TOOLS & METHODS

A conversation tool for civility and knowledge integration: 'a conversation model that combines dialogue and (self)facilitation for civility and creativity in a fragmented world.'

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Conversation can be a vehicle for human flourishing, with its ability to invite expression, generate and translate ideas, and build enduring relationships. On the other hand, conversation can be filled with the rancor so prevalent in our media and civic arenas. While unconscious bias, conversation-fears and time-pressures may lead us to prefer the act of fleeing over engaging, certain ways of thinking and communicating can help us improve our conversations' productivity and knowledge integration. This is good for the group, and for our own mental health. The Five Discussion Disciplines (5DDs), derived from the sciences of dialogue, facilitation and traditional wisdom, equip participants to converse with respect and impact. The 5DDs are also easy to learn and observe. In this article, we observe the common gaps in conversation skills and self-confidence, we describe the 5DD model for productive conversation, we illustrate conversation impacts through examples, dos and don'ts, and case studies; and we provide action strategies for individuals and leaders. We end the article with a plea for further research. Finally, we invite the reader to join a community committed to improving conversation for civility and knowledge integration.

Keywords: conversation; dialogue; civility; knowledge integration; knowledge co-creation; polarization; facilitation; methods

Introduction

We often feel that conversations can get out of control. What starts as a normal back and forth can become derailed, degenerate into a competition, become complacent and conforming, or become self-sealing, excluding new ideas. Every day we hear about the US Congress and other nations'

parliaments becoming polarized, with representatives locking in positions, retreating to their "echo chambers" as they are unwilling to hear, let alone integrate, alternative views.

Our colleagues who are educators, managers, policy makers, and parents have pointed to a yawning gap in skills and courage for conversational interaction -- real-time or asynchronous. A diversity of people, experiences, perspectives, knowledge and emotions make the world uncertain. That uncertainty can make us feel overwhelmed, leading us to simplify what we see, reducing the complexity to binary choices (i.e., good/bad, ethical/unethical, effective/ineffective) (Jackson, 2023), which in turn, can lead to argument and stalemate. Not surprisingly, the social media siren seduces us, with its confirmatory suggestions, predictable agreements, and familiar tropes. Our evolutionary past, which may have favored a psychological response to intergroup competition (Henrich, 2018) is playing out in the media we're drawn to which supplies ever more hysterical representations of 'us vs them.' Political elites use dehumanizing language that can push individuals or groups further into their positions, with some of us unconsciously bringing hyperbole, labeling, and 'otherings' into our family, work, school or civic interactions. These conversations (or avoided conversations) can be destructive to our relationships and our (collective) mental health.

Nonetheless, we find both hope and practical lessons from the fact that we are biologically conditioned for reciprocity and collaboration (Boyd, 2017; Henrich, 2016; Zaki, 2013). We are meant to be interdependent. Our brains are wired for collaboration (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981). For example, productive human conversation leaves a neurological imprint. Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) studies, Sievers et al. (2020) found that, when groups engage in productive, inclusive conversation, individuals experience neurological alignment after the conversation: The brain regions active during the productive conversation light up again when participants later, independently encounter similar problems (Sievers et al, 2020). On the other hand, we fear conversation, and hardly expect to see such benefits: We tend to rate our conversation skills and conversation performance at the bottom of all of our interactive activities, and underrate our conversation partners' positive emotional reactions (Welker et al., 2023).

In this article we respond to both the mounting need for better conversation for civility, and our fears of our own incompetencies. We provide a model, the Five Discussion Disciplines for conversational interactions that achieves immediate and enduring collaborative outcomes, integrates diverse perspectives into shared meaning, and results in an enduring capacity to act. In person, in a video conference, across digital platforms, in all forms, conversation can contribute to civility, knowledge-integration, and creativity.

Facilitation alone cannot change the cycle of assumption-generation, 'othering,' labeling, isolating or attacking behavior. Our mental models about each other guide our perceptions (Mor-Barak, 2017), and our words, in turn, can reinforce or regenerate new mental models. In our experience, individuals can learn to examine their own mental models, by pausing and detecting the movements in meaning as we interact in the conversation. 'Rhetorical intent' is the term for this movement: words or phrases that direct the conversation towards a goal by provoking an affective or cognitive response in others. We intuitively absorb the accumulation of different rhetorical intents. For example, where all rhetorical intent is about shoring up arguments and debating others, rhetorical intent can reduce knowledge-creation and integration (Argyris, 1994). With some reflection, we may even witness ourselves contributing to that fracturing. We get tunnel vision. By developing a capacity for recognizing how rhetorical intents, individually and cumulatively, elevate or derail conversations, we can avert such escalation. Rhetorical behaviors in dialogue draw out diverse insights and pull in missing voices while producing both today's sense-making, and tomorrow's teams and organizations that are resilient through their capacity for dialogue. With dialogue we can expand understanding and ideas for today, and, as Sievers et al. (2020) suggest, we can build capacity for tomorrow.

