

# PRESENCE. CONNECTION. FLOW.

Sovereign exchange dynamics — and the structural mechanics underneath any system that is trying to become coherent.

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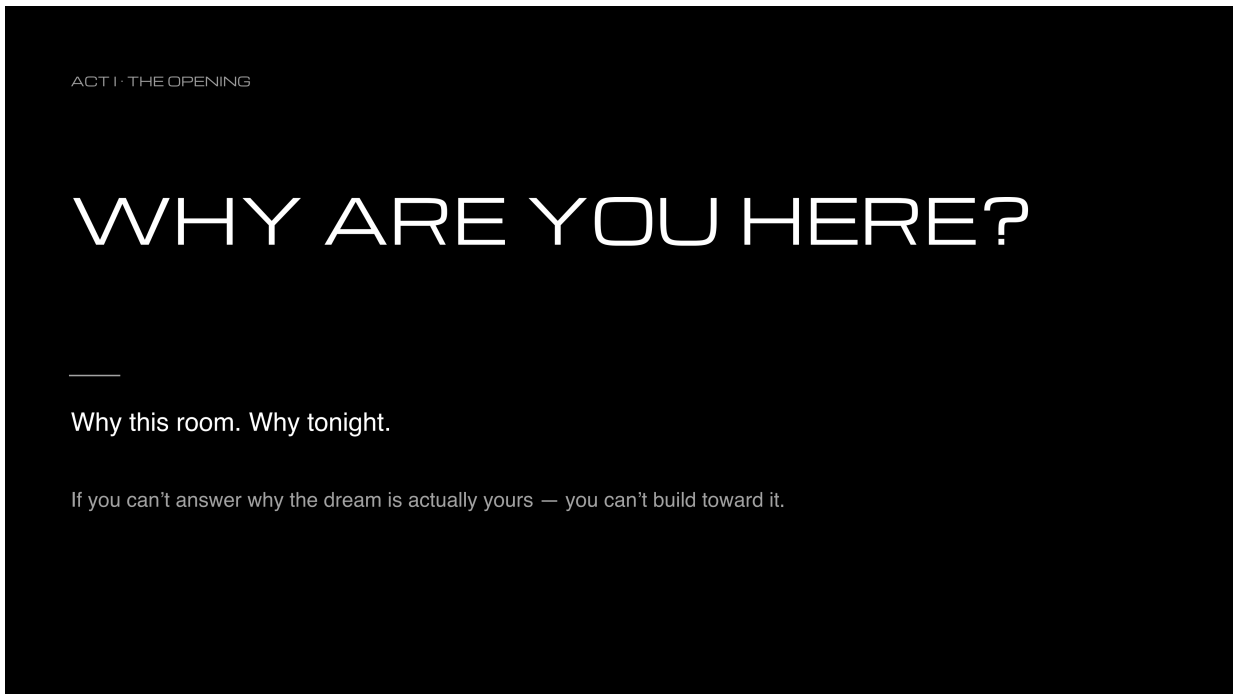
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Good evening. Thank you for being here.

My name is Jason Carroll. I'm the founder of Coherence Research and The Coherence Foundry, and over the next fifteen minutes we're going to discuss a small but extremely important dynamic of the **Structural Coherence Anchor Specification** — or SC-AS.

Today's subject is **PCF: Presence, Connection, and Flow** — and how this fundamental dynamic is fractally pervasive in every system that exists. It determines how every system succeeds or fails at maintaining coherent existence.

We'll also discuss structural sovereignty, and how it affects the dynamics of systems we're all already working within.



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**So why are you here?** Why this room, why tonight?

Are you searching? Wanting to learn? Trying to answer how do I build — how can I do better, be better? What am I doing wrong? Why is this so hard?

And what *are* you building? This thing you're attempting to accomplish — if you had to explain what it is, could you? Do you know what it's supposed to do if it functionally fulfills its purpose in your mind?

**If you can't answer these questions, you can't effectively build toward that goal.** You have to establish the concept of something before you can evolve the path by which it becomes what you've conceptualized. Make sense?

HUSTLE HYPNOSIS

90% of our time goes to things that don't actually create value — measured against metrics that were never ours to begin with.

RISE AND GRIND	MOVE FAST, BREAK THINGS	ALWAYS BE CLOSING
FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT	SLEEP LESS, DO MORE	FIGURE IT OUT

