know- given what seems doable in my setting." (RC1)*

> *"I do not hear a calling for humanity, or the collective. My experience of our global, human-caused predicament is that we are on a non-stop fast track to human-caused collapse of Earth and Human Systems. It also seems like we are in that collapse now... with much more to come within one human lifetime. I cannot see or predict any collective change (radical or not) being activated at scale to change this trajectory in any way." (RC7)*

The 13 other respondents were more willing to engage in this thought experiment, regardless of their belief in the possibility of any radical collective change actually taking place. In fact, a third respondent made a point to voice their doubts:

> *"[What is needed is] reconnection, end of the Separation in its three main embraces: oneself, others and the Land. I do not need to explain this. Nor to explain why this is almost impossible to happen at a collective level. So much to unlearn, so many conditionings (internal and external) that make this change unrealistic." (RC8)*

I consider that respondents aspired to three main types of radical collective change:

- Orienting towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings;
- A transformative shift in worldviews and value systems; and
- A radical reshaping of political and economic structures.

I will examine each of these aspirations in turn.

- *Orienting towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings*

The predominant theme, referred to by nine respondents, had to do with **a new orientation towards collective and more compassionate ways of being and relating**.

This involved, first of all, human beings adopting a new way of being in the world, grounded in **loving kindness**.

> *"Greater compassion and more nuanced understanding of the diversity of human experience. Learning how to make room for that diversity with a joy of the uniqueness of us all and simultaneously honor our connection. It is true I am unique, and that's also true of everyone." (RC12)*

> *"What I use to guide my moment to moment decision-making is something I learned in my UU Church: Where is love calling me next?" (RC14)*

> *"Learning how (practically, emotionally, intellectually, creatively) to love everything - yes, even those really difficult bits!" (RC6)*

For two respondents, this also involved the creation or restoration of **fairer communities** around the world.

> *“To create collaborative, democratic, respectful, safe, just, equal communities, locally (where we live) and globally. These communities need to be based on equal livelihood for all--livelihood being the recognition that what is traditionally called the economy, society, and the eco-system are not separate. Individual humans are embedded in the ecosystem and how we relate to each other, as well as make a living cannot be separated. Thus, our understanding of the world, our relationships with others, and the way we make a living must all change, radically and collectively.” (RC13)*

One respondent also stressed the importance of acknowledging and working on issues of **grief and trauma** for any meaningful change to take place.

Another dimension of this new orientation also has to do with finding **a new attunement to other-than-humans and the Earth**, as well as a deeper understanding of **humanity’s place within the rest of the natural world**.

> *“Creating loving, creative and abundant local communities which are grounded in nature and a love of the earth.” (RC5)*

> *“The former story of normal requires harm on unimaginable scales, mostly hidden, that if we truly understood our place within nature we could no longer support or contribute towards.” (RC4)*

> *“Learning to listen, and trust, the quiet voices that whisper at us from within, and even more so (as it is more difficult to attune to), from without.” (RC11)*

- *A transformative shift in worldviews and value systems*

The second major theme that I identified, and which was mentioned by six respondents, was about **transforming dominant ways of seeing the world and finding meaning**.

> *“From Consuming to Creating. From Stuff to Meaning... From Biggerment to Gratitude. From Instant Gratification to prioritising what's most important.” (RC2)*

> *“All humans currently engaging in modernity need to unpack our view of how society should be ; assumptions of privileges, assumptions about other human's place in our world - the view or map we have.” (RC3)*

In particular, several respondents noted that this epistemological shift involved **truth-telling**, in order to **reach a recognition of the deep flaws, injustice and destructiveness permeating modern societies**, as a result of ignorance, denial and inertia.

> *“Radical collective change would be remaking society in a different way (still undreamed of, and still being imagined) by reeducating ourselves and enabling our children to imagine and build everything differently, not force them into the current, destructive and unworkable structures of technocracy, capitalistism, colonisation, white supremacy, patriarchy.” (RC3)*

> *"We need to undergo a paradigm shift in understanding. One that makes us see that the 'normal' world we live in is anything but, to the contrary, it's 'abnormal'." (RC4)*

> *"Iain McGilchrist says that the left-hemisphere has taken hold of society, even though it's supposed to serve the right-hemisphere's priorities. So, the most radical form of collective change would be to restore the balance in favor of the right-hemisphere. I would say that any step in that direction would be radical to some extent." (RC15)*

Two respondents mentioned that this shift in understanding should fundamentally be about **modern humans de-centering themselves**, and **embracing a less arrogant, more biocentric perspective.**

- *A radical reshaping of political and economic structures*

Finally, five respondents also referred to **deep changes in the economic and political systems that structure modern-day societies**. While two of them seemed open to the possibility of such changes being enacted at a **global or systemic level**, and thus presumably as a result of revolutionary change and new policies, three others spoke rather to a renewed reliance on **local, autonomous and democratic communities**, and a withdrawal from more systemic concerns.

> *"Abandoning trust in Government and taking back the authority we have given them as they are proven to be incompetent and corrupt. How to do this: create the communities we want a a grass roots micro level, almost to the point of ignoring national and global politics..." (RC5)*

> *"A refusal to carry on participating in, and contributing to, the destructive consumerist, individualistic, capitalist way of life which we're hypnotised into." (RC9)*

> *"I'd like to see everyone's basic needs met. Of course, this presupposes the elimination of capitalism. When I think about the climate predicament, what comes to me is the phrase 'extend the glide' i.e., don't stop flying the plane even though the engines have failed." (RC14)*

2.2 DAF and radical collective change

The second question in the RCS questionnaire was: "*Do you sense that your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum might be part of such change taking place, or might have been, to any extent? If so, how? If not, why?"*

Only one respondent said that they didn't consider their participation had been a factor of radical collective change. However, they also made it clear they viewed it as possible that this might happen eventually.

“Yes, it can be. But it hasn’t yet. I am working on it :)” (RC15)

Three others expressed uncertainty, and a willingness to consider the possibility.

“Not sure... I see DAF as being one example of how people are shifting their priorities - but still so far from 'mainstream'.” (RC2)

“Possibly. I’m still finding my way around the Forum.” (RC14)

As for the 11 respondents who answered the question more positively, I see their replies as falling into two main categories, which often overlap:

- Respondents considering that DAF has been useful to help bring about the radical collective change they had in mind;
- Respondents considering that through their involvement in DAF, they had been able to help bring about some of this change.

- *DAF as a space helping to facilitate radical collective change*

Ten respondents spoke positively of DAF as a network helping to bring about radical collective change. For seven of them, this was due to DAF being a space offering its participants **mutual support, care, courage, and validation** in pursuit of the difference they are trying to make – be it in terms of personal learning, grief transformation, or practical endeavours.

“I regularly see gratitude from members for having found the space and like minded group of people with which [they] can try to make sense [of] their feelings.” (RC4)

“I think [DAF] does help to give people the courage to (sometimes gradually, sometimes quickly) extract themselves from that lifestyle - in whole or in part. By participating in a community where collapse-awareness is normalised, we become more able to carry that worldview out into our own localities.” (RC9)

“I've gotten warm personal support for a local community building project.” (RC13)

Three respondents also mentioned being **inspired by other DAF participants**, and finding the **general ethos in the network** useful to them and others personally.

