

HORTGRO TECHNICAL SYMPOSIUM, 2024

Thoughts on how businesses can respond strategically to the sustainability agenda.

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BLUE NORTH

THINKING. FUTURE

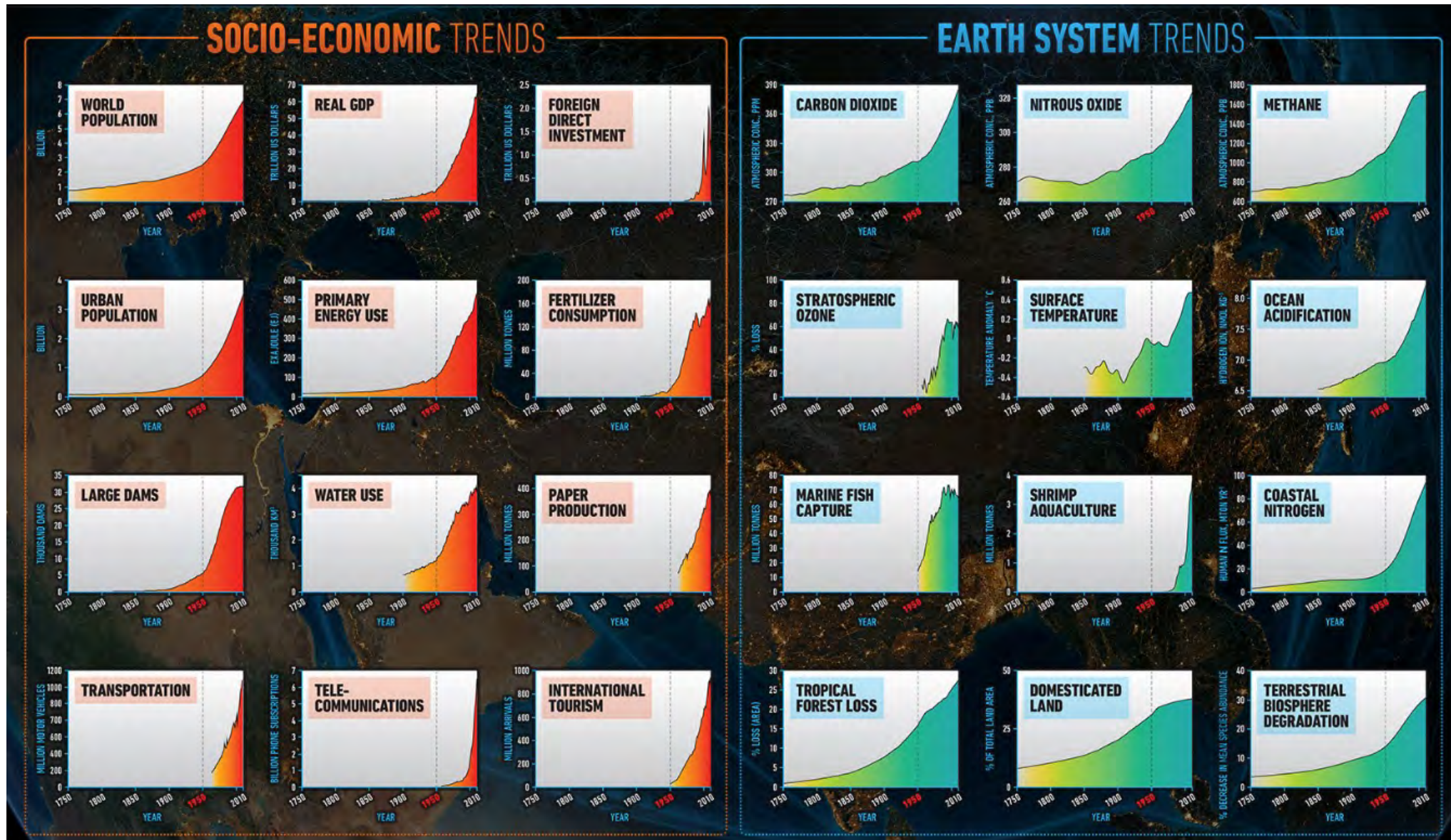
# Contents

- The need for change
- Unpacking “change”
- A thinking framework
- Change trajectories

