I asked C. P.¹, a patient at a therapeutic community in Argentina: *What is art as part of your treatment?* And she said like shooting an arrow at a target: “To come out, breathe. Live life from another place. An art form to break the routine. Feel contained. A game to revive my true essence. Learn to talk about me in metaphors. Think about myself, recreate myself, feel that time flies. Let's me guide. I got lost and with art now I am finding myself.”

If we stop seeing art as the sum of artistic representations and see it as the set of processes and practices that human beings create to coexist with each other, we begin to understand art as one of the most fundamental resources for mediating tensions in the development of life.

Thousands of artists around the world are creating spaces for artistic and cultural mediation like the ones C. describes, from a perspective far removed from ‘Fine Arts’.

This, in each context, makes us capable of intervening in reality, creating group spaces focused on what an expressive body can dream, plan, know and create. We can do this in such a way that those spaces which we feel are anonymous, violent, precarious, manic and gray can be inhabited by impulses that help to recognize the beauty of human environments, the richness of their diversity and then move to curiosity about otherness, rather than foster the mistrust that local and planetary coexistence generates. We are all students of the cultural mandate "man is a wolf for man", that Hobbes theorized in Leviathan, and it is not a question of arguing with his idea of the role of State but of understanding that mistrust is the starting point, and that we must generate a planetary movement to build something else from there.

The challenge is not a theoretical debate but a creative process which can be activated and used as a tool through artistic creation.

The fact that half of the people in our country Argentina are submerged in poverty clearly marks an exhaustion of the political, economic and social systems, with direct consequences and daily tensions in all areas of our private and public lives. When I talk to my peers in Latin America, the statements are the same: a system of binary human ties between saints and demons. We're always feeling like we have to get this tension over with, but that's the damn comfort zone. This human slide into hell is caused by the inability of entire countries to resolve tensions in a creative way. Here and throughout

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¹ The name of the participant was changed to protect her identity.
the world, tensions are avoided or simplified instead of being diagnosed and addressed with the appropriate tools of human creativity.

The discussions and economic recipes taken by one or the other political parties nullify any creative process. The debate on recipes always ignores the background of political tensions and the importance of culture to mediate them. The development goals framework for wellbeing should include the concept of “transformative cultures skills” required for genuine collaboration. This is BEING (relationship to Self) THINKING (cognitive skills) RELATING (caring for others and the context) COLLABORATING (social skills) and ACTING (driving change)2.

We should understand that creativity is a public good and essential in this fundamental role. If we want us to dream, plan and create a country we should come from vulnerability to resilience through arts and culture as C. P. did! Generating the conditions for conversations which allow openness and a learning mindset, empathy and compassion, means finding the languages and the spaces for symbolic creation. Poetized bodies are central to the massive construction of dialogue which can meet the well-being objective. It has to be carried out by the entire population, because if not, it cannot be complete. And that is called CULTURE, a word condemned to be only identified with some expressions of the Fine Arts or the protection of heritage and then supplied with the meager budgets that we dedicate to the superfluous. The keys to establishing planetary well-being include understanding what culture is about and what the art of living together entails, as the central creation of the human community: surviving, producing, living together and creating meaning.

What are the drivers for the creation of this human planetary collective, of which we are passively part?

Something must be created to make the world sustainable, but that creation will never start unless it is understood that the collective project supposes - first of all - a creative subject. And constituting it inevitably entails tensions. When we say “we”, who are we? Who have we left out?

That is, it is the human community that needs to be created as part of the creative process itself. It is the human community that has to create itself in the action of promoting and leading this transformation. The creative collective subject and the collective work must be created together as part of the same synergistic process.

Don’t worry if it seems difficult to you, thankfully theater and dance have understood it very well for thousands of years, because to create a dramaturgy, characters must be built in a scene conceived as a plot of tensions. We identify the creative conflict that makes someone desire something and another resist it.

2 https://www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org/
Performing arts creators work with our own bodies, and those of others, and we do nothing but let ourselves go through the tensions that help us understand our role in that particular edition of a dance or theater piece.