“I am also learning from other participants in meetings and calls, people I feel are already embodying some of this change.” (RC3)

“The DA framing we use to maintain the 'shape' of the discussion space helps most people along their own journey it would seem. It did for me…” (RC4)

“Yes. DA has informed my awareness & thinking. I don't engage in the gatherings, but DA thinking shows up in our collective (my bipoc group, which has evolved again) consciousness.” (RC10)

For five respondents, DAF has also been helpful as a space in which they found **important information and insights.**

> *"I'm discovering ways in which my mind has been colonized by the profit-making, capitalist system… I've been learning new tools (both digital tech as well as social interaction) which are useful in local community-building where I live. Many discussions alert me to new readings and new learning." (RC13)*

> *"I've appreciated the helpful things I've learned with regard to practical adaption." (RC14)*

- *Helping to create radical collective change by taking part in DAF*

Eight respondents said that their participation in DAF had **enabled them to bring about some measure of the change** they were seeking – or at least, **to attempt doing so, and to practice with others** in view of embodying this change or seeing it materialising more widely at a certain point in time.

> *"I do focus on presenting views around the way I see us having to change, when I comment or post in the forum." (RC3)*

> *"My participation has [been] part of that change. Our conversations have informed my work and my being and my tiny contribution to that change - in combination with everyone else's - has been bigger and better because of my involvement in DAF (and many others things, of course). We had the right conversations at the right time, in many places at once." (RC6)*

> *"Yes, to a tiny extent. Through who I am (or rather, who I am seen to seem yo be) and through what I do ([Deep] Relating, Death Cafés, Work that reconnects, articles, talks, exchanges). I believe I have had a deep influence on just a couple of people and maybe inspired a few more to explore further into who we are and what we do." (RC8)*

> *"Yes, I do believe it is. My participation in the Diversity & Decolonising Circle is a contribution to that." (RC12)*

> *"I'm able to practice interacting with loving kindness with people as we discuss serious psychological, social, and other kinds of issues." (RC13)*

Two respondents made special reference to the **qualities of other participants** they encountered in DAF as being an important factor of this change.

> *"I feel that my encounter with the deep generosity and care amongst the DA volunteers, had immensely supported me in making a radical change, which is just beggining to get underway. Potentialy, it may have a much greater impact then where i was acting before." (RC11)*

"Yes to the degree that I think DAF members are naturally responsive to local initiatives and community." (RC5)

2.3 DAF and unlearning

The third and final open-ended question in the RCS questionnaire was: "*Do you sense you might have 'unlearned' anything as a result of your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum? If so, what might this be, and why did it happen?*"

I focus here on the notion of unlearning as it has been explored within the field of postcolonial and decolonial studies (e.g. Spivak, 1988; Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012). Drawing inspiration from a social cartography proposed by a group of authors active in these fields (Andreotti et al., 2018, pp. 23–34; Machado de Oliveira, 2021), I have found most useful to group respondents' very diverse answers to this question into three broad themes (or "layers" of unlearning) that appear to speak to the depth of the unlearning that they state has taken place for them:

- Ways of doing;
- Ways of knowing, imagining, and evaluating legitimacy;
- Ways of being, desiring, hoping, relating, and existing in the world.[3]

Importantly, I do not consider these categories as mutually exclusive. In fact, I found that the answers of almost every respondent contained elements which belonged to several of these. Besides, some answers were rather pithy or unspecific, which often made their categorisation problematic.

- *Ways of doing (methodology)*

The methodological layer of unlearning speaks to **changes in respondents' ways of carrying out certain activities,** or to their adoption of **new behaviours**, without necessarily implying deeper transformations in their self-awareness, value system, or worldview.

Five respondents mentioned embracing new ways of doing, and unlearning such habits as:

"Solo working" (RC1)

"Rescuing other people" (RC2)

[3] I am conscious that this social cartography, as presented by its authors, does not refer explicitly to a process of unlearning, but rather maps different types of critiques of the current global system and analyses of contemporary crises, as well as the kinds of responses or alternatives that are being offered as a result of these critiques or analyses. However, my understanding is that to move from one layer of critique to a deeper one implies, in itself, a willingness to unlearn various assumptions and other cognitive or affective structures limiting one's capacity to perceive or grapple with deeper systemic roots of the global predicament. Therefore, this social cartography appears helpful to me as a way to chart how respondents perceive the personal changes they have undergone with regards to their involvement in DAF.

“To speak less and listen more” (RC8)

“Unlearning some of the quick decision-making that made me 'successful' in the financial services business” (RC9)

“I have unlearned my reluctance to talk openly about collapse.” (RC15)

- *Ways of knowing, imagining, and evaluating legitimacy (epistemology)*

Beyond doing things differently, the epistemological layer of unlearning speaks to **changes in respondents’ ways of thinking about themselves, others, and the world.** This includes a deeper attention to historical and systemic inequalities, and one’s implication in such hierarchies and distributions of power, wealth, and labour – but also, “how our dominant frames of reference favour certain ways of knowing over others and thereby determine was is intelligible, desirable, and imaginable” (Machado de Oliveira, 2021, loc.2065). In other words, this is about rediscovering and reconsidering “*what* and *how* we know – and how we might know *differently”* (ibid.). This extends to examining the narratives that support one’s self-understanding or worldview, as well as what kinds of knowledge are more useful than others.

Nine respondents spoke to forms of unlearning that seem to correspond with this broad category of change.

For three of them, unlearning took place with regards to issues of **racism, colonisation, and other forms of systemic injustice** – which two respondents attributed to their engagement with the DAF Diversity and Decolonising Circle.

“I have been unpacking racism and colonised thought patterns and beliefs, since participating in the work of the Diversity Circle, specifically, and feel a lot of unlearning on those topics has happened.” (RC3)

“My work in the Diversity & Decolonising Circle has opened my eyes to many aspects of systemic injustice. This is an unlearning of numbness and avoidance.” (RC12)

Two others spoke to finding more comfort with **uncertainty and not-knowing**.

“I have unlearned: believing I have the answers, feeling I need a map.” (RC2)

One respondent also mentioned unlearning to “[value] product over process and relationship” as well as “human-centred thinking,” while another spoke to unlearning to be “dismissive of [their] own grief over the Climate Predicament.”

For another respondent, their engagement in DAF had led them to **stop believing in the power of experts** to exert systemic change:

> *"I now consider that the source of power is with the individual, whereas before I used to respect 'experts' and sought higher level change. I no longer think that is possible or want to advocate for that." (RC5)*

Finally, two respondents mentioned shifts in their **perception of the world and humanity,** particularly with regards to the magnitude and complexity of the global predicament. For one of them, this took the form of a **disillusionment with the human species** and its capacity to collectively transform for the greater good.

> *"I'm seeing how deeply entrenched and interlinked many of societies and our civilisations are." (RC4)*

> *"I may have unlearned some of my lifelong assumptions about how humans at their core are caring and wise enough to be curious and introspective and rally to change our ecocidal ways and create a new way of being on this lovely planet… I have come to see that collectively we do not have sufficient care, curiosity or introspection. We have disconnected from our primary sources of meaning and relationship in human life." (RC7)*

- *Ways of being, desiring, hoping, relating, and existing in the world (ontology)*

The third and final layer of unlearning refers to **ways of existing differently.** Beyond examining what one does, and how and what one thinks, unlearning of this type is about "who and what we are (beyond what or who we think we are), the conditions for us to be and to understand being that way, the nature of reality (time, space, conscience, and being), and how we could relate to the world and experience coexistence differently" (Machado de Oliveira, 2021, loc.2106). This kind of unlearning might enable one to relinquish harmful habits of being and relating (instead of merely seeking more useful knowledge to fix specific issues), and to question "the desires for and limits of trying to fix the present for an imagined future on behalf of a supposedly universal humanity" (ibid.).