In this article, we describe the Five Discussion Disciplines (5DDs) (Pugh, 2023) which is a method for facilitating productive conversations for knowledge co-creation. The method has successfully been used by the authors in digital and in-person environments, such as face-to-face meetings, community online forums, and online classrooms. First, we describe the 5DDs in the broader context of dialogue and review the rationale for this approach. This is followed by building capacity and action planning to implement it. Five case stories illustrate learning gaps and barriers that have been resolved with the 5DDs.

Dialogue and the Five Discussion Disciplines

What exactly is dialogue? In western civilization, dialogue could be traced back to the discourse in small tribal units. Dialogue had a sort of renaissance in academic circles in the 1980s at Oxford University under the leadership of David Bohm (Bohm, 1980, 2002). Carrying these ideas into organizations in the 1990s, William Isaacs, working with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Dialogue project, proposed that effective, generative dialogue can improve human flourishing in organizations through co-generation of knowledge and being (Isaacs, 1999). Dialogue centers curiosity and integration, rather than defensiveness and boundary demarcation. Dixon (2021) describes dialogue as a way of talking and sensemaking that establishes a shared

meaning, even when a group disagrees in other areas. In the words of Isaacs (1999, p. xvii), using the word etymology ('dia' and 'logos') dialogue is defined as 'meaning flowing through.' In flow, being other-oriented and content-oriented is a necessity. Weick (1993, p. 360) called that 'collective mind.' Before going further, it is important to not overplay the word renaissance. While dialogue reflects a revival of a way of knowing for western cultures, it is common within traditional cultures. Western cultures are typically characterized by centralization and demarcation, whereas traditional cultures often are decentralized, and each participant is an embodiment of the collective knowing (Yunkaporta, 2020). For example, Australian aboriginal culture recognizes that each person carries a fragment of the shared story and, to see the whole picture, one talks and listens to everyone with curiosity (Yunkaporta, 2020).

William Isaacs and C. Otto Scharmer suggested that dialogue contains four learnable practices: Voice, Respect, Listening and Intention (Isaacs, 1999). Embracing both of dialogues' lineages, as managers and facilitators, we expanded the four dialogue practices. Given our day-to-day digital interactions, we sought to include good digital habits that had been absent in Isaacs' and Scharmer's conceptualization of dialogue. We added two new features: summarization or up-leveling, and invitation or acknowledgement. These are features common to virtual facilitation and asynchronous digital platforms (Skifstad & Pugh, 2014). These additions led to the creation of the Five Discussion Disciplines (5DDs) (Pugh, 2023):

- Integrity: Declare, make a statement or claim.
- Integrity-Q: Inquire, ask a question.
- Courtesy: Respect, use positivity.
- Inclusion: Acknowledge, invite another into the conversation.
- Translation: Summarize, connect or synthesize.

Integrity and *Integrity-Q* grew out of the 'Voice' and 'Listening' dialogue practices, which both contain elements of truth-telling and truth-seeking. *Courtesy* corresponds to the 'Respect' dialogue practice. *Inclusion* is an expansion of the 'Suspension' (opening) and 'Listening' (drawing in) dialogue practices. *Translation* is a new practice, which capitalizes on the sense-making activity of all dialogue practices, and adds a synthesis and interpretation step, out loud, in service to the group. One way of remembering the 5DDs is as 'I3CT.' This is I3 (Integrity, Integrity-Q, Inclusion), C (= Courtesy), and T (=Translation).

Dialogue has been shown to help achieve problem-solving in otherwise polarized groups, for example, between Democrats and Republicans in the USA (Dixon, 2021), between Southeast

Asian countries (Isaacs, 2016), and between inmates and officers in US maximum security prisons (Willison et al., 2017). Integrity-Q, Integrity, and Translation are more *content-directed*, and Inclusion and Courtesy are *other-directed*. Yet, as we shall see, each stands in service to the shared conversation outcomes and to others. By combining dialogue's sense-making and generativeness (as in the disciplines of Integrity, Integrity-Q and Courtesy), and facilitation's welcome and up-leveling (as in the disciplines of Inclusion and Translation), participants empathize, build upon each other, and act on ideas that they collectively generate (Pugh, 2016). The 5DDs have similarly achieved sensemaking and productivity outcomes in online communities (Skifstad & Pugh, 2014) and motivation and belonging in town hall-like interactions in the USA (Pugh, 2022; Pugh et al., 2023).