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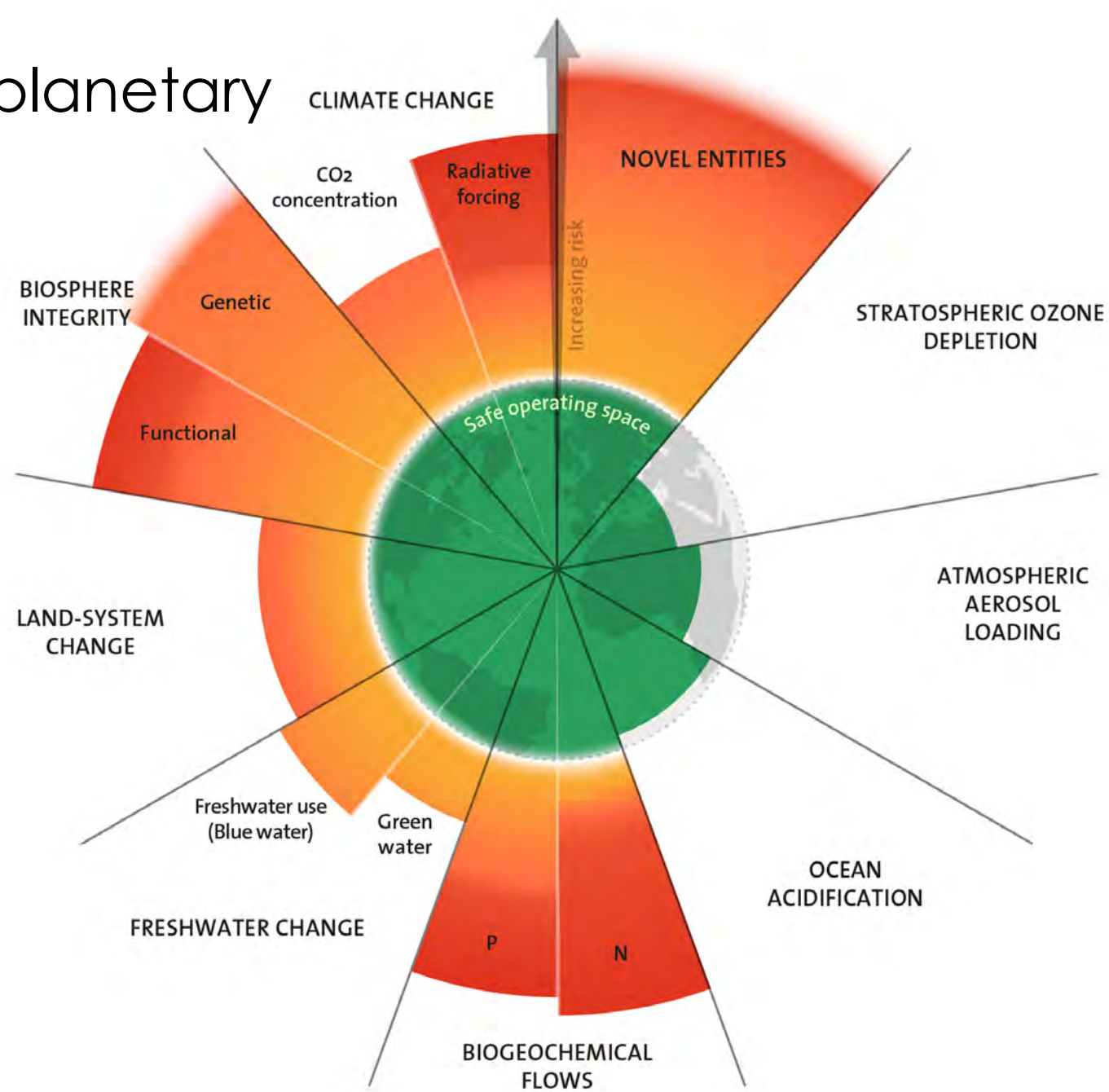
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# The great acceleration...