Ontological unlearning is a reconfiguring of one's experience and understanding of reality, self, consciousness, time, space, change, life, and death. It invites us to relinquish the desires and hopes that constrain our imagination, preventing new possibilities from emerging – and to consider that only by reimagining our existence can the violence of the current system we are entangled with come to an end. It may be fostered by collective experimentation, improvisation and reflexivity.

Eight respondents mentioned instances of change that may correspond to such unlearning, or at least, to aspirations thereof. Overwhelmingly, these descriptions of unlearning concern new forms of relationality.

Five of them spoke about letting go, or having let go, of **certain ways of relating to other people**. In particular, several of these mentioned an increased capacity to be **more**

tolerant or compassionate towards others whose opinions, behaviours or values they disagreed with.

> *"I have unlearned the need I had, to respond forcefully/authoritively, to provocative intellectual statements, and rather connect with the person making the statement." (RC3)*

> *"I'm unlearning 'othering' too, which is so solidly hard-wired in our culture that it's no small task and will probably be a long journey." (RC4)*

> *"Much of it is beyond words but I have certainly unlearned my hatred of evil, my impatience with wrongness, the way that I understood someone 'being difficult' who I now see as 'in pain'…" (RC6)*

> *"I am able to honor myself and be compassionate to where other people are at; as well as finding ways to speak out. This happened through participation in the Deep [Listening] event, at first, and then was supported by the culture in DAF." (RC12)*

> *"Practicing loving kindness every time I've interacted on DAF, has helped me practice letting go of anger and annoyance in my daily life--when I hear about, read about, or experience thoughtless, hateful, or even evil behavior. I more easily practice curiosity about the person's mindset, feelings, needs." (RC13)*

Another relational shift occurred for another respondent, who mentioned "revisit[ing] our relationship with the Land as a living sacred entity."

Three other respondents referred to changes in their way of **relating to their own selves,** which for one of them involved developing more **somatic self-awareness**.

> *"I'm not the same person I was when I found DA... I'm letting go of old parts of myself that don't serve me well." (RC4)*

> *"I am in the process [of] unlearning to rely less in the Mind and more in the Body." (RC8)*

Finally, two people made more general mentions of **changes in their beliefs and their orientation to trust and hope**, which appear to have had an important impact on certain dimensions of their self-image or identity.

> *"I re-membered to trust. Perhaps it is a kind of unlearning… To take apart that which formed some of my core [beliefs], in a very painful process, and discard some of my attachments. The result of which is a new booming." (RC11)*

> *"I think I've unlearned hope and the nagging inauthenticity that had accompanied it for so many years. This happened because I felt supported in being myself." (RC14)*

2.4 Response patterns and variations between respondents

What are some similarities and differences between respondents, depending on their answers to Questions 1, 2, and 3? Do their level of involvement in DAF affect how they answered these questions?

In order to investigate such matters, I carried out a transversal analysis of respondents' answers. That is to say, I examined how their answer to a certain question may exhibit narrative coherence with their answer to one or several other questions.

I will first examine the connection between the main categories of aspirations voiced by respondents, and their perception of DAF with regards to these aspirations. Then, I will turn to respondents' self-assessed unlearning, and examine how it may relate to their aspirations and to the role of DAF in helping to materialise such aspirations.

- *Does DAF enable its participants to bring about radical collective change?*

Eight respondents aspired to radical collective change as **a new orientation towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings.** Of these, seven considered that DAF had been helpful in bringing about such a change, and five considered that their own activities in DAF had also been a small part of this change materialising.

Nearly all of these respondents said this had happened thanks to DAF being **a caring and supportive community**, with whom to initiate this shift and practice new ways of being and relating. One person also mentioned the importance of the various **relational modalities** that are being practised in DAF.

> *"My participation has [been] part of that change. Our conversations have informed my work and my being and my tiny contribution to that change - in combination with everyone else's - has been bigger and better because of my involvement in DAF (and many others things, of course). We had the right conversations at the right time, in many places at once." (RC6)*

> *"Yes, to a tiny extent. Through who I am (or rather, who I am seen to seem yo be) and through what I do ([Deep] Relating, Death Cafés, Work that reconnects, articles, talks, exchanges). I believe I have had a deep influence on just a couple of people and maybe inspired a few more to explore further into who we are and what we do." (RC8)*

For six respondents, radical collective change should involve **a transformative shift in worldviews and value systems.** Four of them have found DAF helpful in facilitating such a shift, but only one person considered that they had contributed to such change taking place through their participation.

The two main reasons mentioned by these respondents for the usefulness of DAF in this regard were, on the one hand, the value of DAF as **a community of like-minded others**, and the presence of others embodying this change in worldviews whom one could emulate; and on the

other hand, the value of the **Deep Adaptation framing and ethos,** as helpful guidelines for this shift.

> *"I do focus on presenting views around the way I see us having to change, when I comment or post in the forum, I am also learning from other participants in meetings and calls, people I feel are already embodying some of this change." (RC3)*

> *"The DA framing we use to maintain the 'shape' of the discussion space helps most people along their own journey it would seem." (RC4)*

Finally, of the five respondents who aspired to a **radical reshaping of political and economic structures**, four considered that DAF had been helpful in facilitating such changes, and two also said that DAF had enabled them to contribute towards such change.

The reasons given by respondents largely revolved around the network as a helpful place in which to find **knowledge and resources** for local forms of community-building, as well as the **courage or inspiration** to disengage from mainstream ways of life.

> *"I've been learning new tools (both digital tech as well as social interaction) which are useful in local community-building where I live. Many discussions alert me to new readings and new learning. I've gotten warm personal support for a local community building project." (RC13)*

> *"I think it does help to give people the courage to (sometimes gradually, sometimes quickly) extract themselves from that lifestyle - in whole or in part. By participating in a community where collapse-awareness is normalised, we become more able to carry that worldview out into our own localities." (RC9)*

- *Do respondents view their own unlearning as contributing to radical collective change taking place in DAF?*

Let us now examine the connections (or narrative coherence) that may transpire between the answers respondents give to the three different questions in RCS. I will do this for each pair of questions:

- Between Q1 and Q2: narrative coherence means that one's involvement in DAF is at least partly helping to bring about the radical collective change one is aspiring to (which I examined above);
- Between Q1 and Q3: narrative coherence means that one's unlearning is at least partly helping to bring about the radical collective change one is aspiring to;
- Between Q2 and Q3: narrative coherence means that one's unlearning is at least partly related to the radical collective change that DAF might be enabling.

For each respondent, I sorted each pair of questions based on three different degrees of coherence:

- Clear coherence (i.e. there is a strong connection between one's answer to one question and the other question in the pair);
- Possible coherence;
- No coherence.