Rationale for the Five Discussion Disciplines

In our own work we have seen that the 5DDs lead to productive conversations, namely conversations that allow for knowledge co-creation, rather than narrowing and polarization of ideas. The 5DDs have successfully been used by the authors in digital and in-person environments such as face-to-face meetings, community online forums, and online classrooms where information was gathered from multiple sources and critical decisions have been taken. These are just a few of those rationales our participants have described:

Rationale 1: Combining views or disciplines without judgment
Crucial problems humanity faces today such as the rising of the seas, pollution, sanitation, food insecurity, and fresh water depletion cannot be solved by a single person. Solving for multidimensional, interdependent and complex tasks requires bridging the unique cognitive repertoires in groups (Page, 2017). Multi-dimensionality and interdependency of complex problems demand a collective effort to turn ideas into realities that fit the capacities, understanding, knowledge, values, and language of the people who will have to do the action (Drucker, 2008). Effective implementation requires idea agreement from multiple and diverse stakeholders (Ehrlichman, 2021). We better combine views or disciplines without judgment **through transparency** (Integrity, Integrity-Q), belonging (Courtesy, Inclusion), and shared progress, if not full agreement (Translation).

Rationale 2: Combatting polarization
Globalization and digital global interconnectivity have enabled a multitude of perspectives and experiences to be shared creating a complex information landscape. This complex landscape

causes a feeling of disorientation which makes most of us feel insecure and threatened. In the U.S. this disorientation is exacerbated by social media. Polarized speech provides a sense of order, a right and wrong, with an 'othering' of members of groups from which our ideas diverge. Anthropologists point out that we evolved as a species under the threat of inter-group competition which leads us to divide people into two groups: the ingroups and outgroup members (Sapolsky, 2017; Henrich 2016). Kids learn to debate as a mechanism for discussion. Lawyers learn to win arguments. Politicians use rhetoric to diminish each other and win votes. We lack the skills to disagree with one another with civility. This permeates structures in our society, even while there is evidence that reciprocity at the interpersonal level is a driving force for culture and human evolution (Benkler, 2011; Henrich, 2016).

We better realize that innate sense of reciprocity through **respect**. We accept that, while our values may be clear (and often shared), few facts are unequivocal, including our own (Integrity), we honor each other's context and contributions (Courtesy), we take turns speaking (Inclusion), and we take the time to lay out and juxtapose data (Integrity-Q, Translation). When we bring people together across difference, we can use 5DDs as ground rules.

Rationale 3: Bridging and integrating knowledge as innovation
In the absence of a mechanism to integrate knowledge, we have a false sense of security in our own echo chambers. When we focus on Inclusion, we provide room for knowledge to expand and we provide room for collective shared meaning. 5DDs enable problem solvers and opportunity visionaries to seek, recognize, value and build on each other's diverse and often conflicting insights. When we do this slowly and systematically, we generate and integrate collective knowledge.

We better bridge and integrate knowledge by drawing-in and acknowledging different ideas (Inclusion), we clarify and expand in the context of shared problem solving (Integrity-Q), and we stand back and see parallels, analogies, and opposing options (Translation). Knowledge integration can be exhausting, as different functions, industries or identities may not understand each other's vocabulary or frames. This is where Courtesy comes in (even the courtesy to take a break).

Rationale 4: Getting unstuck and building collective resilience
The 5DDs can also help groups move toward action. Pugh et al. (2023) performed quantitative research on town-halls, measuring how the discussion disciplines were used. Using an LLM to detect different proportions of discussion discipline and their impact on outcomes, her team found

that increasing the share of Inclusion by 10 percentage points resulted in a 45% increase in the likelihood of there being evidence of intent-to-act in the conversation. The team concluded that, by improving acknowledgement and visibility, people were more likely to take their roles seriously and commit to action.

This is consistent with the research on reciprocal prosocial behavior, where people who are 'seen' are more likely to follow through on commitments (Hoffman, Yoeli & Rand, 2014). It is also consistent with the research on psychological safety. Edmondson and Lei (2014) reviewing multiple experiments, found that having permission to learn from failure increases willingness to experiment. Similarly, Malik and Garg (2017) found that an environment for inquiry and co-generation of ideas is strongly associated with employee resilience and affective commitment to change. By contrast, using indirect speech can destabilize and diffuse conversation (Pinker et al, 2008). Intentional use of the 5DDs can result in not just one-off conversation productivity, but also enduring capacity to interact (Pugh, 2022). We get unstuck and build ongoing resilience through the Intentional use of the 5DDs. Pugh (2022) found that Inclusion tends to help with moving to action, Courtesy tends to help with the relationship's strength, and Translation and Integrity-Q tend to help with the group's creativity.

