

# **Deep Democracy & Communities of Practice – Building System Capacity for Conflict Prevention & Better Decision Making**

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NLN March 2009

# History

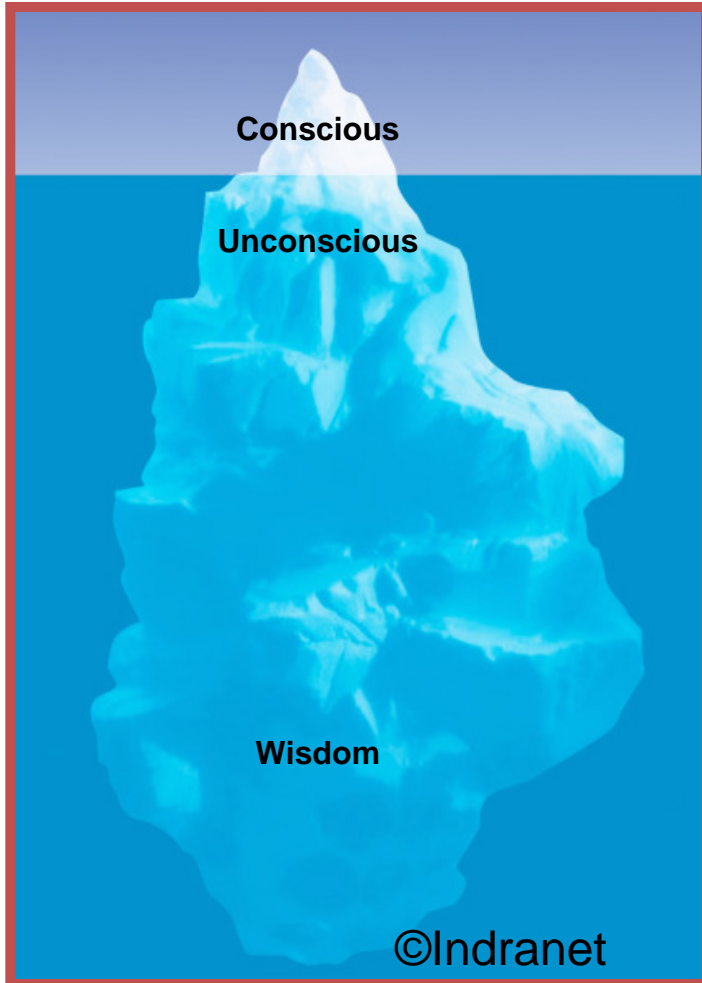
- Theory developed by Arnold Mindell
- Tools and practical applications developed by Mryna Lewis in the context of the shift from Apartheid in South Africa
- Now used in Africa, Europe, UK, Russia, India, Israel, and recently in North America
- Web site—[www.deep-democracy.net](http://www.deep-democracy.net)



# What is Deep Democracy?

- An approach to help individuals and groups address issues, make decisions, resolve conflict
- Process enables people to see situations in new ways
- Skills & tools enable the leader to improve decision making, gain true buy in, enhance productivity and performance
- Advanced DD practitioners can achieve breakthroughs in seemingly impossible-to-solve issues

# Freud's Iceberg: Conscious and Unconscious



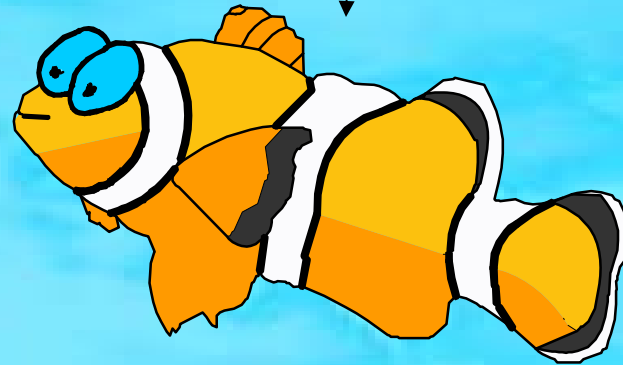
Conscious is when everyone is aware of what is happening

Unconscious is when not everyone is aware.