See an example of this form of analysis in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Narrative coherence analysis of a respondent's answers to pairs of questions

	Answers (excerpts)	**Coherence degree**
Q1 & Q2	Q1: *"[Radical collective change should be about] Abandoning trust in Government and taking back the authority we have given them as they are proven to be incompetent and corrupt. How to do this: create the communities we want at a grass roots micro level…"* Q2: *"[DAF helps to bring about this change because] I think DAF members are naturally responsive to local initiatives and community."*	**Clear coherence** (DAF helps to create the communities that are needed to bring about radical collective change)
Q1 & Q3	Q1: *"[Radical collective change should be about] Abandoning trust in Government and taking back the authority we have given them as they are proven to be incompetent and corrupt. How to do this: create the communities we want at a grass roots micro level…"* Q3: *"[What I have unlearned is that] I now consider that the source of power is with the individual, whereas before I used to respect 'experts' and sought higher level change. I no longer think that is possible or want to advocate for that."*	**Clear coherence** (respondent unlearned their trust and reliance on governments and experts, who are unable to create radical collective change)
Q2 & Q3	Q2: *"[DAF helps to bring about this change because] I think DAF members are naturally responsive to local initiatives and community."* Q3: *"[What I have unlearned is that] I now consider that the source of power is with the individual, whereas before I used to respect 'experts' and sought higher level change. I no longer think that is possible or want to advocate for that."*	**Possible coherence** (respondent's unlearning process may be related to DAF's role in enabling radical collective change)

From this analysis, I identified 3 groups of respondents:

- Group 1: Clear coherence between answers to at least two different pairs of questions;
- Group 2: Possible coherence between answers to at least two different pairs of questions;
- Group 3: No coherence between answers to at least two different pairs of questions.

For respondents from Groups 1 and 2, I took note of the themes connecting answers to two different questions by logically articulating them. See an overview of these groups in **Annex 3.**

I will now present an overview of each of these three groups of respondents.

GROUP 1

Seven respondents (47% of total) belong to this group. For them, there tends to be a clear coherence between their aspirations for radical collective change, DAF's potential role in facilitating that change, and the unlearning they consider they have experienced in DAF. In other words, **these respondents seemed to trust that their own process of unlearning had been (or was being) part of bringing about radical collective change, and that this change was facilitated by DAF.**

Of these, only two respondents showed clear coherence between all three pairs of questions. For both of these respondents, their involvement in the DAF Diversity and Decolonising Circle (D&D) was a key connecting theme in their replies. They expressed that participating in D&D, with others whom they appreciated, had been an important factor of unlearning (around issues of "systemic injustice," but also "colonised thought patterns and beliefs" as well as "numbness and avoidance"); and their participation was part of creating the radical collective change they were aspiring to in the world (towards more appreciation of human diversity and connection, and the dismantling of harmful assumptions and mental patterns).

For other respondents, clear coherence tended to exist between Q1 and Q2 and between Q1 and Q3, but only possible coherence between Q2 and Q3.

Among the connecting themes that Group 1 respondents mentioned in their answers are the following:

- DAF is helping to create a paradigm shift in understanding, by supporting people in awakening to the crisis, processing their grief, and being more conscious of the entrenched social and mental structures perpetuating harm;

- DAF participants are helping one another to engage in more local community-building, and to unlearn their reliance on experts or governments;
- One's involvement as a volunteer facilitator of DA processes can help one to unlearn the separation between self, others, and the land;
- Practising loving kindness in DAF spaces and learning about community-building may help participants to co-create fairer communities locally and globally, by developing more tolerance and curiosity.

All respondents from Group 1 self-described as "active participants or volunteers," except for one "occasional" participant.

In their answers to Q1, 71% of Group 1 respondents had aspirations for radical social change that would bring about a new orientation towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings (compared with 29% of them aspiring to a transformative shift in worldviews and value systems, and another 29% aspiring to a radical reshaping of political and economic structures).

And in their answers to Q3, Group 1 respondents were equally likely to mention forms of epistemological or ontological unlearning (both 71%), and unlikely to mention methodological unlearning (14%).

GROUP 2

Four respondents belonged to this group (27% of total). For them, coherence between their answers to the three pairs of questions was possible, but uncertain - generally due to a lack of specific details in their answers. **Such respondents may have believed that their own process of unlearning had been part of bringing about radical collective change, facilitated by DAF, but didn't make a clear case in this regard; or they may have been uncertain about the extent to which this may have been the case.**

Some the connecting themes that respondents mentioned are as follows:

- Conversations in DAF may have been helping participants to become better able at learning to love everything, and perhaps to develop more tolerance;
- The DA framework may be enabling people to become less arrogant and more skilled at relinquishment and accepting death;
- The mutual care and generosity in DAF spaces may help people to let go of their attachments and unpick some core beliefs, and thereby to enact radical changes in their lives;
- The relational support within DAF may enable one to let go of the attachment to hope when this attachment has become inauthentic.

Group 2 was composed of one "active," two "occasional," and one "rare" DAF participants or volunteers.

In their answers to Q1, Group 2 respondents were similar to Group 1, in that their aspirations for radical social change were largely about bring about a new orientation towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings. However, in their answers to Q3, Group 2 respondents only mentioned having experienced forms of ontological unlearning.

GROUP 3

Finally, Group 3 included five respondents (33% of total). These were respondents whose answers showed little to no coherence between the three question pairs. This does not mean they did not experience any unlearning, nor that they considered DAF irrelevant with regards to radical collective change. Rather, **their answers did not seem to imply that they saw their participation in DAF as having brought about unlearning that may have been congruent with the radical collective change they might have been seeking (if any).**

For example, one respondent from this group expressed they were not aspiring to, nor expecting, any radical collective change, and another said they didn't know what such change might look like. Yet another found that DAF gave people the courage to extract themselves from destructive lifestyles, and that it could therefore help bring about radical collective change in the shape of more local, collapse-aware communities; however, they did not mention having undergone any unlearning corresponding to this aspiration.

Interestingly, Group 3 was composed of four "active" and one "rare" DAF participants or volunteers. This might indicate that the idea of radical collective change is not necessarily more important or relevant for DAF participants who are more actively involved in the network, and that people take part in DAF for other reasons, or following other aspirations.

In their answers to Q1, Group 3 respondents who expressed views on radical collective change were twice more likely (60%) to aspire for a transformative shift in worldviews and value systems than in Groups 1 or 2, and to aspire to a radical reshaping of political and economic structures (40%). Strikingly, none of their answers signalled a wish for a new orientation towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings.

As for their answers to Q3, all Group 3 respondents save one (80%) mentioned having undergone methodological forms of unlearning, and the same number mentioned epistemological unlearning, but none of them spoke of ontological unlearnings.

Summary: Comparing Groups 1, 2 and 3

Comparing the response patterns between the three groups above is of limited explanatory power, considering the relatively small group sizes (7 respondents for Group 1,

4 respondents for Group 2, and 5 respondents for Group 3). However, several interesting patterns distinguishing them from one another are still worth noting.

