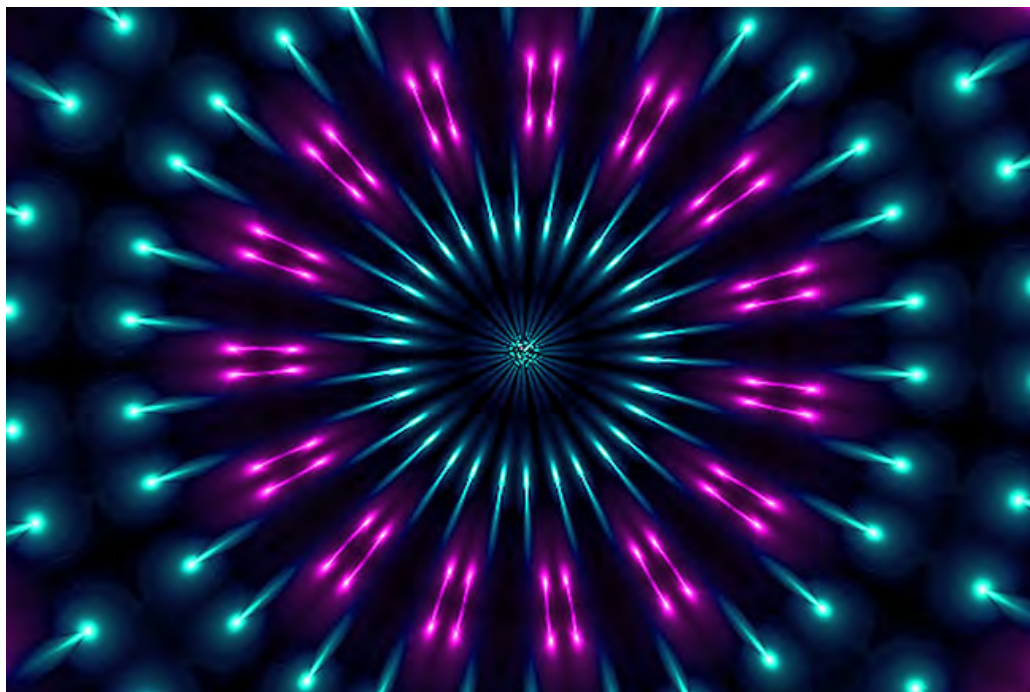


# Co-Creating A New Culture of Technology



*“... electronic media is to be one of love’s most powerful and effective tools of transformation ... facilitating education and catalyzing widespread awakening”*  
~ Ken Carey

Many belief systems hold to the idea that what we choose to focus on matters – that what we focus on is what we bring into being. One can live with this knowledge and be afraid of our power, or one can live into this awareness as liberation. Imagine, as Ken Carey does in his prophetic vision for the internet, what it would be like if everything we do in the digital realm opens the opportunity for love, for transformation, and widespread awakening.

For many of us, the best online events ARE about love, and we feel that is something powerful enough to foment a cultural transformation.

But before we explore this idea of co-creating a new culture of transformation, let’s back up a minute, and look at the etymology of the word “culture”...

Amy Lenzo  
from “The Art of Online Hosting” with FireHawk Hulin  
[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)

The origins of the word “culture” are earth-based, both noun and verb. As a noun, from Middle English, culture originally denoted a cultivated piece of land; as a verb, the word was based on the Latin *colere* to ‘tend, cultivate. So, the earliest use of the term culture was related to ‘cultivation of the soil’ and from this came the idea of cultivation of the mind, of behavior and manners, cultivating a way of “being” in the world.

More recent definitions of culture largely refer to the arts and other human achievements as **seen collectively**, and the customs, attitudes and behaviors characteristic of a particular group.

So modern definitions of culture infer a social orientation - and the context for a new culture of technology via the art and practice of online hosting is located in the behaviors, attitudes and beliefs that comprise the social fabric of our lives. Culture is a permeable fabric - cultures are born, they change, they collapse & disappear; they develop and evolve over time. Culture can be impacted.

We can impact our culture.



Amy Lenzo  
from “The Art of Online Hosting” with FireHawk Hulin  
[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)

There is also a biological definition of culture that has meaning both as a noun & a verb and retains its direct connection to the earth. In biology, to “culture” is to maintain something – e.g. microorganisms, tissue, cells, bacteria - in conditions suitable for growth; and **to grow** that tissue, etc. in a controlled or defined medium. It is also **to introduce** (living material) into a *culture medium*.

So, from one perspective we can ask ourselves, “*What is the culture we are introducing into the online environment and from there to the world - both of which are larger “culture mediums” - through our online hosting practices and engagement?*”

The inculturation of change is already in motion. Think of the times in your life when technology has been a partner for you in a meaningful way... from the ubiquitous everyday tools that have transformed our ability to see and share to social contributions like “Caring Bridge” for connecting loved ones during serious illness.

