

## Tackling Wicked Problems through Deliberative Engagement

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Director of the Center for Public Deliberation  
Professor, Department of Communication Studies*



CENTER FOR  
PUBLIC DELIBERATION  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

*Dedicated to enhancing local democracy through improved public  
communication and community problem solving*

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Which statements best describe your view of the  
current quality of public discussion and debate?  
(choose up to three)

- ☐ 1. High quality, informed
- ☐ 2. Mean-spirited
- ☐ 3. Polarized
- ☐ 4. Involves a broad range of voices
- ☐ 5. Simplistic
- ☐ 6. Dominated by a few loud voices
- ☐ 7. Dominated by experts
- ☐ 8. Robust
- ☐ 9. Weak/limited, people are apathetic
- ☐ 10. (press 0) Productive

Which statements best describe your view of the  
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(choose up to three)

- ☐ 1. High quality, informed
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- ☐ 1 4. Involves a broad range of voices
- ☒ 17 5. Simplistic
- ☐ 18 6. Dominated by a few loud voices
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Answers from CML Board Retreat, Summer 2018

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## CPD Projects, 2006-2019

- Civic mission of schools
- Grade configuration of Poudre School District schools
- Statewide dropout rate
- Colorado Health Care Reform
- Student housing
- Improving higher education
- Childhood obesity
- Bicycle safety
- Diversity Dialogues at CSU Diversity Conference
- STEM education in K-12
- Arts Engagement Summit
- UniverCity Connections (CSU/Old Town collaborative project)
- School budgeting issues
- Medical Marijuana
- Regional visioning process
- Water and growth issues
- Poverty in Larimer County
- PSD Student Think Tank facilitator group
- K-12 school improvement
- Improving higher education through student-faculty reciprocity
- Politics of food
- Issues surrounding aging
- Early childhood education
- On campus stadium proposal
- Senior transportation
- Campus smoking
- School safety
- Bullying
- Mental health
- Nature in the City
- Larimer County Landfill/Wasteshed
- Diversity and Inclusion in Fort Collins
- CSU Innovation and Economic Prosperity
- CSU parking and affordable housing
- Air quality
- Managing data in local democracy

## Applications to Municipalities

Multiple Levels of Communication

- Council Engagement
- City Manager/Staff and Council
- City Government and Community
- Community Engagement

## Overview: Three Key Arguments

### #1 – The Basic Reality

Most of the key problems we face are best understood through a wicked problems lens



### #2 – The Bad News

Human nature and many of our primary institutions and processes are woefully ill-suited to address wicked problems

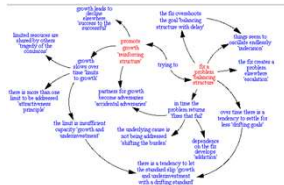


### #3 – The Hopeful News

Once we realize #1 and #2, we can build capacity for the kinds of conversations, processes, and institutions that cultivate the wisdom so critical to addressing wicked problems, particularly at the local level



*Wicked problems* inherently involve **competing underlying values**, paradoxes, and tradeoffs that **cannot be resolved by science**.



## Water in Northern Colorado as a Wicked Problem

Some things we care about:

- |                                       |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Healthy river with healthy ecosystems | Recreational opportunities      | Economic vitality                  |
| Water for homes & lawns               | Open space and wildlife habitat | Low cost of living                 |
| Water for local farms                 | Local food economy              | Freedom of choice of where to live |

### Key Deliberative Responses

1. Prioritizing
2. Balancing
3. Transcending

## Competing Values in Downtown Fort Collins

- |                                     |                             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Aesthetics/Beauty                 | • Individual freedom        |
| • Compassion                        | • Individual responsibility |
| • Diversity/Inclusivity             | • Individual rights         |
| • Economic health/vitality          | • Justice/Fairness          |
| • Effective use of public resources | • Public health/environment |
| • Equality                          | • Respect for law           |
| • Excitement/fun                    | • Respect for others        |
| • Family                            | • Safety                    |

## HEALTH CARE AS A WICKED PROBLEM



## Capitalism or Sustainability as a Wicked Problem

- The “Triple Bottom Line” of
  - Profit (economics, also tied to jobs and taxes)
  - People (social justice, equality, fairness)
  - Planet (environment)



We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

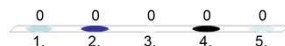
We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish **Justice**, insure **domestic Tranquility**, provide for the **common defense**, promote the **general Welfare**, and secure the Blessings of **Liberty** to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

### Key American Values

Preamble	Current Phrasing
Justice	Justice
Domestic Tranquility/ Common defense	Security/Safety
General Welfare	Equality
Liberty to ourselves	Freedom (for us)
Liberty for our posterity	Freedom (for future generations)

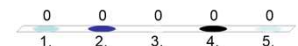
Which is most important to you?  
(choose only one)

1. Justice
2. Security/safety
3. Equality
4. Freedom (for us)
5. Freedom (future generations)



Which is least important to you?  
(choose only one)

1. Justice
2. Security/safety
3. Equality
4. Freedom (for us)
5. Freedom (future generations)



### Inherent Democratic Tensions

- Freedom and Equality (and between equality and equity)
- Our Freedom and Freedom of Future generations
- Freedom and Security
- Justice is a tension within itself (justice as the ideal between too much and too little credit or punishment)

#### Some others

- Democracy and expertise
- Short term and long term
- Individual rights and community good
- Unity and diversity
- Cooperation and competition
- Structure and agency (or opportunity and individual responsibility)
- Flexibility/Innovation and Consistency/Tradition
- Best use of resources (money, time, people)

*Wicked problems* inherently involve **competing underlying values**, paradoxes, and tradeoffs that **cannot be resolved** by science.