THE WISDOM - lies in the unconscious.

No  
No  
No

Water line=perceived level of safety



**The fish represents issues to be discovered.  
Uncovering the fish brings Wisdom.**



Fear of saying what we really think  
and feel...

Fear of hearing and listening to  
the views and feelings of others.

# The role of the leader is to...

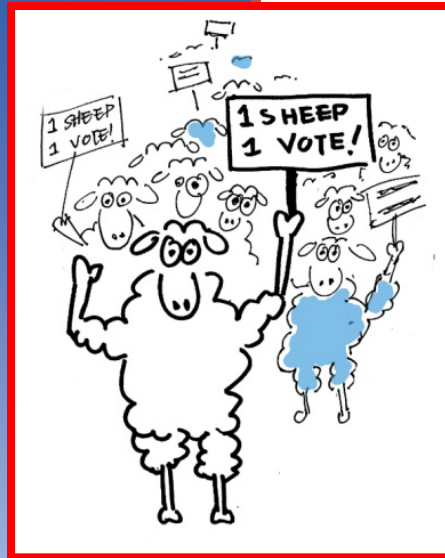
Lower the water line

- Surface all the views
- Make it safe to voice an alternative view
- Spread the alternative view
- Vote
- What will it take for you to come along



# Decision Making

## Majority Democracy

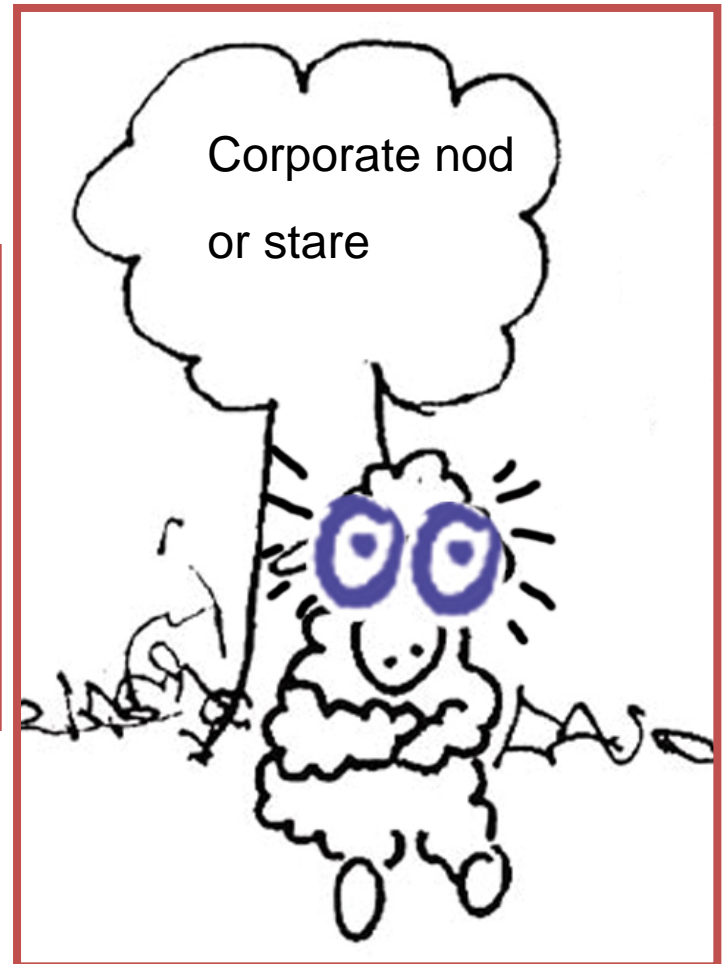
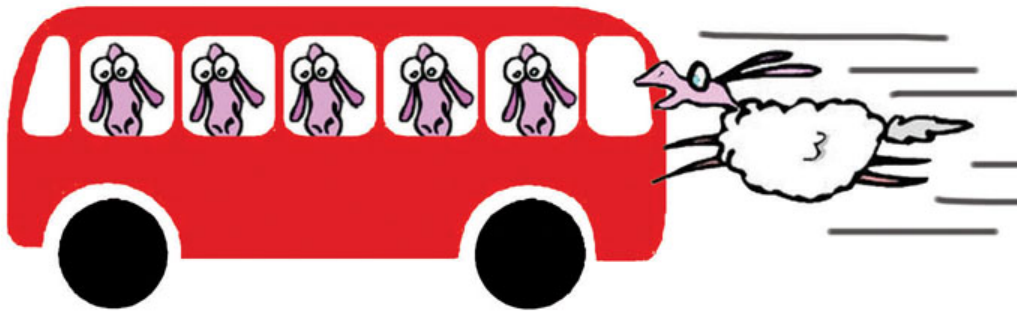