Building competency in the Five Discussion Disciplines

In this section, we describe how to develop skills in the 5DDs, and how to recognize and encourage the mental models that underlie them. Creating shared meaning, rather than divisiveness, requires a shift in mindset. Focusing on practicing the 5DDs deliberately can facilitate the shift for ourselves and others.
Recall that rhetorical intent is the semantic and energetic direction of phrases or sentences inside utterances in a conversation or posts in an online discussion. The 5DDs are a classification of these fragments or 'moves.' In the 5DD model, each discipline plays a rhetorical intent role.

- *Integrity* is an informative and expository move which can initiate new ideas. Integrity's shadow is fear-mongering, spreading misinformation and manipulative intention.
- *Integrity-Q* inquires and seeks clarification by reaching out to the group or specific individuals. Drawn from the research of Chris Argyris (1994), Integrity-Q's shadow is assumption, abstraction, or blame by association.
- *Courtesy* is a demonstration of respect and goodwill. It is positively motivating and mood-uplifting. (While all of the discussion disciplines promote civility, Courtesy is the most

associated with civility.) Courtesy's shadow is blame, aggression, negativism and gaslighting. As it is respect-according, Courtesy embraces another person's experience, reality, and dignity. Porath (2015) shows that treating others with courtesy and respect is the behavior that has the greatest impact in garnering commitment and engagement from others.

● *Inclusion* acknowledges, recognizes, and draws out another person either in the group (synchronous), or outside the group (asynchronous). While Courtesy can be expressed generally to a whole group, Inclusion is more associated with an interchange with individuals or individual sub-groups, and often involves stating a person's name. Inclusion may seek differences in perspectives, heuristics and life-experiences by seeking divergence. Inclusion's shadow is domination and unilateral thinking ("I am always right. You are wrong."). Eisenberg (2012) shows that there is an overlap in the neurobiological underpinnings of physical and social pain. Social pain is a deeply biological phenomena built into our brain because of the crucial part social connection plays in our survival (Eisenberg, 2012). Inclusion plays an important role in avoiding fight or flight response in social environments.

● *Translation* conveys an acknowledgement of complexity by reflecting back to the group content or process, while seeking shared understanding (often accompanied by Integrity-Q or Inclusion). Translation's shadow is binary thinking, false dilemmas, polarized thinking and cherry-picking.

Table 1 samples healthy rhetorical intents (e.g., phrases) for each of the disciplines. Also on Table 1 are unhealthy rhetorical intents for each discipline that can derail productive conversations. Most of us are proficient in one of the five disciplines: Integrity. We know how to make a point, and many of us even use authentic, truthful and data-driven statements. Some people are also proficient in Integrity-Q, asking authentic questions. We role-model behavior from our teachers, media and professional discussions. Yet, in a productive conversation participants aim to co-create a comprehensive understanding from the collective knowledge of the group. This requires that we practice the three other disciplines: Courtesy, Inclusion and Translation. Through the study of the 5DDs (and their omission, or 'snarky' opposites), we can detect unproductive patterns: a) Many talk without integrating previous statements; b) Participants argue without the data; c) Some drop out of the conversation; d) Some ideas get ignored; and/ or e) Some participants sense that their time is wasted, and might use sarcasm or abrupt decision-making. Table 2 provides strategies for inoculating conversations against these unproductive patterns.

Navigating dos and don'ts benefits from a better understanding of the energy and phrasing of each discipline. What might that look like when the 5DDs flow together in a real-world conversation? Tables 3 and 4 do this using an example. They illustrate the contrast between the lack of the

Table 1: Sample wording for each of the discussion disciplines[1]