They call for ongoing high quality **communication, creativity**, and broad **collaborative action** to manage well.



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### What Are We Learning from Brain Science and Social Psychology?

#### The Problematic

We crave certainty and consistency

We are suckers for the good v. evil narrative



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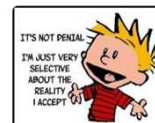
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We filter & cherry pick evidence to support our views





## What We Are Learning from Brain Science and Social Psychology?

### Stages of motivated reasoning

What and who we expose ourselves to

*selective exposure /  
echo chambers/  
filter or media bubbles*



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filter or media bubbles*

How we interpret new evidence

*confirmation bias,  
backfire effect,  
cognitive dissonance*



## How we interpret new evidence

*"when we want to believe something, we ask ourselves, 'Can I believe it?' Then...we search for supporting evidence, and if we find even a single piece of pseudo-evidence, we can stop thinking.... In contrast, when we don't want to believe something, we ask ourselves, 'Must I believe it?' Then we search for contrary evidence, and if we find a single reason to doubt the claim, we can dismiss it"*

• Jonathan Haidt and Tom Gilovich

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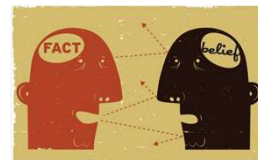
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How we make attributions and tell stories

*egoism, illusory correlation,  
negativity bias*

Bush: 'Too often we judge other groups by their worst examples, while judging ourselves by our best intentions'



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What and who we expose ourselves to	<i>selective exposure / echo chambers / filter or media bubbles</i>
How we interpret new evidence	<i>confirmation bias, backfire effect, cognitive dissonance</i>
How we make attributions and tell stories	<i>egoism, illusory correlation, negativity bias</i>
How we make decisions	<i>heuristics, self-serving bias, social proof</i>

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How we make decisions	<i>heuristics, self-serving bias, social proof</i>
What we remember	<i>availability bias</i>

## What We Are Learning from Brain Science

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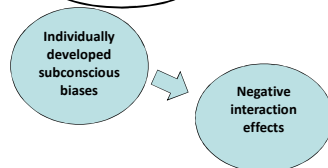
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- We are suckers for the good v. evil narrative
- We strongly prefer to gather with the like minded
- We filter & cherry pick evidence to support our views
- We avoid values dilemmas, tensions, and tough choices



## The Vicious Cycle of Exaggerated Polarization



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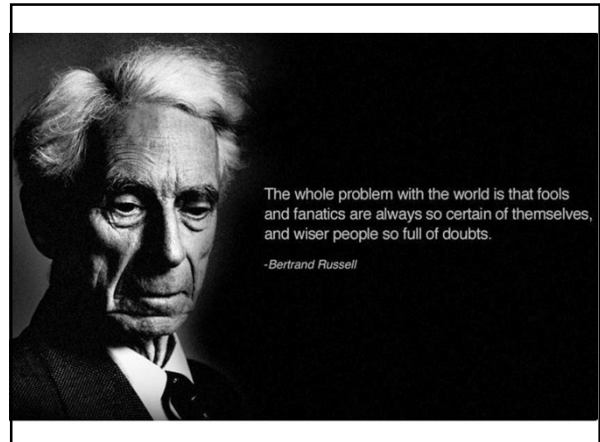
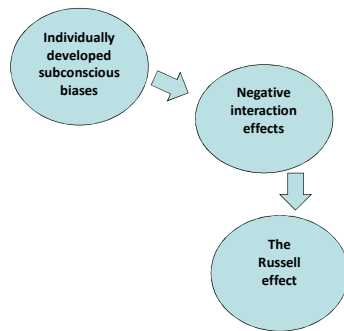
## Negative Interaction Effects

Kathryn Shultz – *Being Wrong*

- First step: Ignorance assumption
- Second step: Idiot assumption
- Third Step: Evil assumption



### The Vicious Cycle of Exaggerated Polarization



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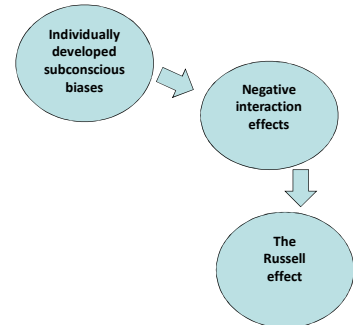


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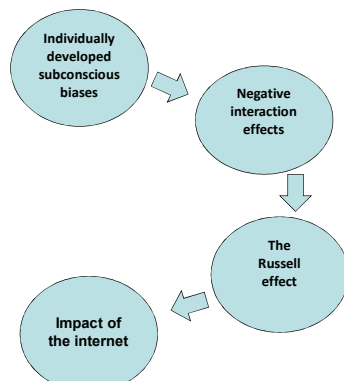
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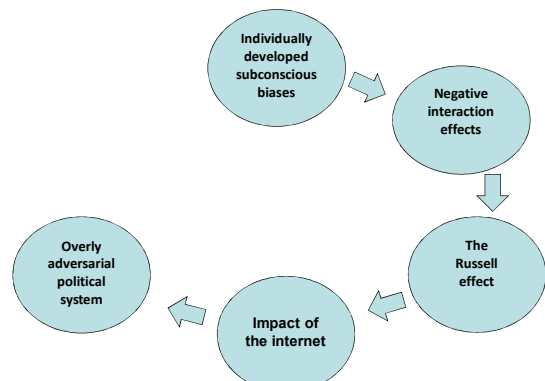
### The Vicious Cycle of Exaggerated Polarization



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### The Vicious Cycle of Exaggerated Polarization