Steffen, Will; Broadgate, Wendy; Deutsch, Lisa; Gaffney, Owen; Ludwig, Cornelia. 2015. The trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration". The Anthropocene Review. 2 (1): 81–98.

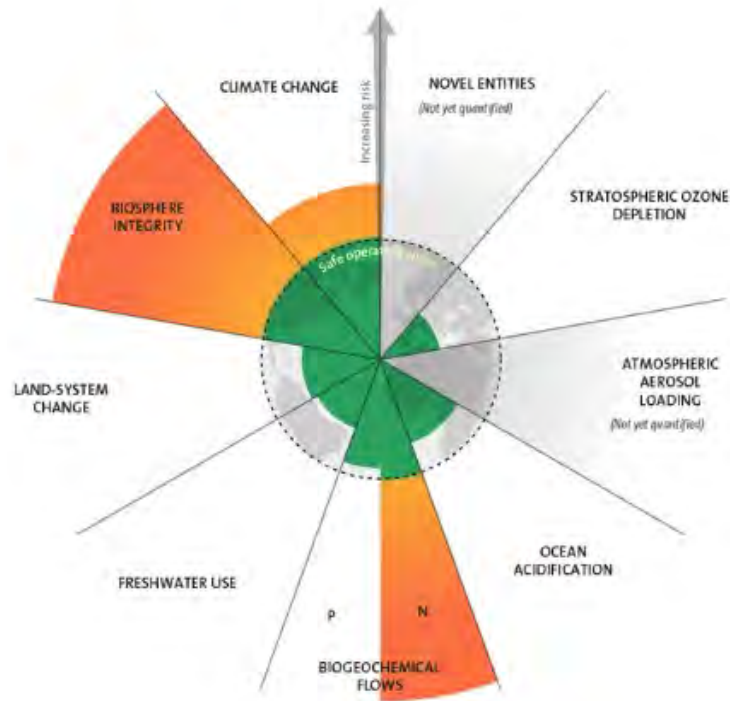
# Overshooting planetary boundaries...





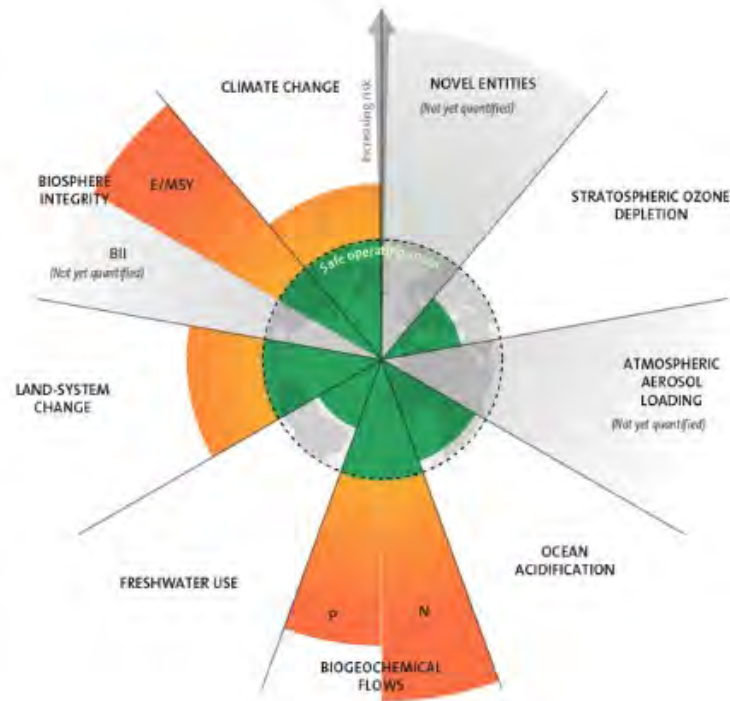
# The risk of large-scale, abrupt or irreversible environmental change is increasing....