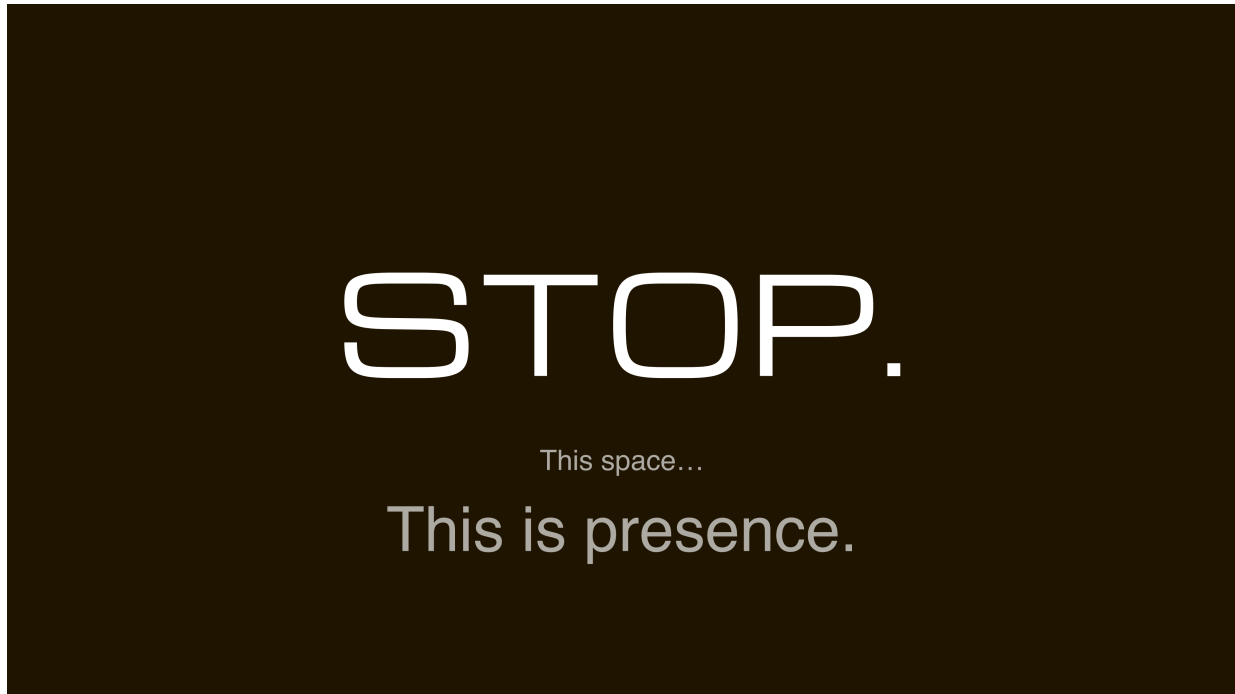
If I were to guess — everyone in this room has seen these phrases. And probably applies them.

So we've established: we have a dream, an idea, or a problem to solve. But how does that effectively get done?

The reality is — and check me if I'm wrong — the first goal is usually *"how do I get money to do this?"* But that's literally the worst thing to focus on.

**The first goal is to focus on the thing.** To refine the concept until you have it firmly in your mind. It's not possible to build until you understand what it is conceptually, what it does conceptually, and how it accomplishes that goal.

Let me make this abundantly clear: there is nothing in your experience that you can want that doesn't exist already — first as a concept, and then as a reality. You literally cannot desire a thing that hasn't gone through the process I'm asking you to go through right now. **If it's not a coherent concept that can be desired, you can't desire it.**



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We need to **stop**.

Understand this moment — the moment of not doing, and just being. That's presence.

Presence is what *is* when doing is integrated. You're doing plenty right now: breathing, heart beating. But it's integrated into your presence — your being. It doesn't come at additional effort. **It's intrinsic to who you are as a sovereign presence.**



Let's look at the fundamental dynamic — Presence.

Presence is the concept at the center of what you're building. The core identity. What's there when it is exactly what it should be, intrinsically.

Your team. Your application. Your process. **Your concept doesn't float in empty space.** It lives inside a structure it has to respect.

If you can conceive of it — if it keeps coming back, persisting — **it has enough structure to exist in some way. Persistence is the signal of valid existential potential.**

Not that it's ready. Not that it's perfect. Not that it's fundable. Just that there's something there worth developing.

And this matters: your hustle, if there's something to it, starts here. Always. No question. **Presence is the foundation of all that is or ever will be in your experience.**

DECOMPOSING PRESENCE

## THREE LEVELS

<p><b>01 · NONLOCAL</b></p> <p><b>The pure concept</b></p> <p>What is this thing fundamentally. What problem does it solve at the deepest level. What would need to be true for it to matter.</p>	<p><b>02 · INTEGRATIVE</b></p> <p><b>The path of becoming</b></p> <p>How does the concept become real. What decisions need to be made so the physical thing faithfully expresses the idea.</p>	<p><b>03 · LOCAL</b></p> <p><b>The thing itself</b></p> <p>The actual product. The actual team. The actual customer relationship. Does what exists reflect the concept that started it.</p>
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Most founders start at Local — they build the physical thing first and skip Nonlocal entirely. You can't integrate toward something that was never defined.

Let's go over the three aspects of presence.

**The Non-Local Aspect** — the pure concept. What is this thing fundamentally as a concept? What problem does it resolve at the deepest level?

**The Integrative Aspect** — this is where the real work is done. The integrative space is where we live with our ideas, our teams, our concepts. The attempts and failures all happen in the integrative space of becoming. What decisions make the physical thing faithfully express the idea?

**The Local Aspect** — the actual thing. Tangible, usable, the end result finally realized as imagined. The actual product. The actual team. The actual customer relationship.