### Drawbacks of an Overly-Adversarial Political System

- Plays into flaws of human nature
- Often focuses on “winning” vs. solving problems
- Zero-sum game incentivizes “bad” communication, strategic research, and problematizes implementation
- Often focuses on blaming (them) vs. taking accountability (us)
- Relies on narrow value frames (thus avoids tensions)
- Attracts/privileges organized, entrenched voices
- Negative side effects like polarization, cynicism, and apathy (which then cause even worse communication)
- Assumes a narrow role for citizens (citizens as voters, consumers, or spectators)



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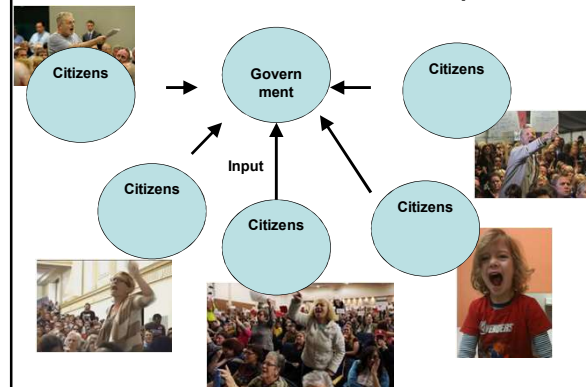
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### Key Problems with our Typical Public Processes

- Engage too late in the process when issues are simply framed as “yes” or “no”
- Primarily provide opportunities for individual or group expression

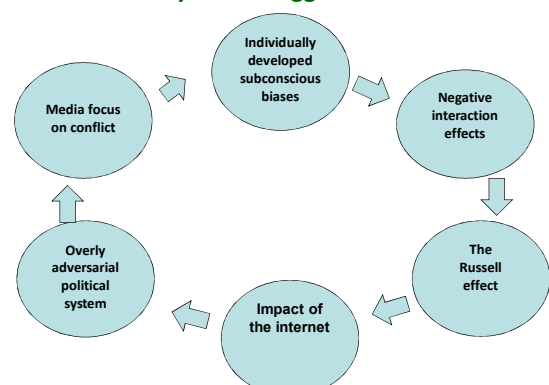
### Traditional Forms of Public Participation



### Key Problems with our Typical Public Processes

- Engage too late in the process when issues are simply framed as “yes” or “no”
- Primarily provide opportunities for individual or group expression
- Caters to entrenched and organized voices
- Little to no effective interaction or learning/refinement of opinion

### The Vicious Cycle of Exaggerated Polarization





### Why Experts Can't Save Us (though they can certainly help when used well)

- Good data is undermined in a polarized environment
- Facts don't change minds or behavior
- Experts by definition are focused on a specific, narrow aspect of the problem (i.e. they struggle with wicked problems).
- Experts often focus on being "value free" (they tell us what *is* or what *could* be, not what *should* be)
- Expert perspectives can overemphasize what can be measured and underemphasize what cannot
- Expert dominated processes shut out the public



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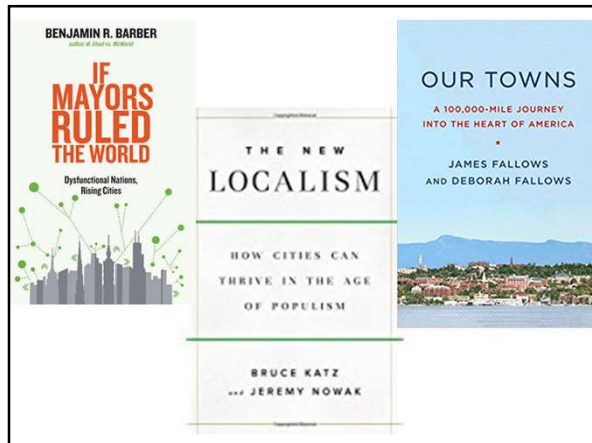
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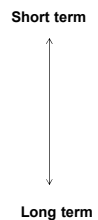
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### Key Steps for Local Communities

- Adopting a wicked problems mindset



### The Wicked Problems Mindset

- Presume wicked problems, not wicked people
- Become more comfortable with uncertainty
- Focus on elevating the conversation not just winning the argument

### Traditional v. Facilitative Leadership

#### Traditional

- Strong opinion
- Charisma
- Public speaking skills
- Mobilization of the like-minded

#### Facilitative

- Strong on process
- Trust and respect
- Facilitation skills
- Collaboration between broad perspectives

## The Wicked Problems Mindset

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- Put your energy toward identifying, engaging, and negotiating inherent tensions

## Inherent Democratic Tensions

- Freedom and Equality (and between equality and equity)
- Our Freedom and Freedom of Future generations
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- Justice is a tension within itself (justice as the ideal between too much and too little credit or punishment)

### Some others

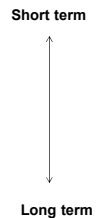
- Democracy and expertise
- Short term and long term
- Individual rights and community good
- Unity and diversity
- Cooperation and competition
- Structure and agency (or opportunity and individual responsibility)
- Flexibility/Innovation and Consistency/Tradition
- Best use of resources (money, time, people)

## The Wicked Problems Mindset

- Presume wicked problems, not wicked people
- Become more comfortable with uncertainty
- Focus on elevating the conversation not just winning the argument
- Put your energy toward identifying, engaging, and negotiating inherent tensions
- Work toward creating a learning community

## Key Steps for Local Communities

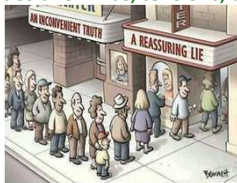
- Adopting a wicked problems mindset
- **Better processes - tap into different aspects of human nature**



## What We Are Learning from Brain Science and Social Psychology

### The Problematic

- We crave certainty and consistency
- We are suckers for the good v. evil narrative
- We strongly prefer to gather with the like minded
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## What We Are Learning from Social Psychology and Brain Science