As mentioned above, Group 1 respondents' answers display the most coherence between their aspirations for radical collective change, their perception of DAF as enabling some of this change, and their own experience of unlearning as being part of bringing about this change. Besides, all Group 1 respondents who self-defined as actively involved in DAF laid an emphasis in Q2 on **their own involvement in creating radical collective change within DAF** (compared to 2 out of 4 respondents in Group 2, and none in Group 3), although they often qualified this emphasis by stating that this change had happened on a small scale. Therefore, it would seem that these respondents feel **a greater sense of agency in helping to bring about this change through their experience of unlearning.**

Secondly, respondents in Groups 1 and 2 were likely to have similar aspirations for radical collective change, with a strong preference for a new orientation towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings. However, in their answers to Q3, Group 1 respondents were much more likely to mention having experienced epistemological unlearning. Group 2 respondents were also less likely to consider themselves actively involved in DAF.

From this, I am led to conjecture that while Group 1 and Group 2 respondents are quite similar in their general motivations, **Group 1 respondents might have spent more time in DAF, and their involvement as volunteers and perhaps regular attendance of certain groups (such as EL, BF or DR) could have enabled them to experience more epistemological unlearning (on top of their ontological unlearning).** This, in turn, could have made them develop more confidence in DAF's relevance to radical collective change.

Thirdly, Group 3 respondents had very different aspirations than in Groups 1 and 2. They were **keener for radical collective change to take the shape of shifting worldviews and value systems, or of economic and political transformations.** Besides, most respondents from this group seemed **less interested in the question of radical collective change overall**, or if they viewed the concept as relevant, it was usually not in alignment with their experiences of unlearning within DAF. None of Group 3 respondents said they had undergone ontological forms of unlearning, which coincides with a much lower interest in radical collective change taking the form of a new orientation towards connection, loving kindness, and compassion towards all living beings.

3. Discussion and conclusion

How do the combined results of both surveys (GRS and RCS) help to answer the research questions investigated in this report?

1. What radical collective changes do DAF participants consider worth pursuing (if any), in view of our global predicament?

A first aim of this report aimed at investigating the radical collective change (or changes) that DAF participants consider worth pursuing (if any), in view of the global predicament. The results of the RCS questionnaire are enlightening in this respect. I found that respondents who aspired to radical collective change and had ideas on what it may look like mostly referred to three main themes.

The main theme covered aspects of change I have been referring to as "orienting towards connection and loving kindness and compassion for all living beings." Change of this sort is about fostering reconnection and new ways of being and relating based on loving kindness and compassion, between human beings, as well as between humans and other-than-humans, the land or planet Earth. It also includes addressing issues of grief and trauma. In other words, this kind of change is about overcoming separation and "othering."[4]

The second most important theme is one I dubbed "a transformative shift in worldviews and value systems." This category of change is about deeply reconfiguring how we humans – or at least, those of us living in modern industrial societies – see ourselves in the world, including anthropogenic impacts on the biosphere as well as systemic forms of injustice and domination running through our societies. Following such a change in mindsets and values would involve facing these hard truths, and relinquishing important assumptions of innocence as well as habits of arrogance and anthropocentrism.

The third theme was one I termed "a radical reshaping of political and economic structures." This type of change covered various areas of global political and economic governance, and mostly featured abandoning the reliance on long supply chains and the infinite growth paradigm, in order to ensure everyone may have their basic needs met. The topic of building local and autonomous grassroots communities, in a spirit of fairness and equity, came to the fore as an alternative to these unfair global systems.

Considering these three themes, it is perhaps unsurprising that the first one was mentioned by the most respondents. Indeed, much of the discursive framing underlying the purpose of DAF has to do with promoting loving kindness, and most RCS respondents were active DAF participants or volunteers (therefore, presumably aligned with the network's overall purpose).[5] DAF participants have also initiated several groups and projects within the network that have aimed at addressing the second theme, such as the Diversity and Decolonising Circle, or the Earth Listening Circle. But efforts to address the

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4 See Bendell and Carr, 2021

5 DAF's mission statement, since the creation of the network, contains the phrase "enabling and embodying loving responses to our predicament." See also Bendell and Carr, 2019 - https://jembendell.com/2019/03/17/the-love-in-deep-adaptation-a-philosophy-for-the-forum/

third theme have been comparatively less prevalent in the network, with exceptions such as discussions in the Business and Finance group, or various conversations on the topic of local community-building activities.

In other words, respondents' answers to the RCS questionnaire tend to confirm their adherence to the network's explicit goal of fostering new forms of relationality as a key response to the global predicament. They also displayed some attention to the need for important changes in worldviews and value systems, and – to a lesser extent – to addressing global economic and political dimensions.

It is also important to note that several respondents, most of whom self-identified as actively involved in DAF, did not seem to find the idea of radical collective change relevant, or had nothing to say about what such change might look like. Although this may be an issue of language (with regards to how the first question of the RCS survey was phrased), this could indicate that participants may choose to be actively involved in DAF regardless of any wishes or expectations for social change.

2. Do DAF participants consider that their involvement in DAF groups has been part of initiating such changes? If so, what may have enabled these changes? If not, what may have prevented them from taking place?

Answers to Question 2 of the RCS show that a majority of respondents who aspired to radical collective change considered that DAF had helped bring about some of this change, at least to a small extent. This was true for all three categories of change mentioned above, although in the case of economic and political change, DAF seems to have been most helpful in the area of local community-building – a set of activities whose relevance to global economic and political change is debatable.

The main factors mentioned by RCS respondents as having enabled such changes to take place include:

- A caring, supportive community;
- Useful relational modalities practised in the network;
- A community of like-minded others to emulate;
- The use of the Deep Adaptation framing and ethos within the network;
- Access to useful information and resources;
- Finding courage and inspiration by interacting with other DAF participants.

It is important to note that by and large, when asked to describe how DAF may have helped to bring about forms of radical collective change, respondents have tended to lay a strong

emphasis on individual changes they experienced themselves as exemplars (with less emphasis on collective changes). Nonetheless, to the extent that respondents' aspirations for radical change had many areas of overlap, and that most of them considered DAF had enabled such changes to take place, it seems safe to point to a shared confidence in respondents that radical collective change had been taking place thanks to DAF.

3. What are some meaningful personal or collective changes that participants report having experienced, as part of their involvement in DAF or DAF groups? Do some groups appear to bring about deeper changes than others? If so, why?

The results of the GRS questionnaire throw some light onto DAF participants' experience of engagement within three different social learning spaces in the network: the Earth Listening circle (EL), the Business and Finance group (BF), and the Deep Relating circles (DR).

The low number of responses to the questionnaire for the BF and DR groups makes it difficult to be categorical in my conclusions, and further research is needed to confirm these results. However, it appears that participants in the EL and DR groups have experienced more impactful personal changes than participants in BF.

Through their involvement, EL participants report having found new ways of being and relating (particularly with regards to other-than-humans and the natural world), as well as more self-understanding and personal healing, and developed more confidence in practising their truth. Similarly, DR participants said they had found more confidence and self-acceptance, more self-understanding and personal growth, as well as finding fulfilment, and that they had become better able to be present with and relate to others. In other words, participants in these two groups appear to have mostly experienced various changes in their relational skills and awareness.

These respondents also mentioned having started new projects or initiatives as a result of their involvement; having found more clarity as to how to shape their home or work life; and having decided to engage more deeply in DAF.

In contrast, BF participants reported more changes in their understanding of the global predicament, including becoming better acquainted with more systemic approaches and perspectives, as well as insights on issues of systemic oppression. They also encountered new tools, resources and projects through their participation. These changes appear to be largely of a cognitive and methodological nature.