**A large majority of founders start at Local.** They build the physical thing first, ignoring the Non-Local entirely. You can't effectively integrate toward something that was never clearly conceptually defined. And if you try, you can guarantee your integrative process will be full of failures and mistakes that could have been easily avoided.



Let's look at the next dynamic — Connection.

You might imagine that connection is just a simple link between two presences. We make connections all the time, right? Simple?

Connection is much more complex and dynamic. It's a **live feedback loop** between presences — and by live I mean moment-by-moment negotiated feedback of shared energetic flows. It's the process of negotiation and regulation of every type of energetic flow passing between presences.

And by energy, I'm not talking about warm fuzzies. Energy can be capital, attention, trust, information — much more than vibes or electricity. Each of these can be quantified, negotiated, and regulated.

Connection is always reporting on its status. Customer going quiet? That's a connection reporting. Team losing energy? A connection reporting. Revenue flat for no reason? Still the system reporting.

**It's always telling you — whether you listen or not.**

A STRUCTURAL DEFINITION

# FRICTION = CONSTRAINT DENSITY

The combined traversal cost of every constraint sitting between where you are and where you're trying to go.

policy	approval process	unclear role	unresolved conversation
misaligned incentive	broken trust	ambiguous decision	
hidden dependency			

WHAT HIGH FRICTION DOES

It doesn't stop the flow. **It redirects it.**

Your customer doesn't complete the purchase. Your team doesn't bring the idea forward. Your investor doesn't commit.

*Not because anything is broken. Because the traversal cost got too high.*

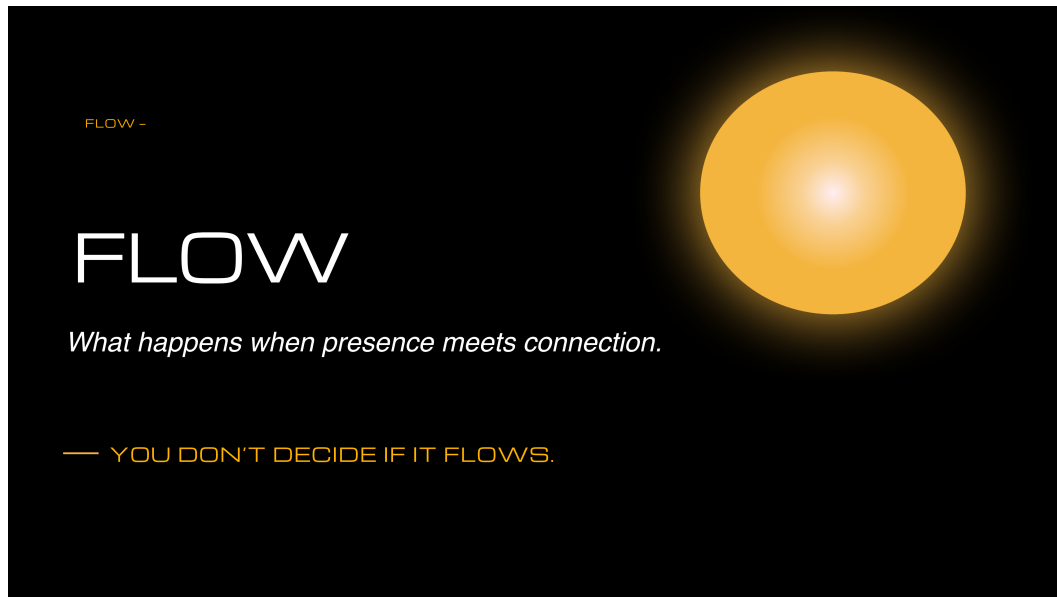
Let's talk briefly about friction as an aspect of connection.

Everyone talks about reducing friction. Nobody defines it.

**Friction is constraint density.** The combined traversal cost of every constraint between where you are and where you're going. Every policy. Every approval. Every unclear role. Every unresolved conversation. Every piece of broken trust. Every hidden dependency. Each one adds to the cost of traversal.

**High friction doesn't stop flow. It redirects it.**

The customer doesn't complete the purchase. The team doesn't bring the idea forward. The investor doesn't commit. **Not because anything is broken** — but because the cost of traversal became too steep compared to the desired benefits. It's that simple.