Discipline	Healthy rhetorical Intent/sample phrasing	Unhealthy rhetorical Intent/sample phrasing
Integrity *Declaration, statement*	● Informative (We should…The point was…) ● Expository (The reason we are considering this is…)	● Fearmongering (Our enemies are pushing for change…) ● Spreading misinformation (I've heard people say…) ● Manipulating (Very few people agree with your idea…)
Integrity-Q *Inquiry, question*	● Inquiring (What are…? How is…?) ● Clarifying (Please can you help me understand…?)	● Assuming (So, based on what you said, you must then be against…) ● Abstracting (You mean [my idea]…) ● Making guilt by association (If you say that, then you don't appreciate …)
Courtesy *Positivity, respect, allowing others to save face, find dignity*	● Motivating (These are great examples…) ● Mood-uplifting (This gets better with practice…)	● Being judgmental or aggressive (What a stupid idea…) ● Exhibiting negativism (Your idea will never work…) ● Gaslighting/denying another's reality (You are too sensitive…)
Inclusion *Acknowledge one's presence (often with their name), draw in*	● Acknowledging (Sarah, as you said…) ● Fostering diversity (Ahmed, can you share your perspective on…?) ● Encouraging multiple and divergent perspectives (Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken…)	● Excluding (We all agree… - when not everyone has spoken) ● Dominating the narrative (We don't have time to continue talking…) ● Fostering divisiveness (They are selfish and only care about themselves…)
Translation *Summarize, extrapolate, synthesize*	● Acknowledging Complexity (On the one hand…on the other hand…) ● Reaching Shared Understanding (not necessarily agreement) (We can look at this puzzle together…We can hold divergent views out there and look at them together. This is what we can agree upon and this is where we disagree….)	● Showing an us vs them mindset (If you say that, then you are against… ● Using binary thinking (You are wrong, I am right…) ● Using false dilemmas (Do or die.) ● Using polarized speech to cherry-pick the data, or make the summary one-sided (Our enemies did this….)

disciplines and their presence. The case is a hypothetical online discussion using the prompt:
Discuss what you found useful in the recommendations contained in Simon Sinek's (2021) 'A Quick Way to Find your Why.

Table 2: Dos and Don'ts for the Five Discussion Disciplines

Discipline	Definition	Dos and Don'ts
Integrity	Declaration, statement	Do: Initiate a discussion with one's own true voice. Make authentic, data-driven statements or statements based on one's own experience, perspective or knowledge. Provide due credit when referencing others.
		Don't: Do not speak for others. Do not make assumptions and speak without sharing and testing those assumptions.
Integrity-Q	Inquiry, question	Do: Be curious and ask questions to understand and gain further insight in others' perspectives and information. Demonstrate interest by asking clarifying questions to what was said. Ask questions that demonstrate curiosity. Ask questions that propel the discussion. Ask questions to deepen or challenge the group's understanding.
		Don't: Don't ask questions that just or assume, or use sarcasm. Don't use questions as veiled statements.
Courtesy	Positivity, respect, allow others to save face	Do: Respect the participants in the conversation in a general way. Show general goodwill and positivity. In online settings respect the forum. In other words, keep conversation where all can read and participate, rather than outside of view. Engage graciously with others. Express appreciation for people's contributions. Call people out on biases, use of stereotypes and generalizations to create psychological safety. Establish rules of engagement. Hold people accountable if they deviate from agreed upon norms. Check your own biases and apologize if you use language that you learn was biased and demonstrated prejudice even if unintentionally. Learn from your mistakes. Respect the individuals in the group who may have differing views. "Hear them out." Help the group stay on topic by redirecting the conversation when needed.

Discipline	Definition	Dos and Don'ts
		Don't: Don't use derogatory language, stereotypes or generalizations. Don't use sarcasm. Don't accuse or label people. (Rather label the behavior and explain the consequences and impact of inappropriate behavior or language.)
Inclusion	Acknow-ledge one's presence (often with their name), draw people in	Do: Acknowledge what others have said by thanking them. This may include repeating in your own words what you heard them say. Remind people of someone else's point if forgotten. Draw others in, directly inviting them to contribute, especially those whose voices are marginalized. Define terms, acronyms, and concepts to avoid excluding anyone intellectual or culturally. Schedule synchronous meetings to accommodate time-zone. Give asynchronous discussion participants time to accommodate different time zones.
		Don'ts: Do not use acronyms, jargon or terms of art, or if you do, explain them to avoid alienating participants. Do not exclude people from the conversation through lack of access to the forum. Don't stay in an echo chamber.
Transla-tion	Summarize, extrapolate, synthesize	Do: Keep track of what others have said and synthesize people's insights and the state of discussion so far. Summarize or integrate ideas. Repeat and translate into clear words what you understood others (plural) have said. As with Inclusion, you play back, but this is playing back across multiple participants' comments. Work to identify overlaps in what has been said, highlighting agreements and disagreements. Make comprehensive your summary or extension of what you heard, drawing connections, identifying meta-themes, or propelling action. Show people the big picture. Integrate external sources, such as data and research. Integrate what was said by all in a way that brings people together to a cohesive point of understanding and allow others to jump in and easily engage.
		Don't: Use generalizations such as, 'we all agree.' Don't 'put words in people's months,' that is, translate by adding what is convenient to your argument. Don't be selective in the translation, that is, pick and choose to include what proves your point. Don't be an auto-biographer, that is, summarize only what you have said and ignore contributions from others.