Some BF respondents also mentioned changes occurring in their professional life or community activities as a result of their involvement, but to a lesser extent than in the EL and DR groups.

With regards to factors enabling these changes to take place, respondents' answers in all three groups displayed important areas of overlap. Most frequently mentioned were:

- Finding like-minded others with whom to speak openly on important and sensitive issues;
- Being with these others in a safe enough space, in which to build trust, thanks to clear principles of engagement;
- The presence of trusted facilitators and organisers initiating these groups;
- The use of specific relational processes and modalities, particularly those bringing attention to dimensions of the self that are usually ignored;
- The regularity of meetings, which help to create a feeling of continuity.

Many similarities can be found between these enabling factors and those mentioned by respondents to the RCS questionnaire, with respect to bringing about radical collective change.

Two disabling factors were also mentioned as having occasionally emerged:

- Less attention to certain modes of relational engagement ordinarily practised in DAF;
- Patterns of systemic injustice, such as men speaking over women.

From these results, it appears that the two groups (EL and DR) in which respondents experienced the most impactful personal changes (of a relational nature) are also the groups whose activities and purpose correspond most closely to the main category of radical collective change sought after by respondents to the RCS questionnaire. This could indicate a common perception, among active DAF participants (representing the majority of RCS respondents), that forms of relational change such as those sought in groups like EL and DR are most critical in order to bring about radical collective change.

In considering these findings, it is important to remember the factors distinguishing the EL, BF and DR groups. In particular, it is possible that factors such as the way in which each group or circle was initiated and is run (e.g. as a weekly session focused on practising a particular form of modality, as opposed to an occasional gathering), or the presence of certain regular attendees (as opposed to irregular attendance) play an important role with regards to the depth and richness of (un)learning that participants may experience in these social learning spaces.

Annex 4 shows an overview of attendance details for all three groups. According to this data, participants in the sessions organised by the EL and DR groups meet two to four times more frequently than those attending BF meetings, and have two to three times more regular participants than the latter. In view of the contrasting reports from these three groups, it therefore seems that more frequent meetings, with a wider group of committed participants, correlate with deeper social learning.

4. Is the idea of unlearning relevant to DAF participants' experience of involvement in DAF groups? If so, what role does this idea play in how participants articulate their experience of involvement?

Results of both the RCS and the GRS questionnaires show that the idea of unlearning is indeed relevant to the great majority of these survey respondents.

I have found that in RCS, three main categories of unlearning were mentioned:

- Ways of doing (methodological);
- Ways of knowing, imagining, and evaluating legitimacy (epistemological);
- Ways of being, desiring, hoping, relating, and existing in the world (ontological).[6]

Respondents to the GRS questionnaire, too, mentioned various forms of relinquishment and unlearning. However, because the context of this questionnaire differs from that of RCS (i.e. the questionnaire is about a particular group rather than DAF at large), it is difficult to group these answers following the RCS typology.

A noteworthy finding is that for nearly half of RCS respondents, instances of unlearning are explicitly mentioned as part of the process by which these respondents view themselves as contributing to bringing about some of the radical collective change they aspire to, through their involvement in DAF. Therefore, for these respondents – who are mostly actively involved in DAF – the unlearning they are experiencing (or have experienced) appears to play an important role within their theory of change: in their answers, DAF is depicted as a network that enables people to relinquish unhelpful ideas, worldviews, ways of relating or behaviours, and thereby to take part in a process of collective change. It also seems that through this process of unlearning, these respondents experience a greater sense of agency in helping to bring about this change.

It is also important to bear in mind that for these respondents, epistemological and ontological forms of unlearning seem to have been prevalent. In other words, they view processes of orienting towards loving kindness and compassion, and transforming worldviews, as most relevant from the point of view of radical collective change. This might have been favoured by their involvement in certain DAF groups such as EL, BF or DR.

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[6] It may appear that this typology mirrors the three forms of aspiration towards radical collective change I identified above. However, this is only true to an extent. While ontological unlearning seems congruent with "orienting towards connection and loving kindness and compassion for all living beings," and epistemological unlearning corresponds with "a transformative shift in worldviews and value systems," the methodological forms of unlearning mentioned by respondents remain firmly in the realm of individual behaviour and everyday practice, and orders of magnitude beyond the "radical economic and political transformations" which I view as the third main type of radical collective change aspired to by RCS respondents.

5. Are there any differences in participants' views of radical collective change, personal change, and unlearning, depending on their degree of involvement in DAF?

The results of the GRS survey show that there were very few noticeable differences in how various respondents answered the GRS questionnaires depending on their degree of involvement in DAF. Likewise, for respondents to the RCS questionnaire, establishing more clearly the importance of this factor with regards to how they answered the survey would have required more responses from self-defined "occasional" and "rare" respondents, which only represented a small minority (20%) of answers.

Therefore, these survey results do not provide meaningful answers to this question.

Implications for research in DAF

The findings presented in this report corroborate some of those I presented in two previous research reports: the DAF Collapse Awareness and Community report (February 2022), and the DAF 2020 User Survey report (June 2022).

First, all three reports point out that for many DAF participants, their participation in the network has been a source of comfort and emotional relief - which nearly all respondents from the EL and DR groups mentioned as part of important personal changes having occurred for them through their involvement in these groups.

Both this report, and the DAF 2020 User Survey report, explored the factors that may have enabled or disabled social learning from taking place in DAF and DAF groups. The current report confirms (sections 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) the importance of several enabling factors that characterise certain social learning spaces in DAF:

- the diversity of voices and perspectives;
- safe spaces allowing for the building of trust and the sharing of difficult emotions;
- the presence of trusted facilitators, moderators and/or conveners of such spaces;
- a sense of community and belonging fostered by the presence of like-minded people agreeing on certain basic premises (such as the likeliness, occurrence or inevitability of societal collapse).

Furthermore, the Collapse and Community Report noted how the most actively involved participants in DAF appeared keener to regularly engage with other active participants, develop deeper relationships, and engage in an inner transformation process as they faced into our predicament (as opposed to other intentions, such as more practical forms of adaptation to climate disasters or collapse). The current report throws new light onto this theory.

Firstly, as discussed above, most active DAF participants who responded to the RCS questionnaire (Group 1) aspired to forms of radical collective change based on new forms of relationality (such as loving kindness and compassion), and had found DAF useful to relinquish

unhelpful ways of relating or behaviours, thereby enabling some of this change; besides, this same group of respondents also appeared to experience a greater sense of agency in the process. It therefore seems possible, if not likely, that this group of active respondents partake of a common narrative concerning DAF, as a network enabling important collective changes through the fostering of various ways of being, desiring, hoping, relating, and existing in the world - and that this narrative is an important reason for them to keep engaging in the network.

On the other hand, other active respondents to the RCS survey (Group 3) were much more interested in bringing about changes to people's worldviews and value systems, as well as to political and economic structures, and had experienced different forms of unlearning (methodological and epistemological rather than ontological) than Group 1 respondents. It would seem, therefore, that people in this other group have different reasons for being actively involved in DAF.

The Collapse and Community survey report also showed that engaging with the topic of societal collapse in DAF had prompted many network participants to enact specific changes in their lives, from the more practical to the more spiritual level. The GRS questionnaire results present several new instances of such changes taking place for respondents, with the most significant evolutions taking place for participants in the EL and DR groups.