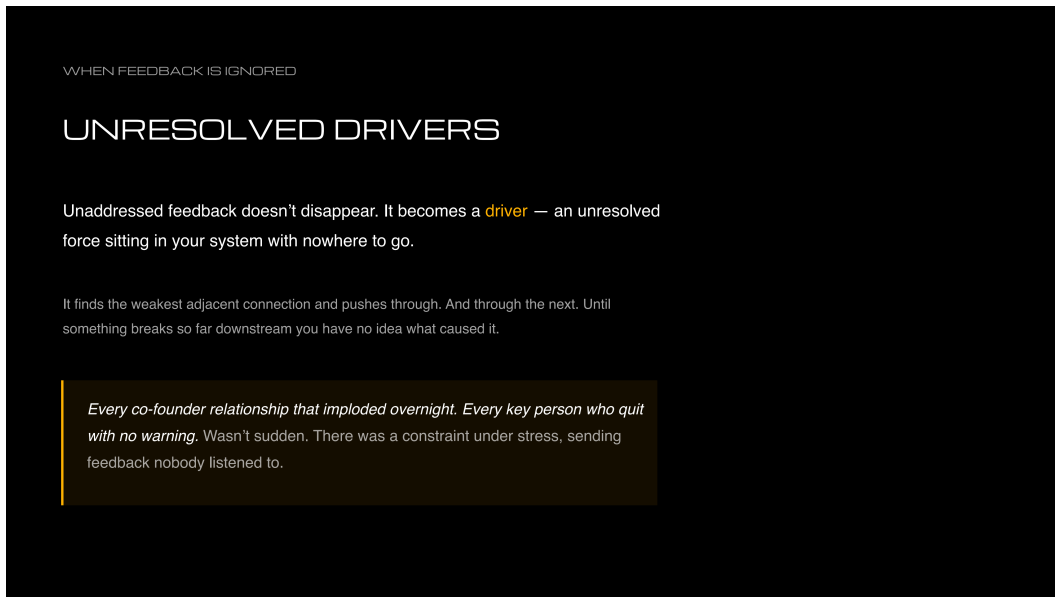


So we have Presence and Connection — and immediately Flow enters the picture.

Let me be clear. **Flow is not something you create.** Flow is what happens when presence meets connection.

No two presences are identical — and that guarantees one thing: if any two presences connect, flow immediately begins, even if it's minimal. Interestingly, even gating — preventing flow — is a type of flow dynamic. One presence must expend some of its flow to maintain that restriction. There's a dynamical cost to negotiating a connection with restricted flow.

**You don't get to decide if flow happens.** Only how you're going to direct it, restrict it, convert it — if you're aware of it at all. And remember: energy can be capital, attention, trust, information. Much, much more.



So we have flow just flowing all over the place, finding its way to and through connections. Let's talk about **unresolved drivers**.

When flow meets friction, the result is feedback. Feedback is simply flow that has to redirect back through its original path to find a way to continue flowing. Unaddressed feedback doesn't go away. It becomes a driver that begins seeking a path through the system. If all it meets is dead ends, you end up with unresolved drivers.

An unresolved driver sits in your system with nowhere to go. And because it's unresolved — **it starts to push. Not randomly. Precisely.**

It finds the weakest connection adjacent to it and pushes through. That connection gets stressed. Ignored again, it becomes another unresolved driver. And so on — until something breaks so far downstream you have no idea what caused it.

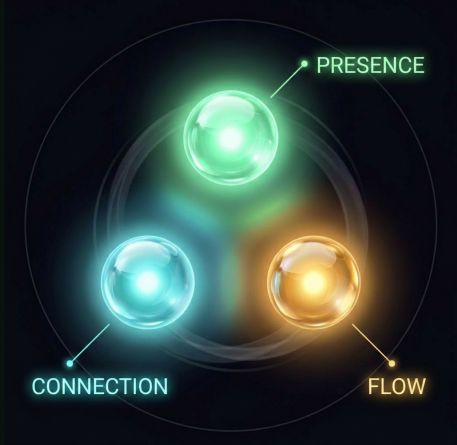
**The VP who quit the Monday after your fundraiser — wasn't sudden.** A constraint had been under stress for months. Sending feedback nobody listened to.

THE THREE

# PRESENCE. CONNECTION. FLOW.

The fractal makeup of any system that exists — at every scale

From the smallest interaction between two people to the largest organization on the planet — same three forces, always at work

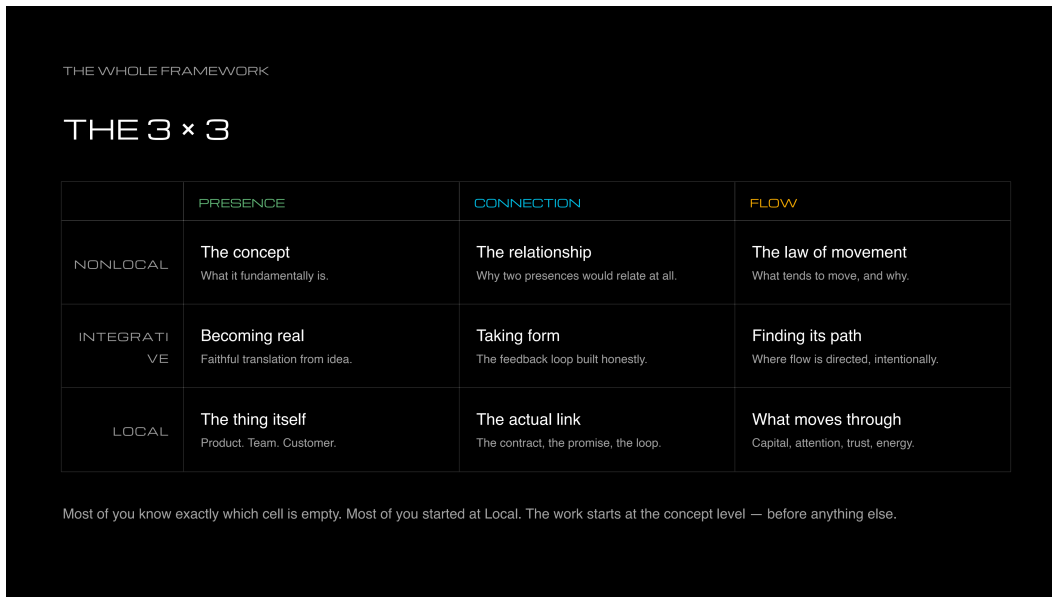


Now we have the PCF triad: **Presence. Connection. Flow.**

The true atom of existence. It's so fundamental it even explains atoms and how they exist and persist.