Table 3: Example of an online discussion dominated by snarkiness[2]

Person	Comment	Discussion discipline (rationale)
Carlos	I thought the recommendation of Simon Sinek to ask my best friends 'What is it I do that makes them be there for me,' is a good way to find out the impact I have on them.	Integrity (Statement of fact, but no data to back it up)
Stephany	Our impact in the world has nothing to do with our 'why.' All Simon Sinek ever talks about is the 'why,' as if that explained everything.	Snarky Translation (Aggression)
Amisha	'Why' is a question that triggers reasoning. It does not trigger an emotional response.	Snarky Translation (Diversion)
Carlos	When we have an impact on our friends, that impact is *always* emotional, and asking them about it elicits an emotional response.	Snarky Integrity (Generalization)
Ahmed	Simon Sinek's video is sort of an explanation of Drucker's Challenge for dummies.	Snarky Translation (Presumption)
Amisha	I thought the video was very interesting. I have asked friends those questions and I have received wonderful responses.	Snarky Integrity (Egocentric / not propelling conversation)

Table 4: Example of a discussion using the 5DDs[3]

Person	Comment	Discussion discipline (rationale)
Carlos	I thought asking my friends 'What is it I do that makes them like me' is a good way to find out the impact I have on them. This is because Simon explains how this moves them into a creative mode.	Integrity (Statement of fact with backup)
Stephany	@Carlos I like how you expressed the impact you have on your friends. Do you think that impact is related to your 'why'? How so?	Inclusion (acknowledgement) & Integrity-Q (Genuine inquiry)

Person	Comment	Discussion discipline (rationale)
Amisha	Simon Sinek says that one should use the question about 'why' over and over again to elicit an emotional response, and then shift to the 'What' to get a specific response. I don't see that, can anyone help me understand it?	Integrity (Statement with evidence) & Integrity-Q (Genuine inquiry)
Carlos	@Stefany, I think our 'why' is linked with purpose in the world, and many people find purpose in service to others, that is, the impact we have on others is our 'why.' What do you think? @Amisha, I think the emotional response we get from the question 'why' derives from it being linked with purpose and that purpose happening in relationship with others.	Integrity x2 (neutral statement of opinion) & Inclusion (invitation)
Ahmed	@Carlos, I agree with you that purpose and human connection are intrinsically correlated. Your statement reminded me of the work of Wieand (2002) we read on Drucker's Challenge. According to Wieand, Drucker wrote that 'altering emotions is a communication challenge that succeeds only when it breaks through a person's emotional glass ceiling' and when it does, it leads to altering one's identity.	Inclusion (Acknowledge-ment) & Integrity (Statement with sound data)
Amisha	Thank you @Carlos and @Ahmed. I think I can summarize what we have collectively expressed so far about Simon Sinek video, please correct me if I am wrong, is the following: Asking people close to you to describe 'why they like you' triggers an emotional response. Guiding them through that emotional response to more specific questions of 'what it is that you do to or for them' allows them to share with you the impact you have on them. That positive impact is essentially how you 'serve' your friends. Service is linked with your purpose in life, or your 'why.' This process, as @Ahmed observed, is a Drucker's Challenge type of experience. Wow, we are capable of altering one's identity and increasing emotional intelligence.	Inclusion (acknowledgement) & Translation (summarization) Inclusion (acknowledge- ment) Courtesy (positivity)

Action planning

We often find our groups in the unproductive mode in Table 3. From our work and our colleagues' work using the 5DDs in our companies, institutions and classrooms we share actions we've seen or used which shift from unproductive to productive mode:

1. Teach and set expectations for the use of the 5DDs;
2. Model the use of the 5DDs (or point out their use in others);
3. Do a role play;
4. Praise the use and nudge participants towards a balanced use of all disciplines;
5. Ask participants to self-observe and self-access their use of the disciplines;
6. Explore and evaluate the macro landscape of the 5DDs.

These accelerate the assessment of baseline competencies, expose the appropriate use of the 5DDs, and infuse a willingness to test and learn the 5DDs in an open and trusting environment. We discuss each in turn.