### The Good

- We are inherently social and seek purpose and community
- We are inherently empathetic
- We are inherently pragmatic and creative
- We can overcome our bad tendencies and build better habits



## What We Are Learning from Social Psychology and Brain Science

Bottom line: The most powerful thing to help people overcome their biases and tackle wicked problems well is **genuine conversation with people they respect.**



Engagement Streams			
A Matrix of Proven Practices			
Primary Purpose	Name of Engagement Stream	Key Features	Important When...
To encourage people and groups to learn more about themselves, their community, or an issue, and possibly discover innovative solutions	Exploration	Suspending assumptions, creating a space that encourages a different kind of conversation, using ritual and symbolism to encourage openness, emphasis on listening	A group or community seems stuck or muddled and needs to reflect on their circumstance in depth and gain collective insight
To resolve conflicts, to foster personal healing and growth, and to improve relations among groups	Conflict Transformation	Creating a safe space, hearing from everyone, building trust, sharing personal stories and views	Relationships among participants are poor or not yet established and need to be issue can only be resolved when people change their behavior or attitude, expand their perspective, or take time to reflect and heal
To influence public decisions and public policy and improve public knowledge	Decision Making	Hearing and framing the issue fairly, weighing all options, considering different positions (i.e. deliberation), revealing public values, brainstorming solutions	The issue is within government's (or any single entity's) sphere of influence
To empower people and groups to solve complicated problems and take responsibility for the solution	Collaborative Action	Using dialogue and deliberation to generate ideas for community action, developing and implementing action plans collaboratively	The issue/topic requires intervention across multiple public and private entities, and anytime community action is important

National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation  
www.ncdd.org

## The Four Key Shifts of Deliberative Engagement

- From wicked people → to wicked problems
- From adversaries → to collaborators
- From inciting the worst of human nature → to bringing out the best of human nature
- From facts as cherry picked ammunition or "fake news" → to facts as tools for addressing problems together

## Key Steps for Local Communities

- Adopting a wicked problems mindset
- Better processes - tap into different aspects of human nature
- Build local capacity for deliberative engagement**

Short term  
↑  
↓  
Long term

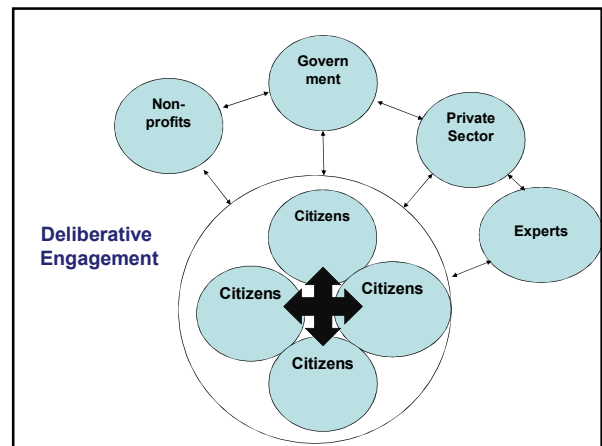
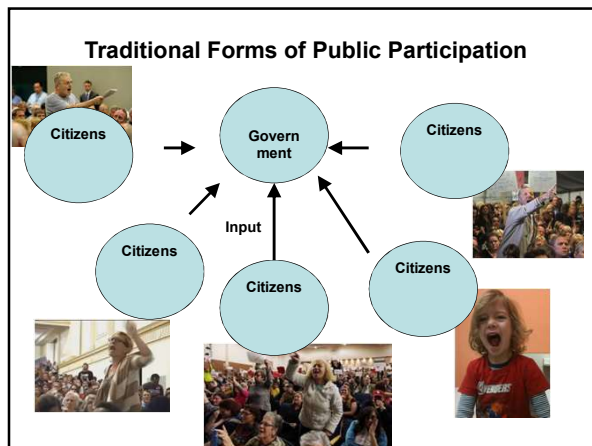
## What is Deliberative Engagement?

Deliberative democracy  
Community problem-solving  
Collaborative problem-solving  
Participatory decision-making  
Slow democracy  
Strong democracy  
Multi-stakeholder dispute resolution  
Public participation  
Organic or community politics  
Consensus building or seeking processes

## Key Components of Deliberative Engagement

- Overall deliberative framing
  - Wicked problem, multiple approaches, broad range of actors, starting discussion "upstream" (before polarization)
- Discussion guides/backgrounders
  - Base of information, something to react to, framed for deliberation, not persuasion
- Small, diverse, representative groups
- Processes designed for interaction and learning
- Deliberative facilitators



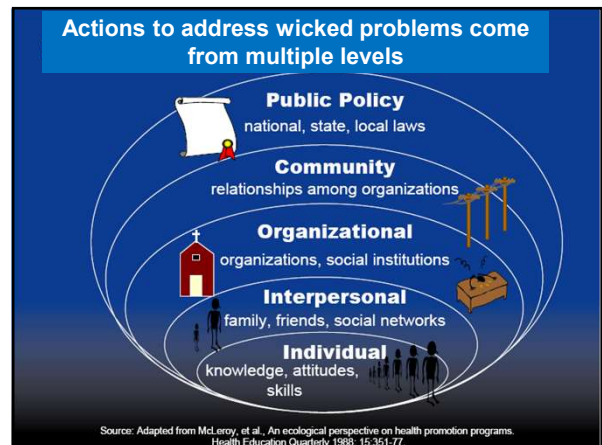


### Key Steps for Local Communities

- Adopting a wicked problems mindset
- Better processes - tap into different aspects of human nature
- Build local capacity for deliberative engagement
- Reinvigorate or create new key bridging institutions