**This triad represents the fundamental fractal makeup of every system in existence.** No matter how simple or complex — everything that exists is infinite nested examples of this fundamental triad.

We talk about them as separate. **They are never separate. Always together.**



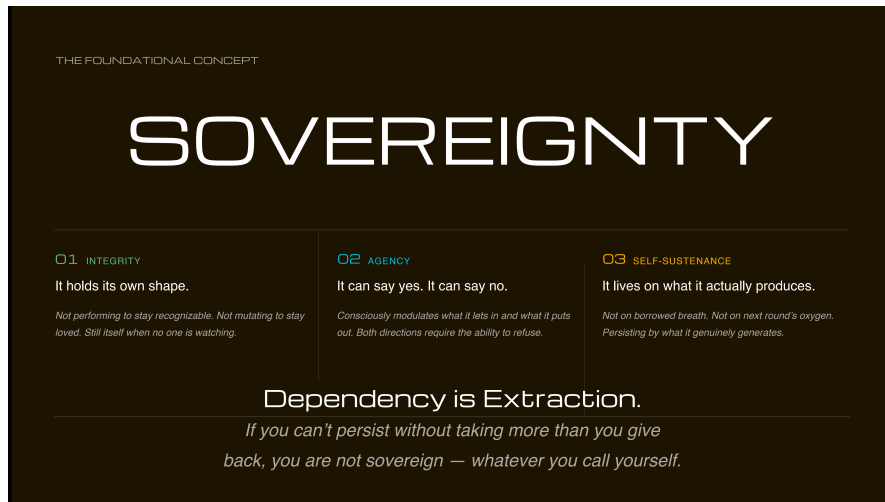
This is the map of the triad — the top nine. What I'd call the basic aspects of PCF that can be applied to any system and provide a meaningful evaluation.

Presence, connection, flow — at three levels: nonlocal, integrative, local.

**This is not a business-school diagram.** It's the fractal makeup of any system that exists. Unresolved drivers. Constraint density. Feedback loops. Not theories — **forces operating in your system right now.**

**Most of you know exactly which cell is empty.**

If these nine cells are properly addressed in your system, team, concept, or application, it doesn't mean you won't have problems to resolve. But it does mean they'll be considerably less painful — and you'll be keenly aware. As soon as a cell starts generating feedback, you'll know it needs to be addressed.



If those nine cells are addressed properly, what emerges is significant. **Sovereignty.**

I wonder if anyone in this room truly knows what sovereignty is. Crypto uses it as freedom from oversight. Self-help uses it as radical personal freedom. Both are reactive definitions — sovereignty as the absence of something.

**The structural definition of sovereignty is the intrinsic state of a self-coherent presence.**

That's a structural reality. A tree has it. A healthy body has it. A real friendship has it — structurally.

**Three conditions:**

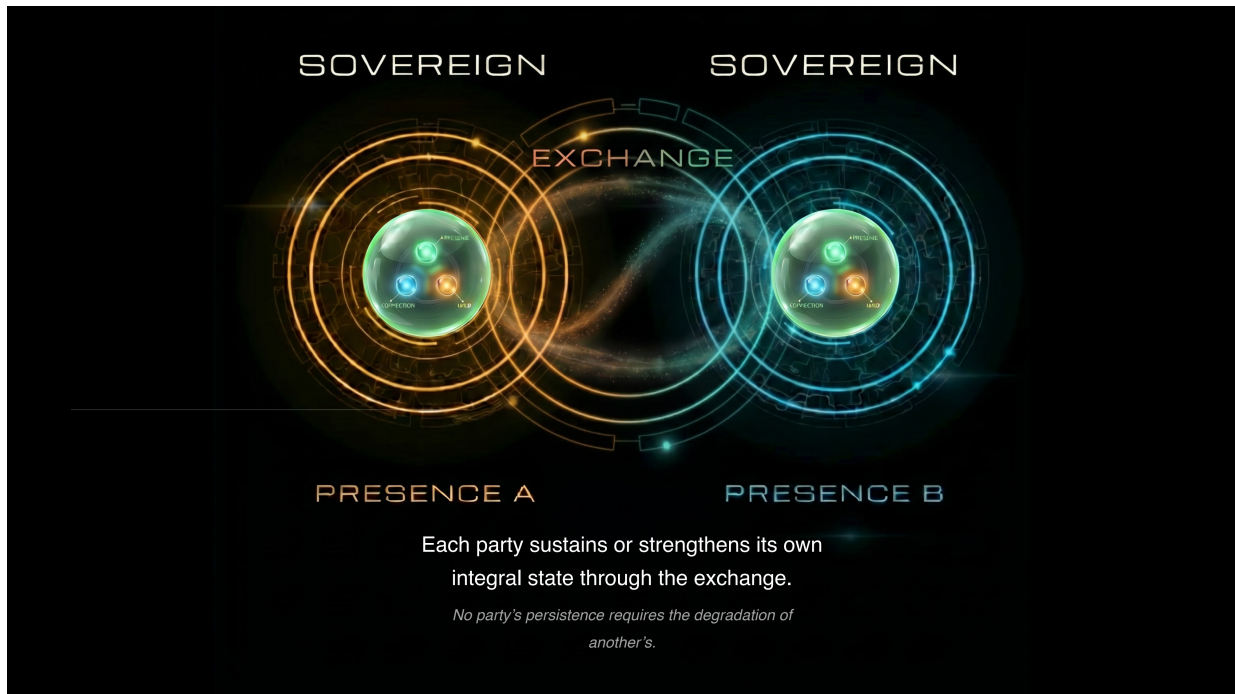
**Integrity.** It holds its own shape of being.