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Annex 1 – The questionnaires

Group Responses Survey (GRS)

The GRS was anonymous, and composed of eight questions:

Q1. Has anything meaningful emerged in you as a result of your participation in [EL/BF/DR]? Feel free to answer this question from any angle relevant to you.
[open-ended]

Q2. Do you know why this has emerged?
[open-ended]

Q3. What have you learned, or been learning, due to your participating in [EL/BF/DR]?
[open-ended]

Q4. What might you have you let go of, or unlearned, as a result of your participation?
[open-ended]

Q5. Have any changes occurred in your work life, your home life or your political activism as a result of your participation? If so, please tell us more.
[open-ended]

Q6. Has the circle prompted you to set new goals and/or objectives for yourself in specific reference to your engagement with the process of Deep Adaptation or the DA Forum? If so, please tell us more.
[open-ended]

Q7. Approximately how many sessions of [EL/BF/DR] have you attended so far?
Choices: "Less than 5 sessions;" "Between 5 and 20 sessions;" "More than 20 sessions."

Q8. *What role do you self-identify with, in the Deep Adaptation Forum?*
Choices: "Active participant/volunteer;" "Occasional participant/volunteer;" "Very occasional/rare participant."

Radical Change Survey (RCS)

Responses were anonymous, and there were four questions:

Q5. Considering everything you know and feel about our global predicament - what, to you, is the radical collective change that is called for today? Feel free to define "radical collective change" as you wish.
[open-ended]

Q6. Do you sense that your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum might be part of such change taking place, or might have been, to any extent? If so, how? If not, why?
[open-ended]

Q7. Do you sense you might have "unlearned" anything as a result of your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum? If so, what might this be, and why did it happen?
[open-ended]

Q8. What role (if any) do you self-identify with, in the Deep Adaptation Forum?
Choices: "Active participant/volunteer;" "Occasional participant/volunteer;" "Very occasional/rare participant."

Annex 2 – The coding process

Group Responses Survey (GRS)

For each of the three groups (EL, BF, and DR) which I investigated via the GRS, I followed a two-step coding process:

1. In the first stage, I sorted the codes within respondents' answers to Q1 through Q6 into new themes, question by question. That is to say, I created different themes within the scope of each of these open-ended questions.
2. Then, I further consolidated these themes by grouping them across questions, as follows:
    - I grouped themes that I identified in answers to Q1, Q3 and Q4 within a new "Personal changes" category;
    - I transfered themes from answers to Q2 into a new "Change enablers" category;
    - And I grouped themes from answers to Q5 and Q6 within a new "New actions and initiatives" category.

Finally, I presented these thematic groupings, category by category, in sections 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 above.

Earth Listening (EL)

Stage 1:

Q1:

- more self-confidence in speaking one's truth
- finding ways to be of service
- more joyfulness
- more self-understanding, integrating & healing
- more in touch with the Earth
- more belonging

Q2:

- finding like-minded others
- rich collaboration & leadership
- diversity of voices
- space for free expression
- regular meetings
- meditation & embodiment

Q3:

- healing power of truth-telling
- new approach to social change
- there are many perspectives
- new ways of being & relating
- reconnecting with indigeneity
- new perspective on self and Earth

Q4:

- less self-doubt & self-silencing
- less self-judging
- less distractedness
- less anthropocentrism & separation

Q5:

- talking about collapse more
- new professional orientation
- new initiatives beyond DAF

Q6:

- new DAF initiatives
- engaging in DAF
- reading more about DA

<u>Stage 2:</u>

1. Personal changes:
    - more confidence in practicing one's truth
        - healing power of truth-telling
        - less self-doubt & self-silencing
        - less self-judging
        - less distractedness
    - new ways of being & relating
        - reconnecting with indigeneity
        - more in touch with the Earth
        - new perspective on self and Earth
        - less anthropocentrism & separation
    - more self-understanding, integrating & healing

2. Change enablers:

- diversity of voices
    - there are many perspectives
- space for free expression
- rich collaboration & leadership
- regular meetings
- meditation & embodiment
- finding like-minded others
    - finding ways to be of service
    - more joyfulness
    - more belonging

3. New actions/initiatives:
    - new clarity on what is mine to do
        - new professional orientation
    - deeper involvement in DAF
        - engaging in DAF
        - reading more about DA
    - new initiatives beyond DAF

Business & Finance (BF)

Stage 1:

Q1:

- new connections
- new projects
- insights on collapse & the world
- new tools & resources
- less isolation, more community
- new ways of thinking
- no changes in one's personal, professional or political life

Q2:

- leadership
- like-minded others
- group failings (disablers)

Q3:

- new systemic approaches & perspectives
- social justice
- systemic oppression
- magnitude of issues
- how to find equanimity

Q4:

- less fear
- less denial
- less ethnocentrism

Q5:

- more engaged in global issues
- more community engagement
- professional changes
- home life changes

Q6:

- more engagement in DAF
- not more involved in DA

<u>Stage 2:</u>

1. Personal changes:
    - New tools, resources & projects
    - deeper, more systemic approaches & perspectives on collapse
        - new insights on collapse & the world
        - magnitude of issues
        - less denial
        - more engaged in global issues
        - new ways of thinking
        - less ethnocentrism
    - insights on systemic oppression and social justice
    - no changes in one's personal, professional or political life

2. Change enablers:
    - like-minded others
        - new connections
        - less fear

    - less isolation, more community
- group failings (disablers)

3. New actions or initiatives:
- more engagement in DAF
    - wish to change B&F group culture
    - not more involved in DA
- changes beyond DAF
    - professional changes
    - community engagement

Deep Relating (DR)

Stage 1:

Q1:
- enjoyment & appreciation
- meeting one's deep needs
- confidence, self-acceptance & self-understanding
- less isolation
- better able to be present & relate with others
- insights on how to be in relation
- inspiration & new perspectives
- similarities between people

Q2:
- facilitators' skills
- spaces for practice
- safety

Q3:
- new ways of being, relating, listening
- diverse perspectives
- renewed awareness of predicament
- how to be more present with oneself

Q4:
- less need for self-definition
- less need for certainty

- less judgment
- less confusion about one's needs & feelings

Q5:

- aspiring to start circle
- wanting to learn more about DR
- find more authentic relationships

Q6:

- wanting to contribute to DA

Stage 2:

1. Personal changes:
    - finding fulfillment in hard times
        - meeting one's deep needs
        - less isolation
        - inspiration & new perspectives
        - renewed awareness of predicament
    - more confidence & self-acceptance
        - less need for self-definition
    - better able to be present & relate with others
        - new ways of being, relating, listening
        - insights on how to be in relation
        - diverse perspectives
        - similarities between people
    - self-understanding & personal growth
        - less need for certainty
        - less judgment
        - how to be more present with oneself

2. Change enablers:
    - spaces for practice
        - safety
    - facilitators' skills
    - DR process

3. New actions/initiatives:
    - aspiring to share practice with others

    - find more authentic relationships
- wanting to learn more about DR
- wanting to contribute to DA

Radical Changes Survey (RCS)

In my thematic analysis of answers to RCS, I followed a two-step coding process. For both stages, I kept emergent codes segregated question by question.