1. Teach and set expectations for the use of the Five Disciplines of Discussion
The five disciplines of discussions are a tool or a framework that helps shift individuals' participation in discussion forums from their own statement to that of others. It helps shift from a combative to an inclusive tone. Explain the 5DDs to the participants and explain that we all have tendencies or strengths in different ones, and sometimes we can use a well-intentioned discussion discipline at the wrong time. Set expectations for the use of the 5DDs at the start of the group interaction or interaction series. In circumstances where that is not possible (e.g., there is inadequate time to name the 5DDs as a convention, such as in open online forums), a shift towards the use of the discussion may still happen as one single person engages in its use, models the behavior for others, and acknowledges the 5DDs' use and productive outcomes.

2. Model the use of the Five Discussion Disciplines (or point out their use in others)
One of the most effective ways to teach the use of the disciplines is modeling it. The lead demonstrates to the group how it is possible to improve the quality of the conversation and the experience of the group through the use of the five disciplines. The two disciplines that cause the greatest impact, because they are so seldom used, are Inclusion and Translation. As the discussion progresses, other members of the group pick up on the behavior. A transition

threshold between unproductive and productive discussions can often be achieved with only two participants making use of the disciplines.

3. Do a role play

In more structured environments, such as in Community of Practice forums or learning workshops, it is helpful to assign roles. One participant is assigned the role of Lead, that is, the one responsible for starting and closing the discussion. The lead will be in charge of including periodic translations of the discussion. These periodic translations function as an accordion, where the discussion is allowed to expand and the translation works as the contraction, consolidating a common or shared understanding of the discussion thus far. In these more-structured environments, another participant is assigned the role of "Social Reporter," who is responsible for confirming or probing others for the use of the five disciplines. Other participants are all encouraged to practice all 5DDs.

4. Praise the use and nudge participants towards a balanced use of all disciplines

In learning environments, the facilitator can nudge the use of 5DDs, or take the "Social Reporter" offline and help them to nudge and/or applaud their peers. It is helpful to break up complex discussion into phases, or use small subgroups. For example: Defining the Context, Identifying the Problem, Brainstorming the Solution and Choosing the Path Forward. With small subgroups, participants have the opportunity to observe how the discussion becomes more productive over time as participants learn the use of the disciplines. Sometimes it helps to have a facilitator who notices and applauds where people have slowed down, and who models, for example by acknowledging (Inclusion) and/or integrating others' ideas (Translation). The facilitator reminds the team of their progress by describing what they see. For example, '[person] slowed down the conversation, and expanded the ownership by acknowledging who just spoke.' The facilitator notices power imbalances. These imbalances could be due to status differences between members of the group, language and cultural barriers and in-group vs out-group dynamics. The facilitator observes whether there is a dominant voice, who is quiet and whose ideas are left unacknowledged or forgotten. To achieve productive conversation, the facilitator may correct through modeling, highlight out loud ('Does anyone notice that we've not asked a question for over half an hour?'), or by including those who are left out.

5. Ask participants to self-observe and self-assess their use of the disciplines

Self-assessment is an effective tool to improve the use of the 5DDs. It is helpful to have participants complete a short self-analysis after the first few discussions where they self-assess along the 5DDs, or share and describe positive examples of each discipline that they observed to

be demonstrated by their peers. This can also provide affirmation to individuals who may be unaware of their use of the 5DDs.

6. Explore and evaluate the macro landscape of the 5DDs

Individuals, divisions, units, departments, institutions, identity groups may have a habitual preference for one of the 5DDs, or may engage in negative rhetorical intents such as indirection, snarkiness or cynicism. As the group familiarizes itself with the 5DDs, they may stand back and look at moves between leaders or departments, and chart their own course for greater conversation civility or productivity:

- 'Is that leader using *Integrity*, or an insincere feint? (Alternatively, are they stating their position precisely, or just "going along to get along"?)'
- [For a nonprofit] 'How is the grantor reaching out with *Integrity-Q* to grant-seekers acknowledging the inherent wisdom, or ground-truth of the grantees interfacing with the public.'
- 'How are the series of physical plant investments *Courteously* respecting the accessibility team's report on best practices? (Are the investments incorporating what the accessibility team has surfaced? Are they explaining when they are not?)'
- 'How is Marketing *Including* Engineering? (Are they digging in or asking for input?)'
- 'How is the competitor *Translating* what it sees across two otherwise separate industries (e.g., Tesla auto manufacturing with solar energy)?'

As the group becomes proficient in the use of the 5DDs, its ecology evolves from one that is transactional, defensive, guarded, and political, to one that is long-horizon, curious, risk-taking, and forgiving. Not all members will mature at the same pace. It's critical to make the patterns of improvement (and failure) discussible.