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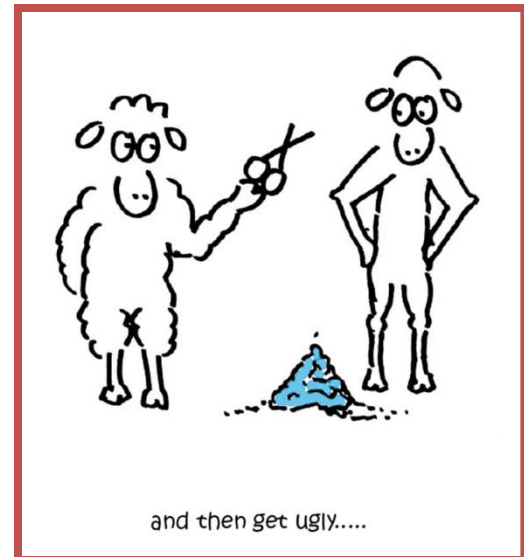
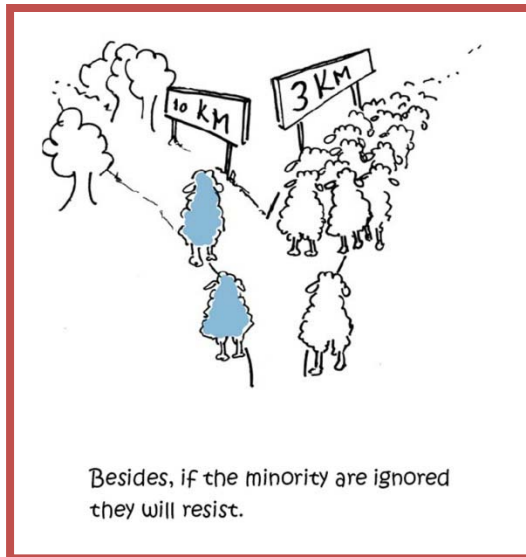
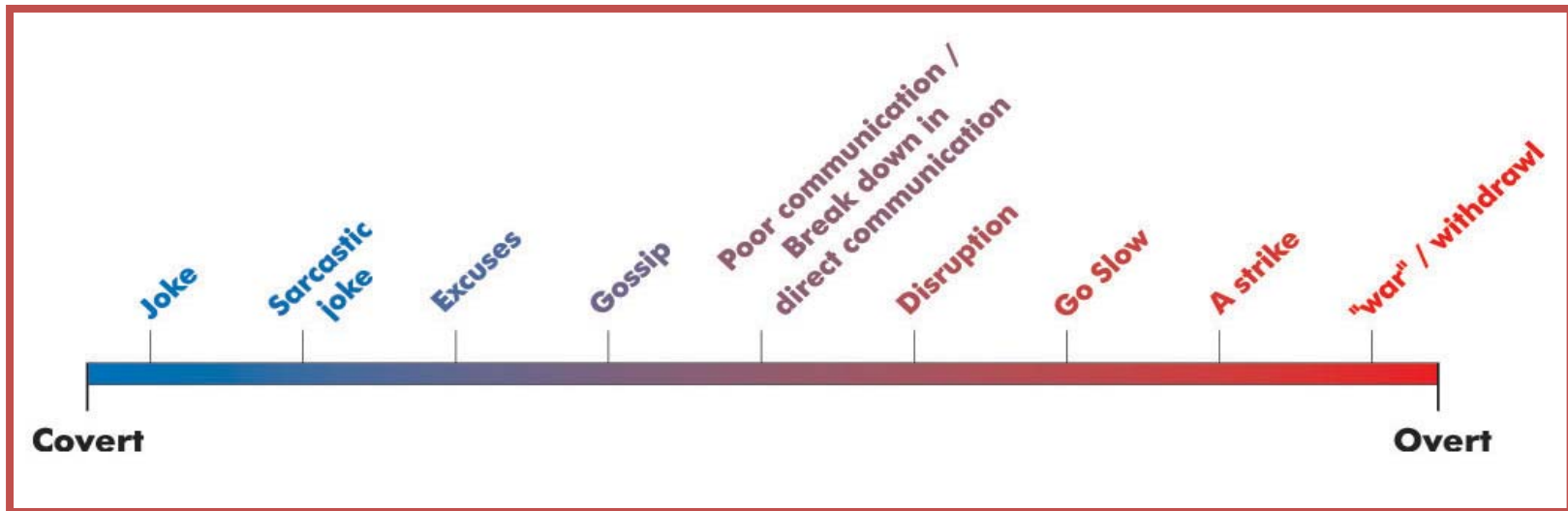
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# How do you know someone is not “on the bus”?