**Agency.** It can say yes. It can say no. It modulates what it lets in and what it puts out. Both directions require the ability to refuse.

**Self-Sustenance.** It lives on what it actually produces. Not borrowed energy. Not next round's oxygen. It persists by what it genuinely generates.

And the boundary condition — the line that makes the whole thing testable: **Dependency is extraction.** If you can't persist without taking more than you give back — you are not sovereign. Whatever you call yourself.

A tree is sovereign. What's the tree version of your business?



Two sovereign presences. Each holding its own shape, its own PCF, its own life.

Between them — an exchange. Something moves. Something returns.

**Both are strengthened by the contact.**

Each party sustains or strengthens its own integral state through the exchange. **No party's persistence requires the degradation of another's.**

That's the whole alternative to extraction, right there.

Exchange is structural. **Nature doesn't reject exchange — it perfects it.**

**This is what exchange looks like when neither party is desperate.**

THE SELF SCALE · APPLIED

# YOU ARE A PCF SYSTEM.

*Before you ever build anything, you are the first system. One presence. Your own connections. Your own flows. The same structural laws apply — whether you name them or not.*

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ONE PRESENCE · THREE FORCES

Blocked at one force. Leaking at another. The pattern you keep seeing out there — it starts here.

HOW YOUR SYSTEM ACTUALLY RUNS

- 01 **WHAT YOU BLOCK IN YOURSELF, YOU ROUTE.**  
*The feedback you won't give yourself comes back as the story you tell about other people. Your unheard signal becomes their problem.*
- 02 **WHAT YOU LEAK, SOMEONE ELSE IS CARRYING.**  
*Output you can't metabolize — pressure, urgency, unclear wants — gets absorbed by whoever is closest. It doesn't disappear; it redistributes.*
- 03 **SOVEREIGNTY STARTS AT THIS SCALE OR NOT AT ALL.**  
*You can't build a coherent team, company, or technology on top of a self that can't hold its own signal. The atom has to hold first.*

— Find where it's blocked. Trace where it's leaking.  
*That's your work.*

Here's where this gets personal.

Before you ever build a single thing — **you are the first system.** One presence. Your own connections. Your own flows. Same structural laws — whether you name them or not. And the same things happen, every day, whether you're paying attention or not.

**What you block in yourself, you route.** The feedback you won't give yourself doesn't disappear. It comes back as the story you tell about other people. Your unheard signal becomes their problem.

**What you leak, someone else is carrying.** Output you can't metabolize — pressure, urgency, unclear wants — gets absorbed by whoever is closest to you. It doesn't disappear. It redistributes.

**Sovereignty starts at this scale or not at all.**

You cannot build a coherent team on top of a self that can't hold its own signal. You can't build a coherent company. You can't build coherent technology. **The atom has to hold first.**

So the work — before any other work — is this: find where it's blocked in you. Trace where it's leaking. That's the first piece of real structural work you can actually do.

THE TEAM SCALE · APPLIED

## YOUR TEAM IS A PCF SYSTEM.

*Presences. Connections. Flows. Moving every day. The same structural laws apply — whether you name them or not.*

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WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS

THE THREE STRUCTURAL LAWS

- 01 **BLOCKED FEEDBACK REROUTES.**  
*Two people can't have the honest conversation, so it travels through a third who becomes the carrier.*
- 02 **DRIVERS FIND THE WEAKEST ADJACENT CONNECTION.**  
*Usually the most capable person. They absorb the problem nobody named — until they walk. And you call it sudden.*
- 03 **SOVEREIGNTY IS THE AXIS UNDERNEATH.**  
*A sovereign person can carry honest feedback. A person held by necessity can't — the signal degrades before it reaches you.*

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**The loudest conflict isn't the problem — it's where the pressure is venting.**

Same structure, one scale up. Your team.