Building that creative subject - which in my case - I have always understood as a collective one, is the first step in managing tensions. With whom do I share what I imagine? Putting a piece on stage starts with finding we are all together with the initial triggers. Those first physical, symbolical, emotional and mental tools will make dance appear. They are our first treasure to move forward, resolving tensions and uncertainty.

After this important pre-production effort, we trust that step by step we will come up with the complex web of tensions that will make something appear in the scene after several months of affirmations, denials, changes, frictions, frustrations and achievements!

Doris Humphrey defined the movement as “an arc between two deaths”. She was referring to the body in static equilibrium standing up and the body in static equilibrium on the floor. “Fall and recovery” was the design basis for all that wonderful flow in that permanent destabilization of forms.

When Clarise Lispector, the brilliant Brazilian writer, spoke about the right word she said "I am trying to write to you with my whole body, sending an arrow that sticks in the neuralgic point of the word." An arrow shot into the space between the bow and the string. That is, the tension is inherent to the force of the launch and the art of how we get the word across.

When we take a seat at the theater, we ask ourselves who is there? what do they want? and then, who will be the opponent to that desire? There is no fear of tensions in dance and theater. It's just about finding them and working from them.

Fear in creative work is not the appearance of tensions but rather the opposite, the fear of not identifying the creative tensions, the fear of not knowing how to edit and compose the scenic narrative with them. The sought-after flow of action with which we will take viewers where we want, implies anticipating who they are and how we will impact them. Once we identify them, we think: How can we generate those creative tensions that will feed their curiosity first and then their empathy?

Not finding those tensions... Now that's scary! Failing to achieve from the audience tense bodies leaning towards the stage is a big problem.

In the case of building cultures of care and well-being in each country, and the entire planet, the process is the same. Instead of assuming that some national or international authority will do it... we must ask ourselves: Who will be the creative subject? The cultural transformation that will give sustainability to the planet is not a task that can be entrusted, it is not a question of someone who must be asked to do it for us. It is necessary to create that community through empowering ourselves with transformative skills, and it must be multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and without borders, because the system that we want to change is missing those exact characteristics.
Arts and culture are the means for awareness and complexity, but also for joy and fulfillment being turned into a collective experience. In this space vulnerability becomes resilience. Achievements coming from this creative infatuation will help any political idea be better equipped to solve practical problems. That urge to dream and plan in new ways must be made highly enticing, since there are many ‘desirers’, many dissatisfied, and many apathetic sleepers trying to adapt to hell.

We are in post-capitalism, where the world has disappointed us because progress and science did not and will not resolve survival in this state of affairs. Survival was put at risk by an extractive and violent way of living with the planet and with each other.

Now, there are four sources of high conflict:

1. The growing awareness that our modes of production, social organization and generation of knowledge must be transformed.

2. The cultural resistance and insecurities that this awareness generates.

3. The powerful inertia that production processes and organizational mechanisms are already long obsolete.

4. The appearance of problems whose resolution requires levels of planetary collaboration.

What is our ability to inhabit this complexity of these tensions? Firstly, understanding interdependence and taking care of diversity, and doing so from the assessment of emotions as the support of life and culture.

Creative Environments is a program created by Crear vale la pena that deals with specific tools that come from art for the treatment of tensions. From them, CVLP creates playful activities for creative expression and collaboration in community spaces, schools, mental health centers, in addition to designing social listening initiatives and neighborhood participation programs for municipalities.

And here we are finally, smiling with the tensions that move us and others! We have to have a creative relationship with the conflict, make friends, consider it an opportunity for transformation. Stop demonizing social conflict, turning it into coincidences and differences, because there is another possible world if we start to create it.

In a world of uncertainties and increasingly complex social tensions, where millions of children and young people live on the edge and do not have time to wait for public policies that are never defined, or electoral promises that are diluted when the election ends, distress and discomfort cannot be understood as a sum of occasional failures but as a divisive reality that has been built and must be unlearned.

It must be a priority to recognize "otherness" so we can empower it, to recognize the tensions, to harmonize them, and to revalidate art and culture in that grassroots action for bonding across inner compasses.
For this, artists must learn to create outside the formal circuits established in modernity. We must urgently join the collective processes of transformation from expressive languages that enable voices and mediations that are effective, transformative, and above all, viable, easy to implement. Because the age of complexity requires simple anchors. Art has them!