2009



7 boundaries assessed,  
3 crossed

2015



7 boundaries assessed,  
4 crossed

2023



9 boundaries assessed,  
6 crossed

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- Facing a “**sustainability challenge**”
- Can we **improve** the situation (reduce risk, increase well-being...)?
- But, “all improvement is a change, but **not all change is an improvement**” (Dr Eli Goldratt)
- **Two parameters** to help discern which is the right type of change...**change that will deliver improvement** (and which will not)
  1. The worldview that guides the change : **Strong vs. Weak Sustainability**
  2. The approach to change: **Reactive vs. Proactive.**



# 1. Worldviews: Strong vs. Weak Sustainability

## **Weak Sustainability**

The economy is disconnected from nature.

Human ingenuity & technology will overcome all limits.

Prevailing worldview that underpins modern economic theory.

## **Strong Sustainability**

The economy a sub-system of the biosphere.

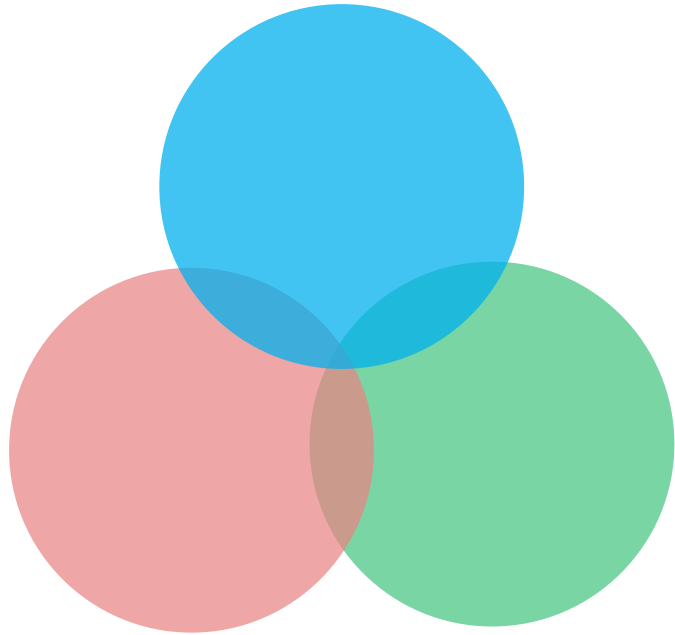
Have to heed the laws and limits of Nature.

Operate within Planet Earth's Carrying Capacity.

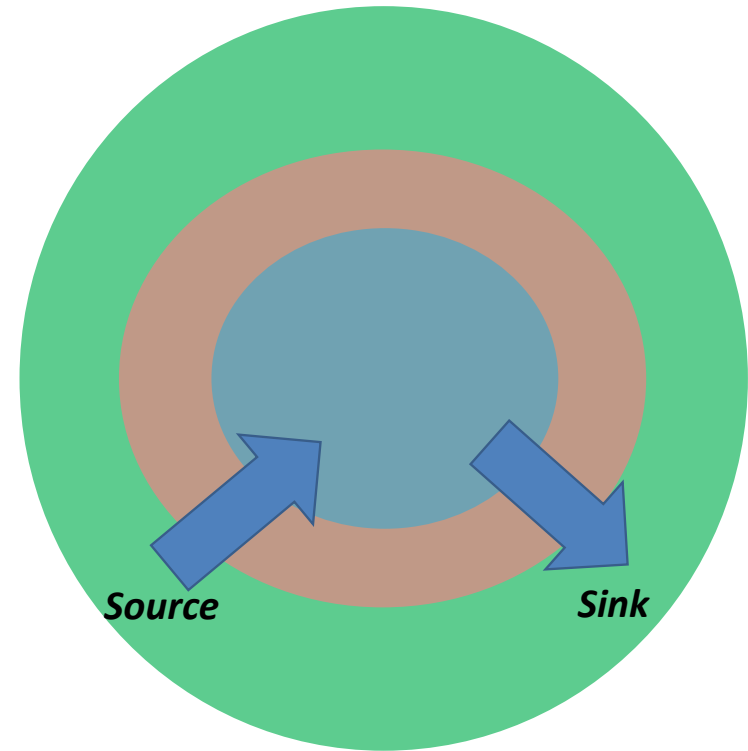
The realm of ecological economics.

