**Cohesion Technology**: Aggregation aggregation, superconnecting superconnectors - various notes

# **Basics and glossary**

**Beacon** and **basin**; sending out a beacon of light to reach others, the basin being the community to fall back on. *Could beacons be events and the basin be “ingroup”?*

To get into the community, into the basin, the beacon is necessary. Analogy to open mics: people need to go on stage (speak up) to be ingroup… but how do we set the stage?

Conrad: A **community** serving as a container, using proprietary language, and which includes and excludes certain people.

**Unfakeable signals:** actions that denote trustworthiness that are hard to fake for deceptive purposes. Conrad: “you can’t fake a handshake”. Meatspace supremacy for trustworthiness? How do we craft unfakeable online signals?

**Superconnector:** someone who connects the right people to each other at the right time. Has a role of visibility: revealing what some can do for other people in ways that are only known to them.

**The ripple effect:** a simple action having massive influence.

People to look into: **Daron Acemoglu**?

​​“**Responses** to the meta crisis” - problem = too narrow of a definition; the meta-crisis is complicated to analyze because there are multiple intersecting problems and tackling only one can lead to ignoring the other. The meta-crisis is a **Predicament**.

ChrisD: “We’re sensing an “illusion that we’re analyzing” the meta crisis.” *(It’s about* ***VIBES****!)*

**Religion** in the Durkheimian sense of a **collective consciousness** (or an **egregore**) emerging and being imbued with a sense of sacredness, which can foster social cohesion.

**Memes** as defined by the Open Memetics Institute of ideas that spread rapidly within the population. Create a community -> spread positive memes within that community -> **upwards spiral echo chamber**

# **Goals - The Cohesion Summit**

## **Unconference idea: making cohesion FUN!**

Bringing together representatives of communities together? Eg: TechTO, CivicSpark, STIAW, Misha Glouberman, Clarens Commons, etc. Superconnecting the superconnectors. Around 15 people?

The premise: solving the meta-crisis by bringing people together. (I. Defining the meta-crisis / II. How do we bring people together to solve it, hence Cohesion Tech)

***We own a domain now: cohesion.love***

Games to look into: Microscope. Could be used as a way of getting superconnectors to collaborate on writing the version of history where we solve the meta-crisis. Downside is that the game can be complex.

# **08/15 Discussion @ Karaoke night**

## [**Pol.is**](http://pol.is) **questions for the crowd**

1. How often do you talk to your neighbors?
2. Do you want to go to more events?
3. Do you want technology to help?

## **Key Insights from Discussion (9:10 PM)**

### **Event Discovery & Crowdsourcing**

**Our perspective**: Build an "aggregator aggregator" to compile what people are working on, including other aggregators

**Dan's perspective:** Users posting events creates crowdsourcing opportunities and encourages people to spot local happenings. The main issue is that events lack sufficient reach.

**Chris's vision:** Build a network of aggregators who attend various events and report back to inform others about city happenings. This would create "a culture of aggregation" that helps events connect and complement each other.

HUMAN AS THE TECHNOLOGY: people serving as the recommendation engine rather than algorithms. Hanging out tech

### **Third Spaces & Community Building**

**Dan's insight:** Identifying the third spaces people frequent most often is crucial, as those individuals can capture more ephemeral experiences that traditional event listings miss.

The discussion highlighted how personal relationships between attendees and event organizers increase attendance likelihood, building trust and mutual interest.

### **Gamification & Incentive Models**

The group examined Foursquare as a case study—a platform where users checked into establishments for points and badges. Key observations:

* It provided interesting incentives for engagement
* Represented where community actually exists
* Had brief popularity before becoming perceived as a "stalker enterprise"

### **Privacy vs. Connection Paradox**

We noted the tension between privacy and community building: "Public personal data is dangerous, yet having more personal data public would encourage people to meet each other."

Very few people actually participate in community platforms, and those who do (like Google Guides) represent a specific personality type.

## **Platform Contribution Discussion (9:27-9:28 PM)**

**Question:** "Does contributing make you feel good?" **Response:** "It did, but now it feels like free labor."

**Follow-up:** "If it was an open source company, would you trust it?" **Response:** "Yes, if the data was for everyone."

## **Event Curation Challenges (9:33 PM)**

**Misha's observation:** Eventbrite becomes unmanageable due to high volume of diverse events—not necessarily divided between good and bad events, but rather events that aren't relevant to everyone. This reinforces why event curation is essential for creating valuable user experiences.

# **08/16 Alan Brouilette @ CivicSpark**

An interesting idea: A community that you can tap into without necessarily knowing all of the people there: for example, people from your university that you can connect to afterwards on linkedin.

A lot of people freeze once they go further into working towards a goal and the world becomes less fair to them. The further you rise, the fewer people you have to talk to. Instrumental connection as quality, not quantity?