Case stories

The following case stories illustrate learning gaps and group-effectiveness barriers that have been resolved with the 5DDs. (For an additional case study, see Settle-Murphy & Pugh, 2020a, 2020b)

1. Intuitive to scientific language gap
One of us provided emergency support for a long distance slurry pipeline operation. In these environments, the pipeline operation technicians often knew there were problems with the

pipeline before a pipe blockage or rupture occurred. Those operators had an intuitive know-how of the pipeline pressure and flow responses, but lacked the proper language to communicate those to engineers. Worse, engineers discredited that know-how as "unscientific." We practiced Translation, reframing what one group said in words that the other could understand, to evaluate the root causes, improving the prognostic of the pipeline operation and reducing the risk of unforeseen emergency events.

Similar language barriers between intuition and scientific know-how happen between parents and educators, where parents have an intuitive knowledge of what their kids need, but lack the skills to explain it using appropriate educational frameworks. By contrast, educators often use educational terms assuming parents can understand. In the absence of Integrity-Q, Inclusion and Translation, and surrounded by an externally-amplified "us vs them" mentality between educators and parents, the conversation between these two groups often derails and becomes combative and unproductive.

2. Contrasting objectives

One of the authors analyzed the collaborative dynamics between farmers, riparian landowners, fishers, regulators, boaters regarding water use. The different groups disagreed about the potential benefit from aquaculture. In town halls, where they used more Courtesy they appeared to improve relationships (as evidenced by a large delta in positivity in the second half over the first half). In these same town halls, more Inclusion appeared to improve intent-to-act (as evidenced by statements of intent to act -- "We should.." "We will…" "Let's do…" -- in the higher-inclusion conversations). (This was documented quantitatively in Pugh et al., 2023). More innovation (options-generation) appeared where there was more Integrity-Q (inquiry) or Translation.

3. Learning, knowledge co-development, and team capacity-building

Both authors have used the 5DDs over the last decade to promote knowledge elicitation, transfer and comprehension among graduate students. Students are prompted to engage in asynchronous online discussions. At first the conversations resemble a parallel train of thought, with each student focused on expressing their own ideas accurately to get points. Then, as the faculty models, praises and nudges the use of the 5DDs, students increasingly merge into a cohesive understanding of the topic, and gain respect for each other. The discussions and the use of the 5DDs not only helped students gain a deep understanding of the topic, but helped develop a learning community. Through each discussion, students' co-learning and retention of new knowledge has grown. Importantly, students report that they are better equipped to collaborate in

group projects in subsequent courses. They do this by 1.) Holding each other accountable for using the 5DDs; and 2.) Giving each other permission to observe, applaud, and nudge the use of the 5DDs.

Conclusions and future research

Conversation may be a purgatory or refuge. Today's media amplifies differences and positions, fans fears and hollows out complexity just when we most need to involve citizens in understanding it. This has chipped away at our mental health and dignity. As we have seen, the 5DDs, by directly addressing the conversational gaps, have been shown to quantitatively improve groups' intent to act, and qualitatively improve innovation and group-resilience (Skiftad & Pugh, 2014; Pugh et al, 2023). We hope that future research will provide evidence for how to build productive conversation, such 5DD capacity-building strategies; navigation of status (power, prestige), and the navigation of (inter)dependencies; merging of distinct vocabularies or professional literacies (e.g., Engineer and Operator); incorporating context from outside the conversation, such as bias and longstanding 'heritage' relationships; and accommodating indirect speech or sarcasm, which may not be understood by all.

The 5DDs can be expressed as rhetorical intents in conversation, but they have parallels: moves of declaration, curiosity, dignity-preservation, acknowledgement, and deep listening can bridge across departments, entities, nations, media platforms and political elites. Only by working together, co-creating meaning, and creating space for divergent perspectives can we creatively and efficiently tackle the world's largest problems, like climate change, resource scarcity, extinction and inequality. We must all learn to practice conversation as an act of sense-making and generosity, to re-capture the traditional wisdom of community, and to re-imagine life-giving interactions.

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Declarations

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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[1] Table 4 illustrates how the conversation evolves when participants use the 5DDs, without snarkiness. Snarkiness can block individual dignity and individual and collective learning.

[2] Students are responding to Simon Sinek (2021) 'A Quick Way to Find your Why.' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1iQjFMiLuE.

[3] Students are responding to Simon Sinek (2021) 'A Quick Way to Find your Why.' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1iQjFMiLuE.