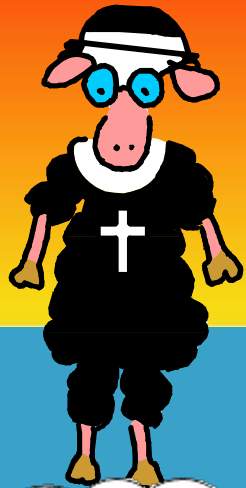
# Saboteur Line



# Principles

1. People wish to be in relationship. It is not about winning the argument - the relationship is more important than winning
2. No one has a monopoly on the truth
3. The resolution process is a growing opportunity, that we will be able to discover something about ourselves, which will be helpful and enable our development

Environment change influences role of person



Priests subdued



Priests subdued



Priests subdued

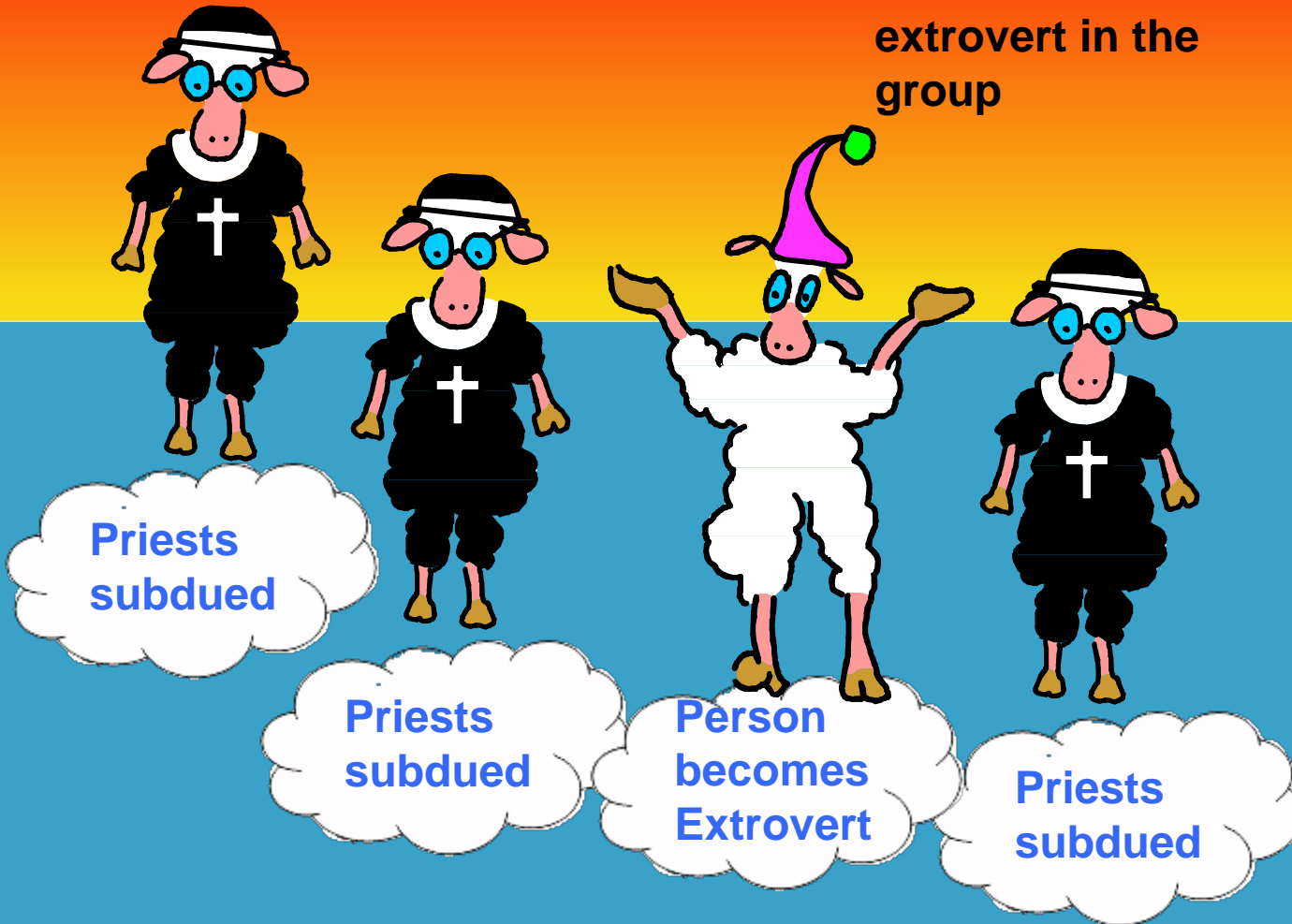
Introvert moves into the group



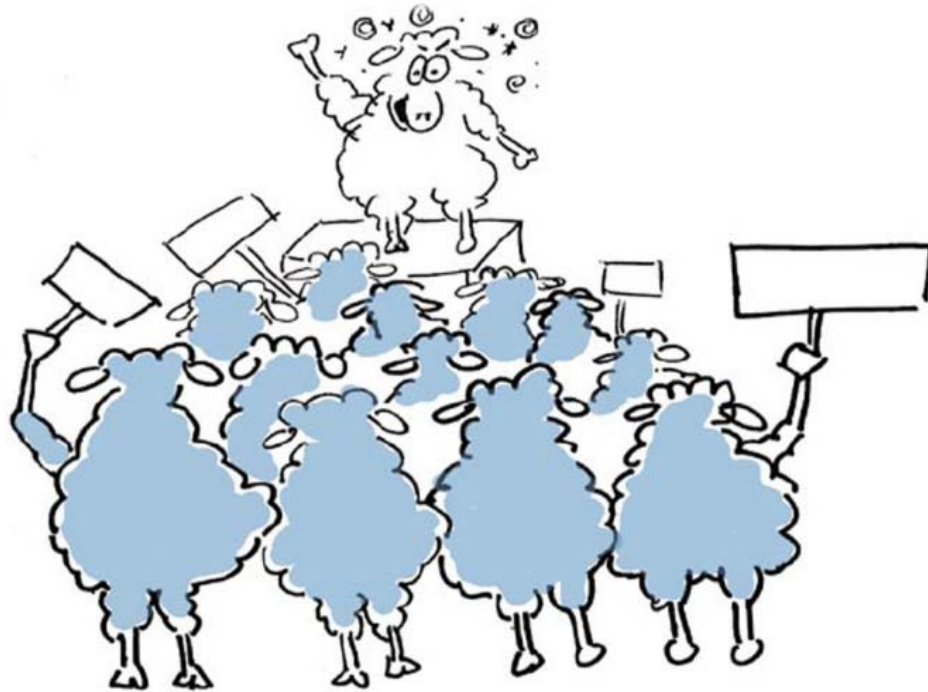
Introvert Person

# Environment change influences role of person

The introvert turns extrovert in the group



# Speaking the alternative view



Put yourself in their shoes - it's not easy to be the only one who sees things differently.

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# DD theory, tools, and processes help the leader to...

- Analyze and understand the dynamics at play in a group or organization,
- Enable people to say what needs to be said,
- Gain true buy-in to decision-making processes from start to finish. The lack of 'buy in', results in resistance to change and counterproductive behaviour, and