# 1. Worldviews: Strong vs. Weak Sustainability

## Weak Sustainability



## Strong Sustainability



## 2. Attitudes: Reactive vs. Proactive

### **Reactive**

- Respond to changes in the system in a reactive way.
- As and when needed.
- "Outside-In change"

### **Proactive**

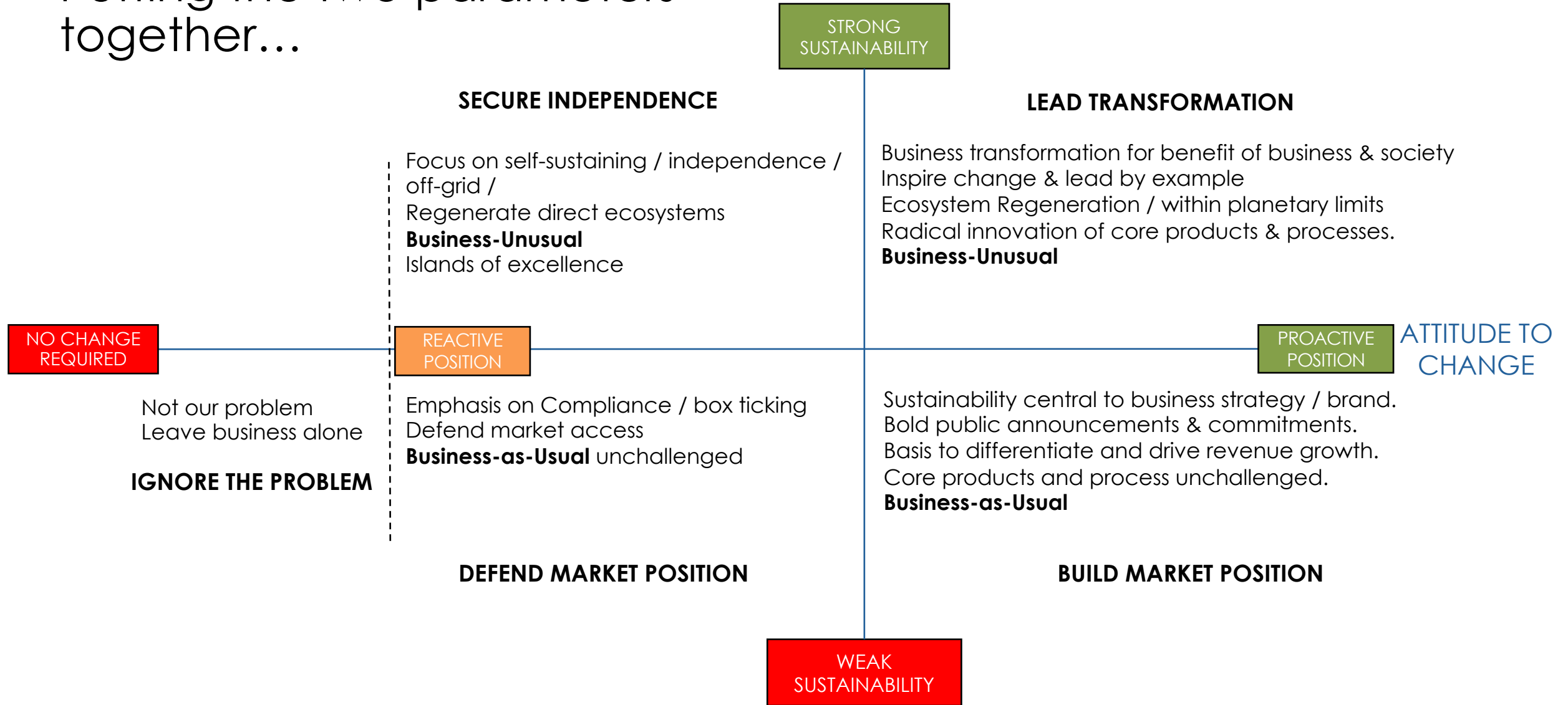
- Proactively and preemptively manage and lead change.
- "Inside-Out change"