Short term

Long term



	Traditional citizen involvement	Democratic governance
Who is responsible for solving public problems?	Governments	Whole community – governments, citizens, businesses, community organizations of all kinds
What are the criteria for “good government?”	Openness and efficiency	Ability to work with the public – identifying priorities, marshalling a variety of resources, achieving tangible changes, and reporting on your progress
How should governments recruit citizens?	Public officials call meetings, use media for outreach	Proactive, network-based recruitment by governments and other groups, reaching large numbers and different kinds of people
How should issues be discussed?	Public officials ‘sell’ the policy they	Basic background information provided, range of views laid on the

National League of Cities, *Building Democratic Governance: Tools and Structures for Engaging Citizens*

### Institutional Troubles

#### Bridging v. Polarizing Institutions

More polarizing

More bridging

- Political parties/elections
- Advocacy groups
- Internet / Social media
- Media/Press
- Experts
- School districts
- Universities
- Community organizations like Leadership Foundations, Public Libraries, League of Women Voters, United Way, Community Foundations, , Leadership programs, Boards and Commissions

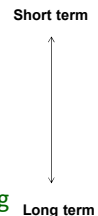
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- **Cultivate citizens as wise collaborators**

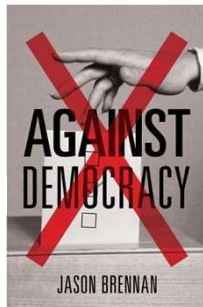


## Brennan's *Against Democracy*

Three types of citizens:

- Hobbits
- Hooligans
- ~~Vulcans~~

Wise collaborators



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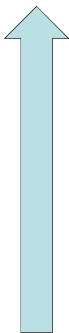
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## In the End, We Must Elevate the Conversations in our Communities

- Build capacity for **collaborative action** and co-creation
- Spark **collaborative learning** and the refinement (not just expression) of opinion
- Help **differentiate** good and weak arguments
- Positively **manage conflict**, build mutual **understanding**, and develop **respect**
- Support **listening** and genuine **interaction**
- Provide opportunities for **voice** and public input

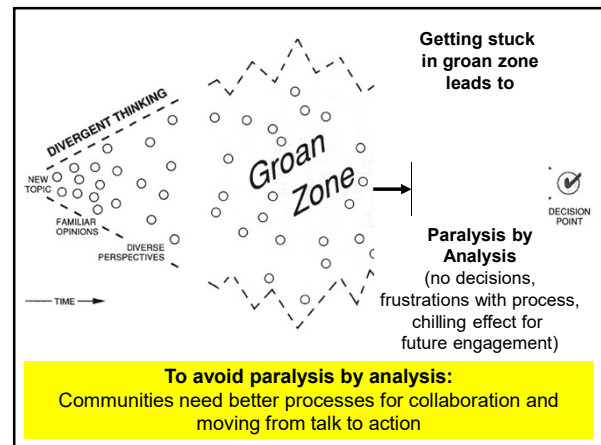
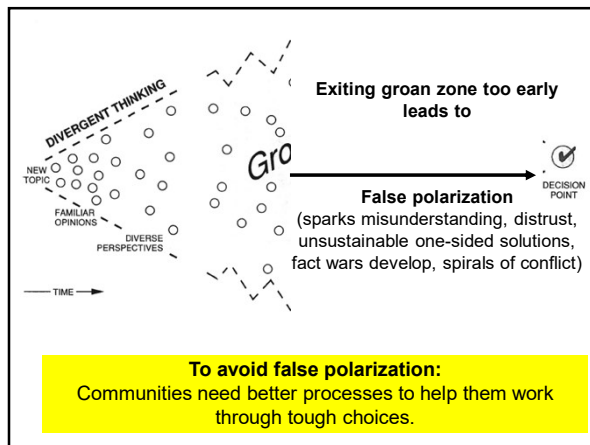
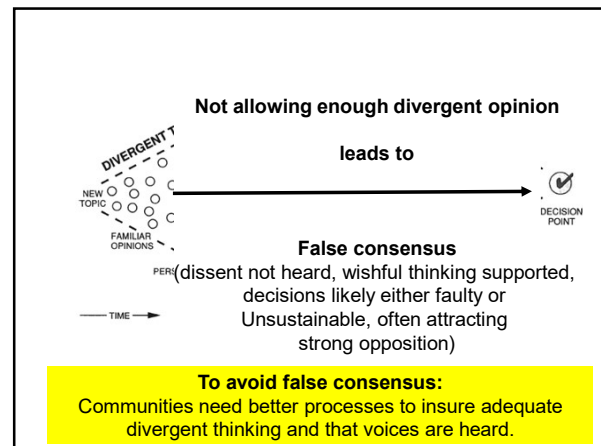
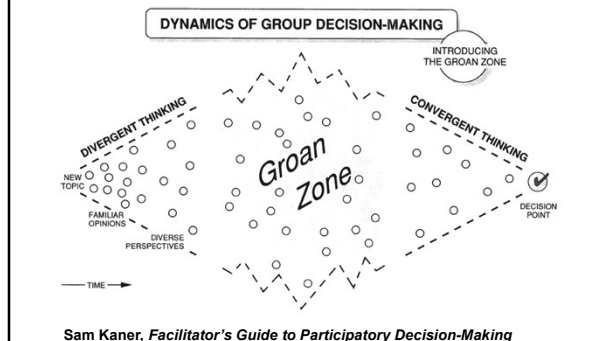


## Three Key Tools for Deliberative Engagement

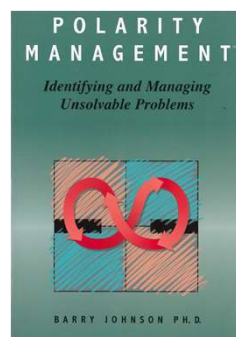
- NCDD Engagement Streams
- Kaner's Diamond of Participatory Decision Making
  - Polarity Management