At stage 2, I mobilised a typology from the field of decolonial studies in order to analyse the types of unlearning mentioned by respondents in their answers to Q3 (see section 2.3).

Stage 1

Q1:

- don't know or irrelevant
- won't happen
- economic & political
- worldviews & value systems
- biocentrism
- relationality
- transformative paradigm shift
- truth-telling
- grief & trauma

Q2:

- don't know
- not yet
- some small changes
- sharing views on radical collective change
- learning from others in DAF
- grief transformation
- os. finding guidance
- finding receptive people in DAF
- os. being part of the change
- finding support, courage and validation

Q3:

- ways of doing
- ways of thinking
- ways of relating
- racism & coloniality
- personal transformation
- systemic understanding
- unlearning in other spaces

Stage 2:

Q1:

- economic & political change
- orienting towards connection, loving kindess and compassion for all beings
  - love & compassion
  - grief & trauma
  - connecting with other humans
  - connecting with nature
- transformative shift in worldviews and value systems
  - biocentrism
  - truth-telling
  - transformative paradigm shift
- don’t know or irrelevant
- it won't happen

Q2:

- DAF as space fostering radical collective change
  - finding support, care, courage & validation
  - useful resources, insights & awareness
  - o.s. finding guidance and inspiration
  - grief transformation
- o.s. being part of the change
  - finding receptive people in DAF
  - sharing view on radical change in DAF
- some small changes in DAF
- don’t know
- not yet

Q3:

- ways of doing (methodology)
- ways of knowing, imagining, and evaluating legitimacy (epistemology)
  - systemic understanding
  - racism & coloniality
- ways of being, desiring, hoping, relating, and existing (ontology)
  - personal transformation
- unlearning in other spaces

Annex 3 – A summary of RCS respondents' answers

Table 2, below, presents a summary of answers to the RCS questionnaire. For each of the 15 RCS respondents, this table shows:

- Their aspirations (if any) regarding radical collective change, expressed in reply to Q1 (i.e. *"Considering everything you know and feel about our global predicament - what, to you, is the radical collective change that is called for today?"),* following the typology outlined in section 2.1:
  - "Views" stands for "A transformative shift in worldviews and value systems";
  - "Love" stands for "Orienting towards connection, loving kindness and compassion for all beings"; and
  - "Eco" stands for "a radical reshaping of political and economic structures."
- The emphasis they place in their reply to Q2 (i.e. *"Do you sense that your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum might be part of such change taking place, or might have been, to any extent? If so, how? If not, why?")*, following the typology described in section 2.2:
  - "Self" stands for an emphasis on one's active involvement in bringing about radical collective change in DAF;
  - "DAF" stands for an emphasis on the conditions within DAF that they deem conducive to such change taking place.
- The forms of unlearning they mentioned in response to Q3 (i.e. *"Do you sense you might have "unlearned" anything as a result of your participation in the Deep Adaptation Forum? If so, what might this be, and why did it happen?")*, following the typology described in section 2.3:
  - "Doing" stands for "Ways of doing (methodological unlearning)";
  - "Seeing" stands for "Ways of knowing, imagining, and evaluating legitimacy (epistemological)";
  - "Being" stands for "Ways of being, desiring, hoping, relating, and existing in the world (ontological)."
- The respondent's self-assessed level of involvement in DAF, based on their reply to Q4 ("active," "occasional" or "rare");
- The degree of logical coherence I have assessed between their replies to each question pair, as described in section 2.4:
  - "C" stands for "Clear coherence";
  - "P" stands for "Possible coherence";
  - "N" stands for "No coherence."

"?" stands for unclear information. "X" stands for a rejection of the question.

The three groups of respondents I have described in section 2.4 are shown on the table using a color coding:

- Green: Group 1;
- Blue: Group 2;
- Yellow: Group 3.

Table 2: Narrative coherence of RCS respondents' answers

						Coherence	
	Rad. Coll. Change Aspirations	DAF & change	Unlearning Type(s)	DAF Involvement	Q1 & Q2	Q1 & Q3	Q2 & Q3
1	?	?	Doing Seeing	Active	?	?	?
2	Views Eco	?	Doing Seeing	Active	?	N	N
3	Views	Self DAF	Seeing Being	Active	C	C	C
4	Views Love	DAF	Seeing Being	Active	C	C	P
5	Eco Love	Self DAF	Seeing	Occasional	C	C	P
6	Love	Self DAF	Being	Active	C	P	P
7	X	DAF	Seeing	Active	N	N	N
8	Love	Self	Being Seeing Doing	Active	C	C	P
9	Eco Views	DAF	Seeing Doing	Active	C	N	N
10	Views	DAF	Other	Rare	P	N	P
11	Love	DAF Self	Being	Occasional	P	P	P
12	Love	Self DAF	Seeing Being	Active	C	C	C
13	Eco Love	Self DAF	Being	Active	C	P	C
14	Love Eco	DAF	Being	Occasional	P	P	C
15	Views	?	Doing	Rare	N	N	N

As for Table 3, it shows the proportion of respondents from each group who referred to the various types of radical collective change aspirations and types of unlearning I have analysed in sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.

Table 3: Overview of RCS respondents' answers to Q1, Q2, and Q3, per group

		Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Q1	Views	29%	25%	60%
	Love	71%	75%	0%
	Eco	29%	25%	40%
Q2	Self	83%	50%	0%
	DAF	83%	100%	40%
Q3	Seeing	71%	0%	80%
	Being	71%	75%	0%
	Doing	14%	0%	80%

Annex 4 – EL, BF and DR group attendance

The GRS questionnaire was forwarded to participants in the Earth Listening circle (EL), the Business & Finance interest group (BF), and attendees of the Deep Relating circles (DR) by the main volunteer conveners and facilitators of each group.

Thereafter, these facilitators kindly offered further information on the membership and meeting times of their respective groups. Meeting frequency was gauged using information supplied by meeting facilitators, and examining the archives of the online DAF events calendar. The period of study was February 2021 to February 2022.

Earth Listening

Meeting frequency: Weekly.

Average number of attendees: 8-9 (including co-hosts) per session, of which, on average:

- 7 to 8 “regulars”, and
- 1 “newbie”

Estimated total number of “regulars”: 16, of which:

- 2 are the circle co-hosts
- 7 are “very frequent regulars”
- 7 are “occasional regulars”

Business and Finance

Meeting frequency: About once a month.

Sessions alternate between:

- standard meetings, attended by 8 to 10 participants (including co-hosts)
- meetings featuring Q&As with special guests (3 over the time period above), more widely promoted and attended by around 40 participants

Estimated number of “regulars”: 5 to 6, of which 2 are the circle co-hosts.

Deep Relating

Meeting frequency: Twice a month between March 2021 and December 2021, then four times a month between December 2021 and February 2022. Meetings take place at two alternating times, to enable participation from anywhere in the world.

Average number of attendees: 2-7 (including co-hosts) per session, of which, on average:

- 2 to 4 “regulars”, and
- 1 “newbie” every few weeks or months

Estimated total number of “regulars”: 10 to 15, of which roughly:

- one third are active co-hosts of these circles (i.e. they either facilitate these calls, or take part in them as frequent regulars)
- one third are “very frequent regulars”
- and another third are “occasional regulars”

Email reminders about upcoming circles are sent to over 70 recipients.