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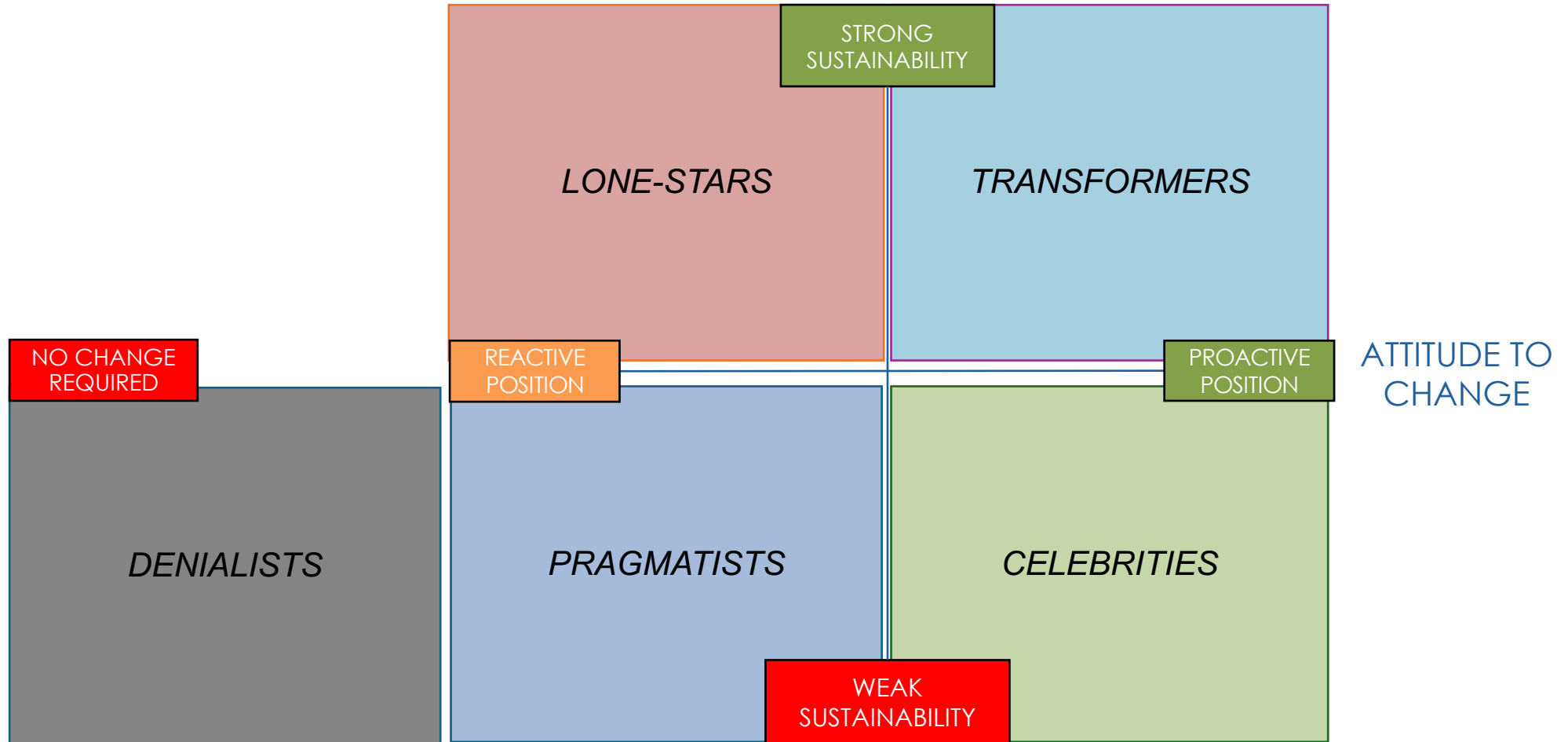
# Putting the two parameters together...