An incredibly valuable connection to have is someone who has connections everywhere (*a superconnector!)* and we need to make them meet each other *(a superconnector superconnector!!)*

It’s not about money, it’s not about cause, it’s not even about power; it’s about relationships. It’s about drama. Who is mad at who, who loves who.

# **Bike Brigade - Rachel @ CivicSpark**

MAAAAAAPS!!!!!

From spreadsheet to an actual map of a mutual aid biking community.

(Comment: one interesting thing about that network is that they coalesced around something very similar to an “interest”, but which actually forms an ingroup - the ingroup of bikers. I wonder what makes it different from a simple interest. Is it the stakes?)

PEOPLE TIE THEIR IDENTITY TO THE COMMUNITY.

The woman who runs Bike Brigade is an environmentalist and a musician and understands the value of technology to bring people together. VALUABLE SUPERCONNECTOR. Let’s collaborate with her - Cohesion Summit invite!

Knowledge sharing as a way of making onboarding a lot easier: having everybody have the same kind of knowledge (almost. There’s still a board) so that newcomers aren’t dependent on training from the busy directors. (*This is really interesting to consider for what it means to create an Ingroup.)*

Building a primarily text based messaging system that would work without data to make it as accessible as possible.

The bike brigade is a good entry point to solidarity; getting exposed to microsolidarity through the actions and demonstrations.

The pandemic was a time of strong activism cohesion, and it has since dwindled. External circumstances create stronger bonds. *How do we create this kind of cohesion without war, pestilence, famine? How do we make people want to help each other even without an enemy? Multiple options: create an enemy (bad) or exhort them to love (good)*

How do we move towards the solution? **Get to know your neighbor.** Build networks. Do things for each other. Build a community; oldschool telephone trees. Little pieces of infrastructure are things we can build together today.

# **Lunch break!**

### **Our points:**

* Community building should focus on getting neighbors to know each other
* "Super-connectors" are valuable for bringing people together
* People often don't care about others due to lack of perceived safety/security (Erin’s take)
* Nervous system safety and connection are fundamental to community
* Cooperation strategies from game theory (Prisoner's Dilemma) apply to real community building

### **Rachel's Main Points:**

* Believes in celebrating and "showing off" community work to inspire others
* Recognizes the cultural challenges around cooperation and kindness

### **Janet's Main Points:**

* Does the "physical work" of community organizing (has practical skills)
* Has lived car-free while raising three young children
* Cultural problems with basic courtesy
* Believes in living your values even when it's challenging

# **AI and democracy - Matthew Victor and Jake Hirsch-Allen @ CivicSpark**

As tech comes along, we have a choice to take ownership and deploy it, or to let other actors do so with different intentions. Social media has destroyed the expectation of privacy in the US. We can deploy it in specific ways to enable more impact. Informing people.

People don’t have civic muscles the way they used to, which makes it difficult for them to express themselves. AI can help co-pilot testimonies; it can empower people to act without fear of being wrong.

Activism is currently either 1. Post on social media or 2. Canvassing or protesting. But there’s no middle ground. Technology could do this, for informing and impacting

“Manifesto for the Resto”

You only fail once you stop trying.

## **AI for all - Shingai Majengwa, Varun Chandak, Alex Tveit**

Shingai = formerly data educator, now AI educator

Big corporate organizations are pushing tools but the need to educate about them is even more prescient now.

Varun’s background is in finance, founded Access to Success.

AI has been called “The Great Equalizer” and also a source of harmful divide.

SM is worried that we are so far ahead in the divide that it will keep compounding. The snake we are holding has a really long tail. We could have a computer to whom we can ask questions and ask for support; and it’s just a useful tool. Not biased, as much as that is possible.

AI is available anywhere, everywhere, and customized to you.

Accessibility impacts EVERYONE. Teaching people about it will be moving the needle.

“What’s in it for me?” Convince people that they are in fact getting something out of it. Better technology, better quality of life, etc.

AI education is URGENT!

# **The structure**

1. [Pol.is](http://pol.is)
2. We-space meditation
3. Dream-sharing; making people discuss, write their ideas on pieces of paper, then taping those pieces of paper to the board, and signing an endorsement on ideas to start conversing with the people who had those ideas. We want the conversation to continue

# [**Pol.is**](http://pol.is)

Seed statements.

1. “I know who my neighbors are”
2. “I go to events once a week or more”
3. “I spend a lot of time socializing within my area”
4. “I only socialize with people similar to me in some way”
5. “I only go to events when I know one or more of the people there, or someone I know recommended them to me.”
6. “I prefer staying in than going out and meeting strangers.”
7. “I engage in weekly activities with a somewhat consistent group of people.”
8. “I identify as an introvert.”
9. “I regularly frequent the same event venues.”
10. “I often meet the same group of people at different events I go to.”
11. “I don’t care how far I need to go to attend an event as long as it interests me.”
12. “I would like to attend more events.”
13. “I would like to meet more people.”