## Kaner's Diamond of Participatory Decision-Making



## Polarity Management

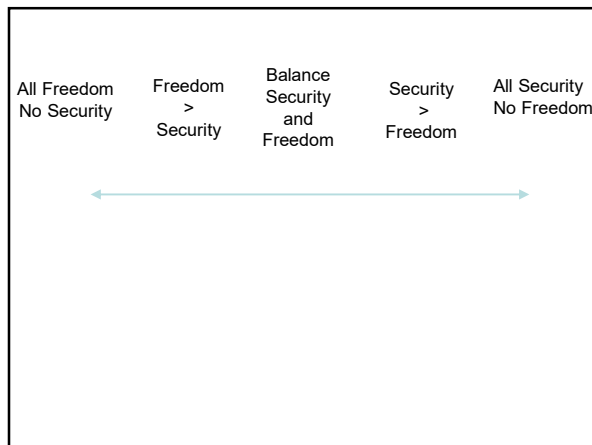
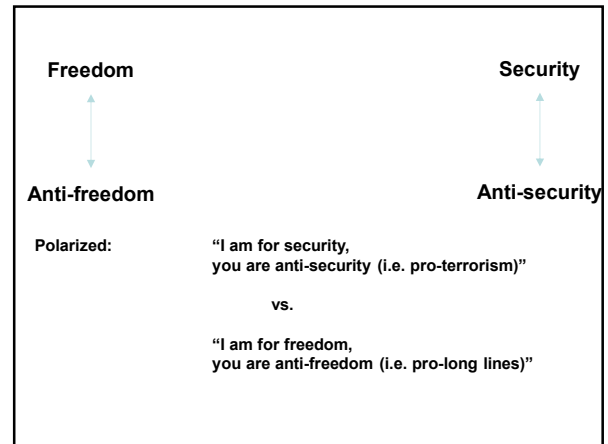
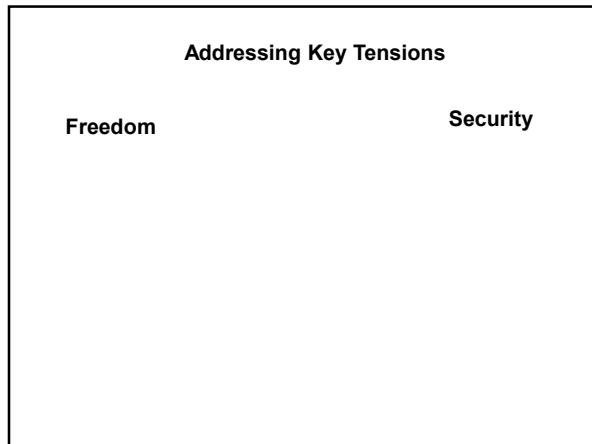


### Inherent Democratic Tensions

- Freedom and Equality (and between equality and equity)
- Our Freedom and Freedom of Future generations
- Freedom and Security
- Justice is a tension within itself (justice as the ideal between too much and too little credit or punishment)

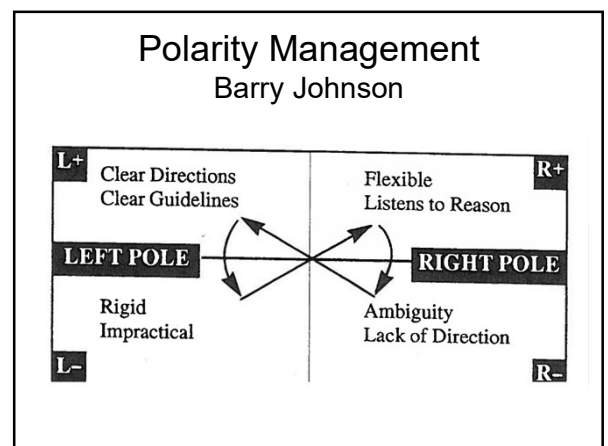
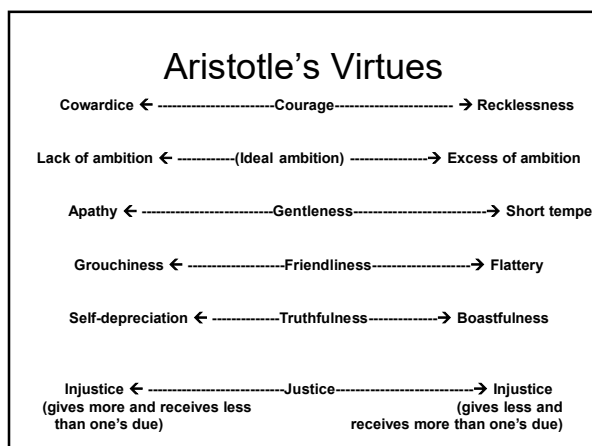
#### Some others

- Democracy and expertise
- Short term and long term
- Individual rights and community good
- Unity and diversity
- Cooperation and competition
- Structure and agency (or opportunity and individual responsibility)
- Flexibility/Innovation and Consistency/Tradition
- Best use of resources (money, time, people)



### Aristotle's Theory of Virtues

Aristotle defined a virtue as “a mean between two vices, that which depends on excess and that which depends on defect...virtue both finds and chooses that which is intermediate”



### Polarity Management

The Case for Consistency	The Case for Flexibility
Dependable, Clarity, Allowing comparisons, Tradition, Principled, Fair, Just, Reliable, Steady, Standards, Measurability	Innovation, Adaption, Individuality, Creativity, Outside the Box thinking, Pragmatic, Thinking on your feet