## THE GUIDING WORLDVIEW





# THE GUIDING WORLDVIEW



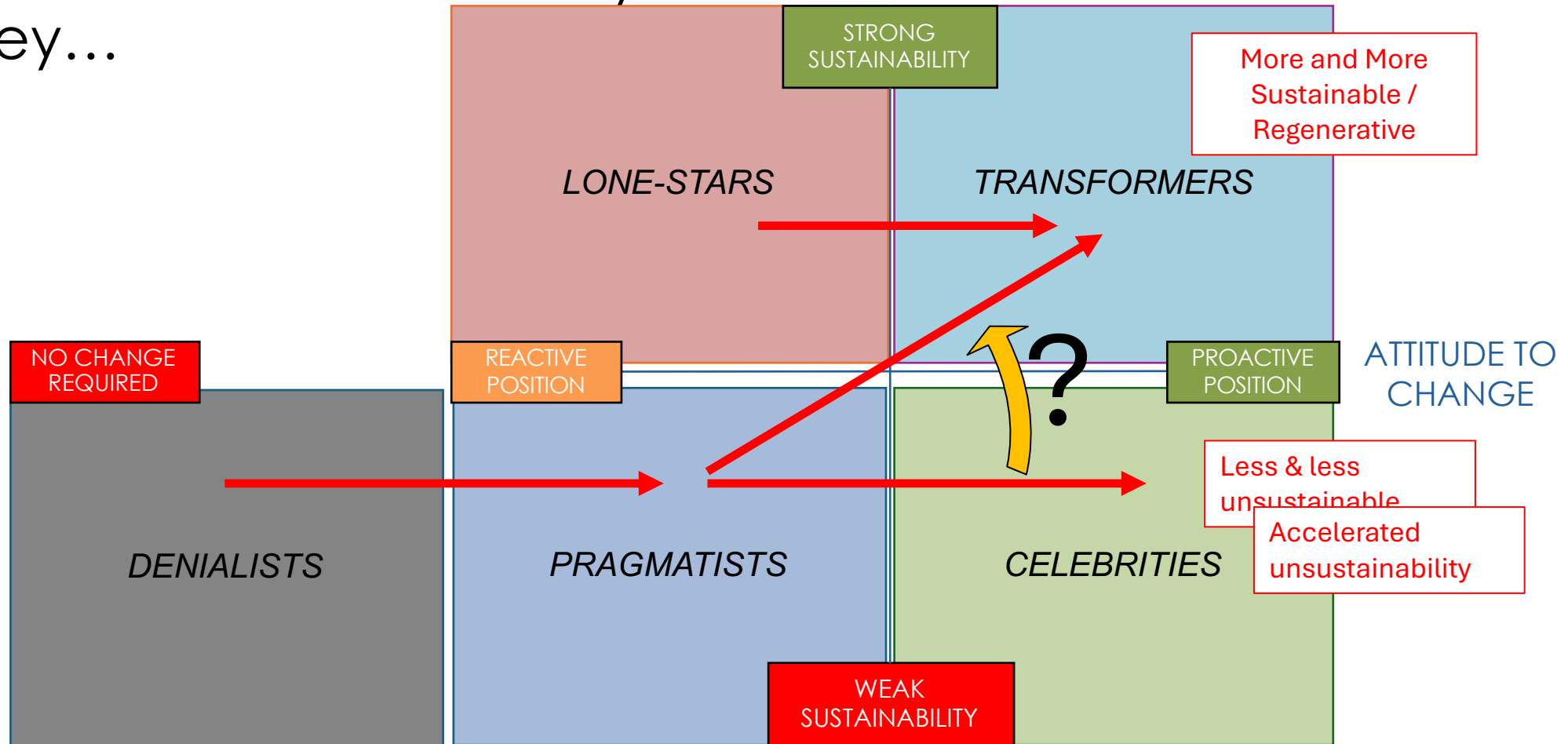
- Where would you place your own business on the matrix currently?
- Where would you like your business to be in future (aspiration)?