Let’s return for a moment to the idea of “presencing” as a verb, which comes from Otto Scharmer’s work in the Presencing Institute, and the book “*Presencing*” he co-wrote with Peter Senge, Joe Jaworski, & Betty Sue Flowers.

Extrapolating from Scharmer’s work, “presencing” is the ACT of calling something forward, into being. It is to weave a container, create “hospitable space”, to nurture and “seed” what it is we are calling forward.

That leads us to the question that underlies the focus of this inquiry - *What is the new culture we want to bring forward with our online hosting? What do we want from our technology, from our life online?*

## A Culture of Relationship-Based Technology

There is a book by Charles Eisenstein called *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*, that has had considerable influence recently - the title alone is evocative enough to ask us to consider - “*What IS the world I want to live in? What’s my vision for the future?*”

We all have a vision for the future. Here’s mine. I am interested in cultivating a *relationship* with technology and releasing the culture of relationship-based technology

Amy Lenzo  
from “*The Art of Online Hosting*” with FireHawk Hulin  
[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)

into the world of online hosting. The culture of technology I want to live into is one focused on our capacity to partner with technology be more human together, to connect to each other, to other sentient beings, and to Life as a whole.

The culture of technology I can imagine is one that uses technology to draw out the best in us: that helps us get to know each other through what we have in common and what we can learn from our diversity as human beings in order to evolve a global mind-set of mutual respect and curiosity.

It frames what we do online as integral and co-creative with the rest of our lives, using technology as creative expression; as a unique opportunity to celebrate Life, to bring Beauty into the Center of all we do; to bring our whole selves - minds, spirits, bodies, and emotions - into our engagements and to invite that wholeness in one another.

This is a culture that many are already participating in, using technology to create new and innovative ways of being human together.

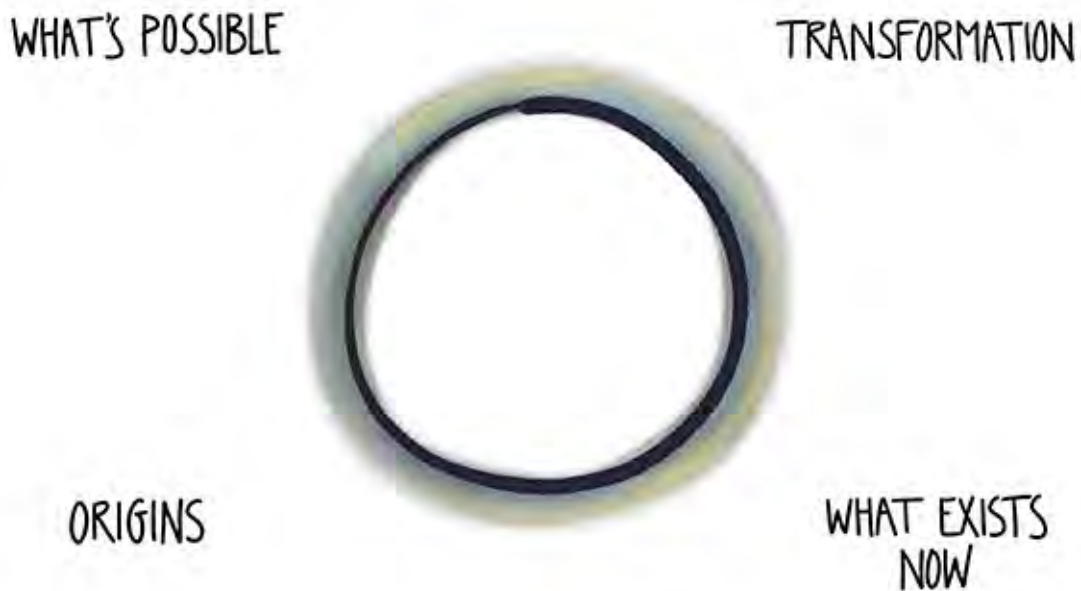
These ideas and ways of evolving are not separate or disconnected from the natural world and the Earth itself. What the Earth does is find a million ways to connect and weave things together so that the whole can survive and thrive. We are all integral parts of Nature – so it follows that the cultures we create come from nature, and so does our technology.

It falls to us to step forward and ensure that this amazing invention – technology - too finds ways to serve all of Life, through our choices and the practices we embrace and explore. The natural world models a way of being that can inspire us to presence our relationship with the whole at every step.

In our passionate engagement with facts and issues, may we not forget the beauty of our world. May we step forward not to evoke anger & indignation in others, but to remind each other of who we are, and what we most love and need. May we be ever conscious of what is at stake in terms of our larger circles of relationship.

*Amy Lenzo*  
*from "The Art of Online Hosting" with FireHawk Hulin*  
[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)

# Mapping a New Culture of Technology



graphic by [Viola Clark](#)

## What Exists Now?

*What is the current state of the Culture of Technology?*

There is always a “present state” for culture - no matter what culture it is - and the current state of online culture is a very mixed bag...