- With advanced skills, prevent conflict and transform it when it occurs.

# A tool to try...before making your next team decision

- Surface all the views: are there other perspectives?
- Make it safe to have an alternative view: does anyone have a different view?
- Spread the alternative view: who else feels/thinks a little bit like this?



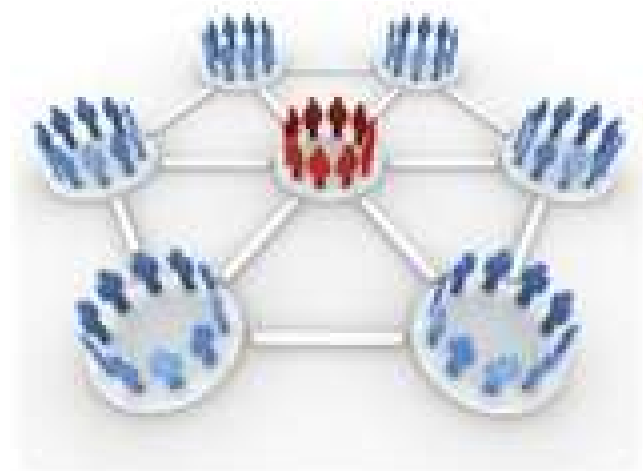


# Building Capacity: Communities of Practice



# What is a Community of Practice?

- A group of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wegner, 2002)



# What's the Value of a CoP?

## Short-Term

- Help with challenges
- Easy access to expertise
- It's fun
- It's meaningful
- Enables problem solving
- Facilitates knowledge sharing
- Enables synergies across units/departments
- Efficient use of resources

## Long-Term

- Personal development
- Professional reputation & identity
- Creates a network(s)
- It's marketable!
- Enhances strategic capabilities
- Helps with information sharing
- Encourages innovation
- Retention of talent
- Enables new strategies

# Critical Success Factors

## COMMUNITY

- Domain that energizes
- Skillful, reputable coordinator
- Involvement of experts
- Address details of practice
- Right rhythm & mix of activities for the group



## ORGANIZATION

- Strategic relevance
- Visible management sponsorship but not micro managed
- Creative tension (“dance”) of formal & informal structures, processes
- Adequate resources
- Consistent attitude

# Our Deep Democracy CoP

- Course colleagues from LHIN 12
- Intentional focus, building capacity for DD within ourselves, our organizations, our LHIN
- Have met x 2 in the past year
- Scheduling busy people is a challenge!



# Format of a Meeting

- Rotate sites and meeting organization; host site facilitates using DD techniques
- Start with a check-in with the following questions:
  - How are you
  - How have you been using Deep Democracy in your life and work? (stories & examples)
  - What do you want to talk about/do today?
- Agenda flows from the check-in

# Reflections

## Successes

- We met twice!
- Supporting one another
- Brainstorming about situations
- Practicing our skills
- Spreading the change



## Challenges

- Finding common time to meet
- Having our mentors so far away
- A bit of technology might help
- There are others out there alone
- Need a designated coordinator