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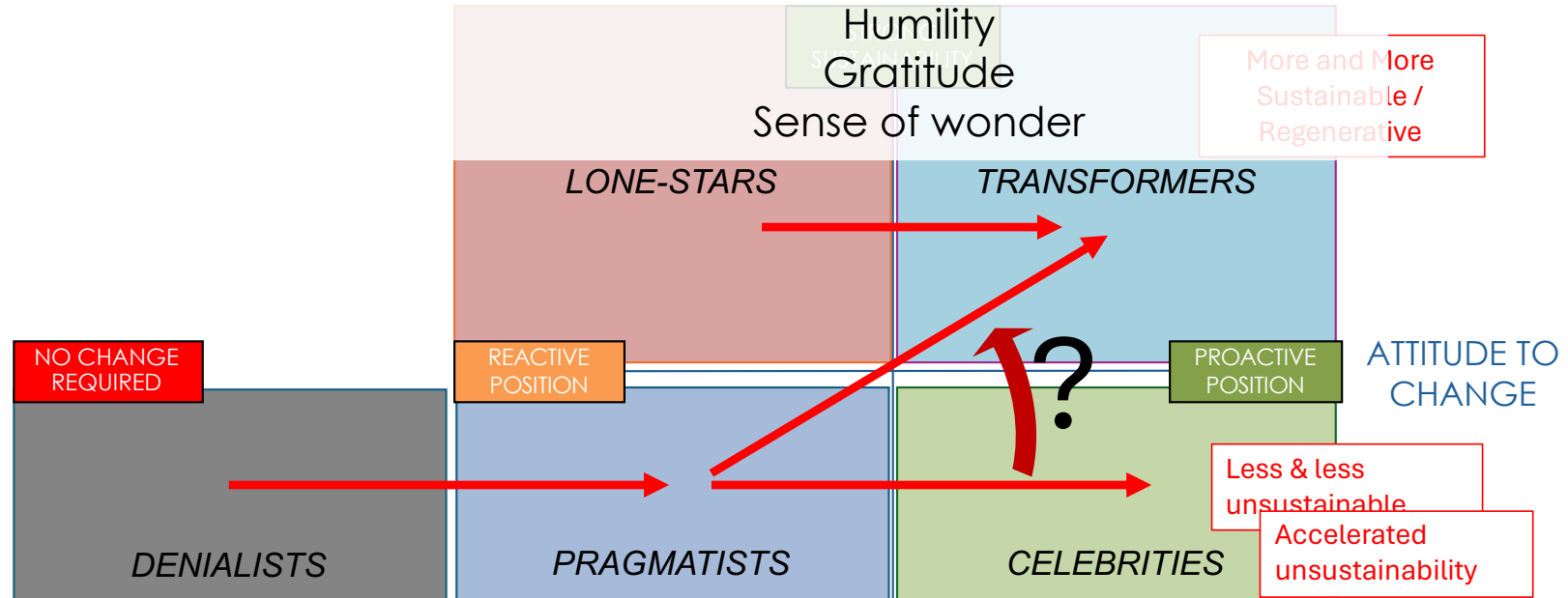
# Fundamentally different "roads" on the sustainability journey...

## THE GUIDING WORLDVIEW



# Considerations for a change in trajectory...

Whole system thinking & planning  
 Ecological literacy  
 Stewardship  
 Long-term timeframes  
 Regenerative  
 Inclusive



*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
 Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
 Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -  
 I took the one less travelled by,  
 And that has made all the difference.*

From: The Road Not Taken, by Robert Frost.



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Thank you!



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