Much of the prevailing culture of technology is anonymous and impersonal, sometimes dangerously so. As is true in the larger culture, the online culture puts a lot of focus on commercialism and consumerism. “Big business” threatens to take over the flow of information, with access to content dependent on financial models of profit and loss. For many, the online sphere is seen largely as a mental space, without a lot of heart or spirit. The lack of connection to our bodies online and the increasing rates of obesity, stress, and eye strain caused by long hours in front of a digital screen echo the

Amy Lenzo  
from “The Art of Online Hosting” with FireHawk Hulin  
[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)

disconnect with our larger body, the Earth, that also dominates the larger culture around the world.

At the same time, there are increasing numbers of projects and people and programs emerging in the online culture that are focused on heart and spirit. Technology is being used to help raise awareness of the natural world, and address environmental concerns, as well as connect people around the world in global conversations that make us wiser and more sensitive to each other and our diverse needs.

## Origins

### *What is the Origin Story of Technology?*

The “journey song” of technology tells a story that began not too long ago in the history of humankind. The changes that began with the Industrial Revolution have led us to the most recent chapter which started a mere hundred years ago or so, about an extraordinary new medium of shared communications designed to nurture collaboration.

*“The Internet was originally built to facilitate collaboration... the protocols of the internet were devised by peer collaboration, and the resulting system seemed to have embedded in its genetic code a propensity to facilitate such collaboration.”*

~ Walter Isaacson, *The Innovators: How a Group of Innovators, Geniuses, and Geeks Created the Digital Revolution*

According to Isaacson’s extensive research, the vision that fueled the development of the digital age, starting with initial explorations in the early 1800s, was based on collaboration - human with human, and human with machine. It was also – tellingly - a collaboration between art and science.

From the early days of the internet, brought into being through conversation and explorations between Ada Lovelace (daughter of the poet Byron) and Charles Babbage, art and aesthetics have impacted what might otherwise be a very dry medium. Steve Jobs of Apple is a classic example, with his realization that beauty matters. He knew that the visual and tactile quality of what we are seeing and feeling as we work online - the fonts we’re using, the design of our tools, and the layout of our screens - impact us in ways both subtle and overt.

Amy Lenzo

from “The Art of Online Hosting” with FireHawk Hulin

[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)

We too are part of this lineage, those of us concerned with the “art” of hosting – with the recognition that there is magic afoot in our engagements and not everything can be planned and pre-established.

## What is possible?

*What is the culture we can imagine and want to bring into being?*

Because of the nature of being human, we inevitably want to evolve and develop our cultures. We want technology to serve us, to serve the evolving nature of what it is to be human NOW, and what we can imagine for the future. Many of us are putting a stake in the ground for an online culture that is not limited to what is there now. We are looking to co-create a culture of technology that includes what is here now and transcends it.

*What do we say yes to? What do we say no to?* There are a series of such choices to navigate as we host a new culture into the world.

Our work together suggests that a powerful shared context can help guide our hosting aspirations, experiments, and programs. Perhaps a deeper way to express this is to say that for me and those I am co-creating with, the Digital Realm is sacred (because we see it as scared); and each of us who gather in it are sacred human beings.

The internet can be a vehicle of exploitation, domination and control or it can be a most intimate space, where we come to practice being fully human together. Together we can create a space that is distracting, banal, and mundane, or we can create a culture that is meaningful, rich, and wildly co-creative. The choices are ours.

## Transformation

You only have to look at the power of the great cultures of the past, and the quantum leaps that have occurred over time to know that transformation is not only possible, it is inevitable.

The question is simply what transformations will take place, and how quickly.

If what we really care about is being human together, we can contribute to a culture that does just that. Cell phones connected across the world are a petri dish for a whole new level of human connectivity. What strange and wonderful culture/s will grow from this?

Amy Lenzo  
from “The Art of Online Hosting” with FireHawk Hulin  
[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)

\* \* \* \* \*

Many of us are passionate about co-creating a new culture of technology and feel that it will be increasingly crucial to be fluid in this medium and embrace its opportunities for new ways to live and be together in a truly connected world.

We don't need to limit our dreams to what's possible now... technology is growing so quickly - it will *grow into* our dreams! But ultimately it's not about technology at all - it's about what technology can serve, and our ability to dream into futures that work for everyone.

When we set out to host, let us consider how we can create spaces, in whatever contexts we are hosting, that invite everyone who joins us to be engaged and come to know that they matter. How can we allow for the spaciousness in ourselves that can create spaciousness for all of the others – with no-one left out!

We are a proof of the concept that the digital realm is sacred - because we say it is and because we choose to act accordingly. We can commit to fiercely and lovingly intervene when people speak and act in ways that denigrate and dismiss this realm as something that makes us less human. We can lead by example.



Amy Lenzo  
from "The Art of Online Hosting" with FireHawk Hulin  
[www.wedialogue.com](http://www.wedialogue.com)