The Case for Consistency	The Case for Flexibility
Dependable, Clarity, Allowing comparisons, Tradition, Principled, Fair, Just, Reliable, Steady, Standards, Measurability	Innovation, Adaption, Individuality, Creativity, Outside the Box thinking, Pragmatic, Thinking on your feet
When Consistency dominates Flexibility ...	When Flexibility dominates Consistency ...
Dogmatic, Stubborn, Unaccommodating, Stiff, Simplistic, Stuck in the past, Uninspired, Rigid, Soul-sucking, Obstinate	Wishy-washy, Ambiguous, Inconsistent, Erratic, Untrustworthy, Irregular, Unreliable

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### Steps in the Basic Exercise

- Polarity or tension is identified and named
- In groups, brainstorm the positives for each end of the polarity one at a time, making the best possible case
- Groups then complete the out of balance problematic alternatives
- Groups can then potentially combine or compare their work
- Conversation can then focus on responding to the tension

### Responding to Key Tensions

- Recognize tension, still **prefer** one side while accepting the tradeoffs. That preference may be purposefully short-term, with a corresponding focus on nimbleness
- Recognize tension, seek **balance** (which may mean moving in one direction or the other, seeking compromise)
- Recognize tension, seek to **transcend or integrate** tension through innovation (seeking win-win)
- Recognize tension, allow **different groups** to seek **alternative ends**
- **Disagree** with tension

### PM and CPD processes

- Superintendent search (strong leader and collaborator)
- Local food cluster (top down and bottom up)
- Neighborhood associations (formal and informal)
- Local church on gay rights issue (truth and grace)
- Elementary school – flexibility and consistency
- Mathews House (non profit working with children exiting out of foster care) - self care and client care, individual responsibility and opportunity (agency and structure)

*I believe that the central leadership attribute is the ability to manage polarity.*  
Peter Koestlinbaum

**8 Polarities in "The Fundamental State of Leadership"**  
From *Building The Bridge As You Walk On It* by Robert E. Quinn

Spontaneous; Expressive	AND	Self-disciplined; Responsible
Compassionate; Concerned	AND	Assertive; Bold
Mindful; Reflective	AND	Active; Energetic
Principled; Integrated	AND	Engaged; Involved
Realistic; Questioning	AND	Optimistic; Constructive
Grounded; Factual	AND	Visionary; Hopeful
Confident; Secure	AND	Adaptive; Flexible
Independent; Strong	AND	Humble; Open

**12 Leadership Polarities**  
From Polarity Management Associates

Conditional Respect	AND	Unconditional Respect
Task	AND	Relationship
Candor	AND	Diplomacy
Responsibility	AND	Freedom
Confidence	AND	Humility
Analysis	AND	Encouragement
Control	AND	Empowerment
Grounded	AND	Visionary
Structure	AND	Flexibility
Logic	AND	Creativity
Individual	AND	Work Group
Planning	AND	Implementation

**10 Polarities in "Level 5 Leadership"**  
From *Good To Great* by Jim Collins

Self	AND	Organization
Willfulness	AND	Humility
Debate	AND	Unity
Candor	AND	Diplomacy
Reality	AND	Faith
Deep Understanding	AND	Simplicity
Discipline	AND	Entrepreneurship
Technology Facts	AND	Pioneering
Evolutionary	AND	Revolutionary
Preserve Core	AND	Stimulate Change

**8 Leadership Polarities**  
From *Lost in Transition* by Richard Elmer & Bridget Farrands

To shake things up	AND	To preserve
To be open to events	AND	To be intentional about results
To develop bonds	AND	To keep distance
To seek help to learn about the organization	AND	To give value by showing how to succeed or avoid failure
To impose	AND	To facilitate
To go fast to perform	AND	To go slow to prepare
To clean out	AND	To develop
To support the team	AND	To serve the hierarchy and/or the wider organization

Source: Polarity Management Associates

**11 Important Organizational Polarities**  
From Polarity Management Associates

Centralized Coordination	AND	Decentralized Initiatives
Recognize the Individual	AND	Recognize the Team
Reduce Cost	AND	Improve Quality
Competing with Others	AND	Collaborating with Others
Stability	AND	Change
Celebrating Our Differences	AND	Celebrating Our Commonalities
Care for My Part of the Organization	AND	Care for the Whole Organization
Showing Respect for Every Person	AND	Showing Respect Based on Performance
Getting the Job Done (task)	AND	Building Relationships
Taking Care of the Organization	AND	Taking Care of the Customer
Work	AND	Home

**1 Organizational Polarity**  
From *Built to Last* by Collins & Porras

Preserve the Core AND Stimulate Progress

**3 Organizational Polarities**  
From *The Three Tensions* by Thomas Dohal & Ken Fararo

Profitability AND Growth  
Today AND Tomorrow  
The Whole AND The Parts

**10 Strategic Management Polarities**  
From *Strategy Synthesis* by Bob de Wit & Ron Meyer

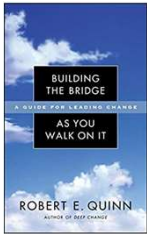
Logic	AND	Creativity
Deliberateness	AND	Emergentness
Revolution	AND	Evolution
Markets	AND	Resources
Responsiveness	AND	Synergy
Competition	AND	Collaboration
Compliance	AND	Choice
Control	AND	Chaos
Globalization	AND	Localization
Profitability	AND	Responsibility

**7 Organizational Polarities**  
From *Managing on the Edge* by Richard Tassier Pascale

(Left column = the "Areas of Excellence" from *In Search of Excellence*)