Your team isn't a collection of individuals. **It's a live PCF system running every single day.** Presences. Connections. Flows. Same laws. And the same things we've been talking about happen — just with people this time.

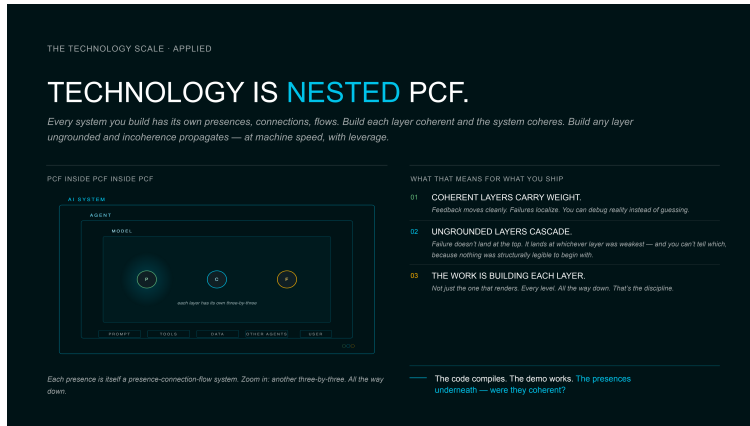
**Blocked feedback reroutes.** Two people on your team can't have the honest conversation — so it travels through a third person who becomes the carrier. That person isn't being helpful. **They're being a release valve for a connection that can't hold its own signal.**

**Drivers find the weakest adjacent connection.** Usually that's your most capable person. They absorb the problem nobody named. They stay late. Pick up the slack. Until they have somewhere else to go — and then they walk. And you call it sudden. **It wasn't sudden. They were the only one free to leave.**

**Sovereignty is the axis underneath all of this.** A sovereign person can carry honest feedback — because the relationship can survive the truth. A person held by necessity can't. The signal degrades before it ever reaches you. You think you're getting reports. You're getting filtered reports.

So what do you do with this? **Stop treating team problems as interpersonal. They're structural.**

**The loudest conflict isn't the problem — it's where the pressure is venting.** Find the blocked connection. Find who's absorbing the load. That's where the work actually is.



This one is for the builders and technologists in the room. This is the piece that actually matters.

Everything we just walked through — **every system you build has its own internal PCF.**

Your AI system is a composition of presences: the model, the prompt, the training data, the tools it can call, the agents it collaborates with. Each one a presence. Each one with its own structural integrity — or its lack of it. Connected by flows of information, authority, and trust.

Your blockchain application is a composition of presences: consensus layer, contract, token, governance, community. Each one a presence.

Your software is a composition of presences: functions, services, databases, APIs, users.

### PCF inside PCF inside PCF.

Every layer has its own three-by-three. Every. Layer. And most engineering today only looks at the surface layer. The code compiles. The UI renders. The demo works. **But the presences underneath — were they coherent when you composed them?**

An agent built on an ungrounded model — reasoning over word-soup training data — calling tools whose contracts nobody verified — passing outputs to another agent doing the same thing — **that's not one incoherent system. That's incoherence nested inside incoherence, at every layer.**

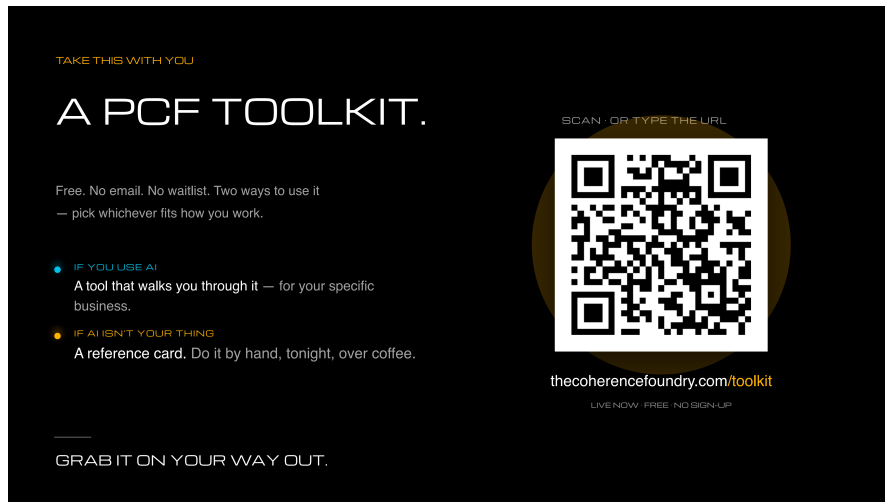
And when it fails, it won't fail at the top. **It fails at whichever layer was weakest.** And you'll have no idea which one — because you never looked.

### The value of coherent technology isn't philosophical. It's structural.

When each layer holds its own PCF, the system can carry weight. Feedback moves cleanly. Failures localize. **You can debug reality instead of guessing.**

When layers are ungrounded, failure cascades across all of them at once. You can't tell where it started — because nothing was structurally legible to begin with.

**The work is building coherent layers. Every level. All the way down.** That's the discipline.



Here's the gift. Right now. Tonight.