Strategy	Planned	AND	Opportunistic
Structure	Elitist	AND	Pluralistic
Systems	Mandatory	AND	Discretionary
Style	Managerial	AND	Transformational
Staff	Collegiality	AND	Individuality
Shared Values	Hard Minds	AND	Soft Hearts
Skills	Maximize	AND	Meta-size

Source: Polarity Management Associates



**AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS:**

- People focused and Task focused
- Visionary and Practical
- Authentic and Energetic
- Adaptable and Stable





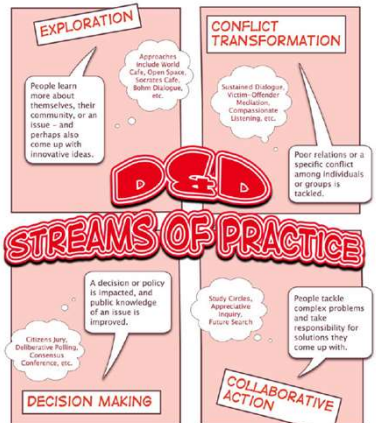
Figure 7.1. Competing Values Model of Leadership

## NCDD's Engagement Streams



**Resource Guide on Public Engagement**

National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation



**D&D STREAMS OF PRACTICE**

- EXPLORATION:** Approaches include World Café, Open Space, Serious Games, etc. People learn more about themselves, their community, or an issue – and perhaps also come up with innovative ideas.
- CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:** Sustained Dialogue, Victim-Offender Mediation, Compassionate Listening, etc. Poor relations or a specific conflict among individuals or groups is tackled.
- DECISION MAKING:** A decision or policy is impacted, and public knowledge of an issue is improved. Citizens jury, Deliberative Polling, Consensus Conference, etc.
- COLLABORATIVE ACTION:** Study Circles, Appreciative Inquiry, Future Search. People tackle complex problems and take responsibility for solutions they come up with.

### Exploration

Primary Purpose	Name of Engagement Stream	Key Features	Important When...
To encourage people and groups to learn more about themselves, their community, or an issue, and possibly discover innovative solutions	Exploration	Suspending assumptions, creating a space that encourages a different kind of conversation, using ritual and symbolism to encourage openness, emphasis on listening	A group or community seems stuck or muddled and needs to reflect on their circumstance in depth and gain collective insight.

Examples of Issues	Organizer's Strategy	Appropriate D&D Processes	Key Design Questions for Organizers
Strengthening democracy, understanding a community of practice	To encourage new insights and connections to emerge by creating a space for people to share their thoughts, feelings and perspectives.	Conversation Café, Intergroup Dialogue in the classroom, Wisdom Council, Wisdom Circles, Socrates Café, World Café, Open Space, Appreciative Inquiry, Bohm Dialogue	How can we ensure that people feel safe expressing what inspires and touches them? What kind of techniques or rituals will stimulate listening and sharing, without making people uncomfortable?

National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation [www.ncdd.org](http://www.ncdd.org)

Conflict Transformation			
Primary Purpose	Name of Engagement Stream	Key Features	Important When...
To resolve conflicts, to foster personal healing and growth, and to improve relations among groups	Conflict Transformation	Creating a safe space, hearing from everyone, building trust, sharing personal stories and views	Relationships among participants are poor or not yet established yet need to be. Issue can only be resolved when people change their behavior or attitude, expand their perspective, or take time to reflect and heal.
Examples of Issues	Organizer's Strategy	Appropriate D&D Processes	Key Design Questions for Organizers
Political polarization, Jewish-Muslim relations, race relations, value-based conflicts, healing after crises or trauma	To create a safe space for people with different views to talk about their personal experiences and feel heard. Often, to set the groundwork for deliberation and action.	Sustained Dialogue, Intergroup Dialogue in communities, Victim-Offender Mediation, PCP dialogue, Compassionate Listening	How can the issue be framed so that all sides are brought to -- the table? What are people's needs relating to this issue, and how can divergent needs (healing, action, respect) be met effectively? If a conflict exists, how overt and volatile is it? How, if at all, will you transition people to "what's next"?

Decision Making			
Primary Purpose	Name of Engagement Stream	Key Features	Important When...
To influence public decisions and public policy and improve public knowledge	Decision Making	Naming and framing the issue fairly, weighing all options, considering different positions (i.e. deliberation), revealing public values, brainstorming solutions	The issue is within government's (or any single entity's) sphere of influence.
Examples of Issues	Organizer's Strategy	Appropriate D&D Processes	Key Design Questions for Organizers
Budgeting, land use, health care, social security	To involve a representative group of citizens in thorough discussions about complicated policy issues. Ideally, the process is linked to policy making.	National Issues Forums, Citizens Jury, Deliberative Polling, 21st Century Town Meeting, Charrettes, Citizen Choicework, Consensus Conference	How can we best represent the public (random selection, stakeholder representation, recruiting a critical mass)? Should/can public officials participate in the process side-by-side with citizens? What kinds of materials need to be developed or obtained? How can we ensure that this process influences policy?

Collaborative Action			
Primary Purpose	Name of Engagement Stream	Key Features	Important When...
To empower people and groups to solve complicated problems and take responsibility for the solution	Collaborative Action	Using dialogue and deliberation to generate ideas for community action, developing and implementing action plans collaboratively	The issue/dispute requires intervention across multiple public and private entities, and anytime community action is important.
Examples of Issues	Organizer's Strategy	Appropriate D&D Processes	Key Design Questions for Organizers
Regional sprawl, institutional racism, youth violence, responding to crises	To encourage integrated efforts among diverse stakeholders, sectors, organizations, etc. involved in the issue.	Study Circles, Future Search, Appreciative Inquiry	Who needs to be at the table? What kind of power dynamics exist already? What group/leader/institution is most resistant to change? What group tends not to be at the table, although they're affected?