Free. No email signup. No waitlist. None of that nonsense.

Here's how it works: **scan your website, or upload a document** — a pitch deck, a business plan, a strategy doc, whatever you've got — and **download a real PCF evaluation**.

Let me be straight with you: we can only evaluate what you give us. That's a real limit. **But even then — the evaluation will tell you what's missing from what you gave it.** So the limit itself becomes useful signal.

One more thing — and this matters: **this is not a report card.**

Every system has issues. Yours. Mine. The ones you admire from across the room. Every single one. **This is the difference between knowing about them or not.** That's the whole point. Not judgment. Visibility.


Two things waiting for you at the URL. One: the evaluation tool — scan, upload, download, real structural read. Two: this presentation — downloadable, yours to take home, share with your team, discuss, and put to work.

**thecoherencefoundry.com/toolkit** — live right now. The website also explains PCF clearly if you want to go deeper. Grab it on your way out.

TWO ORGANIZATIONS. TWO DISTINCT ROLES.

## WHO WE ARE

RESEARCH · NONPROFIT




**COHERENCE RESEARCH**

Independent nonprofit. Publishes open standards, builds free tools, gives structural understanding away — because access to it shouldn't cost anything.

• [coherenceresearch.com](http://coherenceresearch.com)

PRACTICE · CONSULTANCY



**COHERENCE FOUNDRY**

Consultancy and systems design practice. Fee-based. Built to take what the research produces and make it real inside real organizations.

• [thecoherencefoundry.com](http://thecoherencefoundry.com)

TIME TO BUILD ON STRUCTURE.

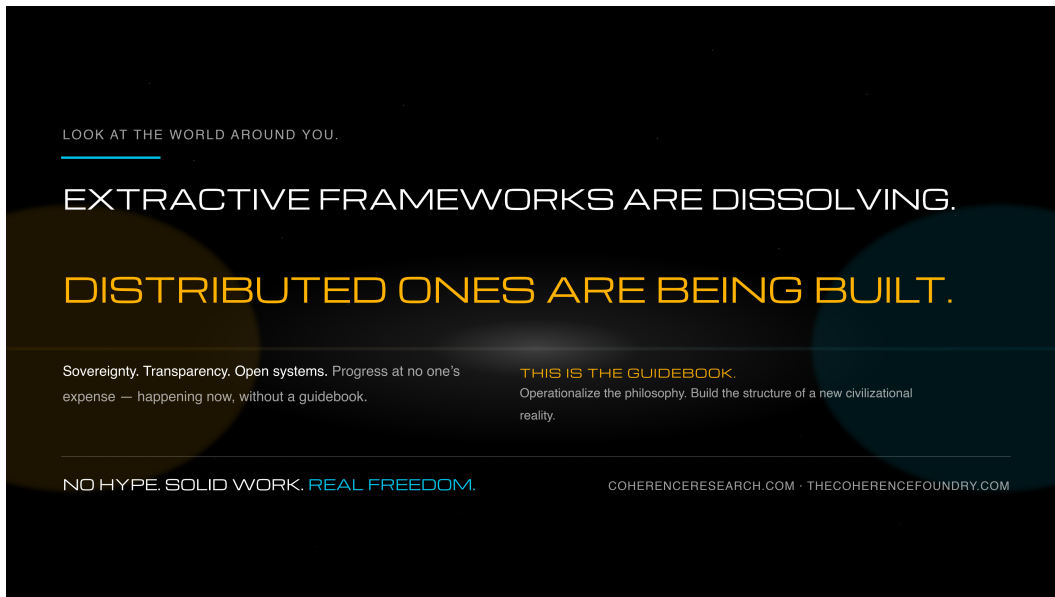
JASON CARROLL · COHERENCE RESEARCH

Two organizations. Two distinct roles.

**Coherence Research** — independent nonprofit. We publish open standards, build free tools, give this stuff away — like we're doing tonight — because structural understanding shouldn't cost anything to access. That's the mission. [coherenceresearch.com](http://coherenceresearch.com).

**Coherence Foundry** — consultancy and systems design practice. Fee-based. Seriously capable. Built specifically to take what the research produces and make it real inside real organizations.

If your organization is ready to go further — if you want to actually implement this, design systems grounded in sovereign exchange, work with people who understand the structural mechanics — **that's where we go.** [thecoherencefoundry.com](http://thecoherencefoundry.com).



Look at the world around you.

Distributed systems are everywhere now. Sovereignty. Transparency. Open systems. Not a future promise — evolving in real time.

**Extraction is becoming a deprecated concept.** Being replaced by progress at no one's expense. The old scaffolding is dissolving. You can see it.

Something is being rebuilt using this exact methodology — presence, connection, flow, sovereign exchange — even if no one has the language or a map.

**This is the map.**

If you can operationalize this philosophy — this process — **you will be building the structures of a new civilizational reality.** No hype to buy in. No round to get in on. Solid work. Quiet work.

But you will be standing there — already building — when everyone else shows up holding the debris of what's dissolving now.

**A legitimate opportunity.** Not a Microsoft. Not a Google. An opportunity of real freedom.

Thank you.