Unlocking the Mystery:
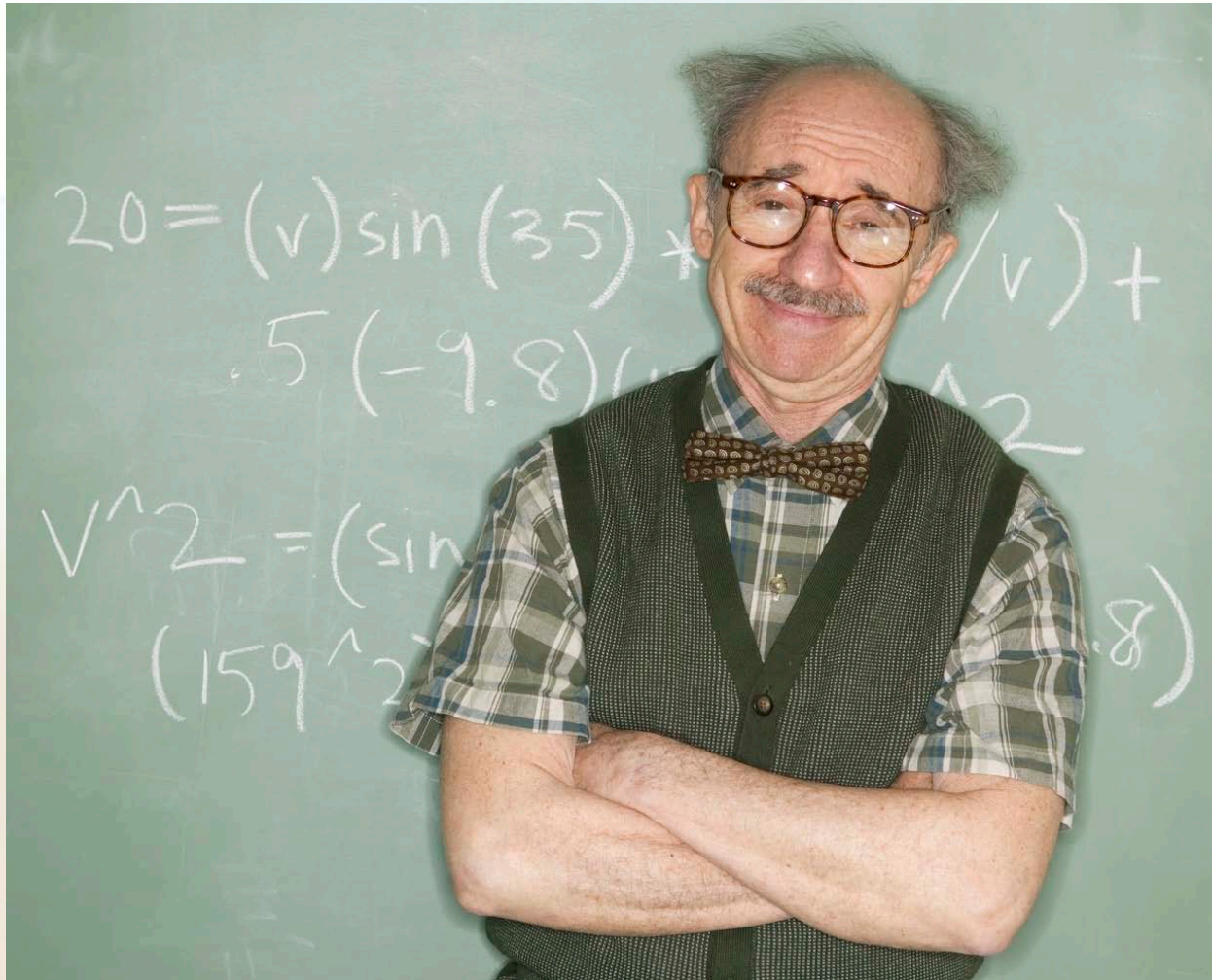# Six Essential Keys to Successful Community Building for Blended Learning

Steven N. Pyser, J.D. (snp10@psu.edu)

Regional Colloquy - Penn State Abington

Hybrid Courses and Blended Learning

January 18, 2010

Shall we teach as we've been taught?

Challenge by Choice

Full Value Community Agreement

- We will have a successful and positive Dialogue in a "safe" environment through a Full Value Community Agreement (FVCA) that provides for:

- "Full Value" means recognizing and valuing anything that makes us an individual and recognizing the same in others

- Be here (for the entire process), Be *here* while you're here

- Listen actively and attentively.

- All voices are invited, respected and heard

- All experiences are treated as valid

- Participate actively and share opinions in the conversation – engage fully in this process

- Experiment and take risks to share, while engaging in conversation with others
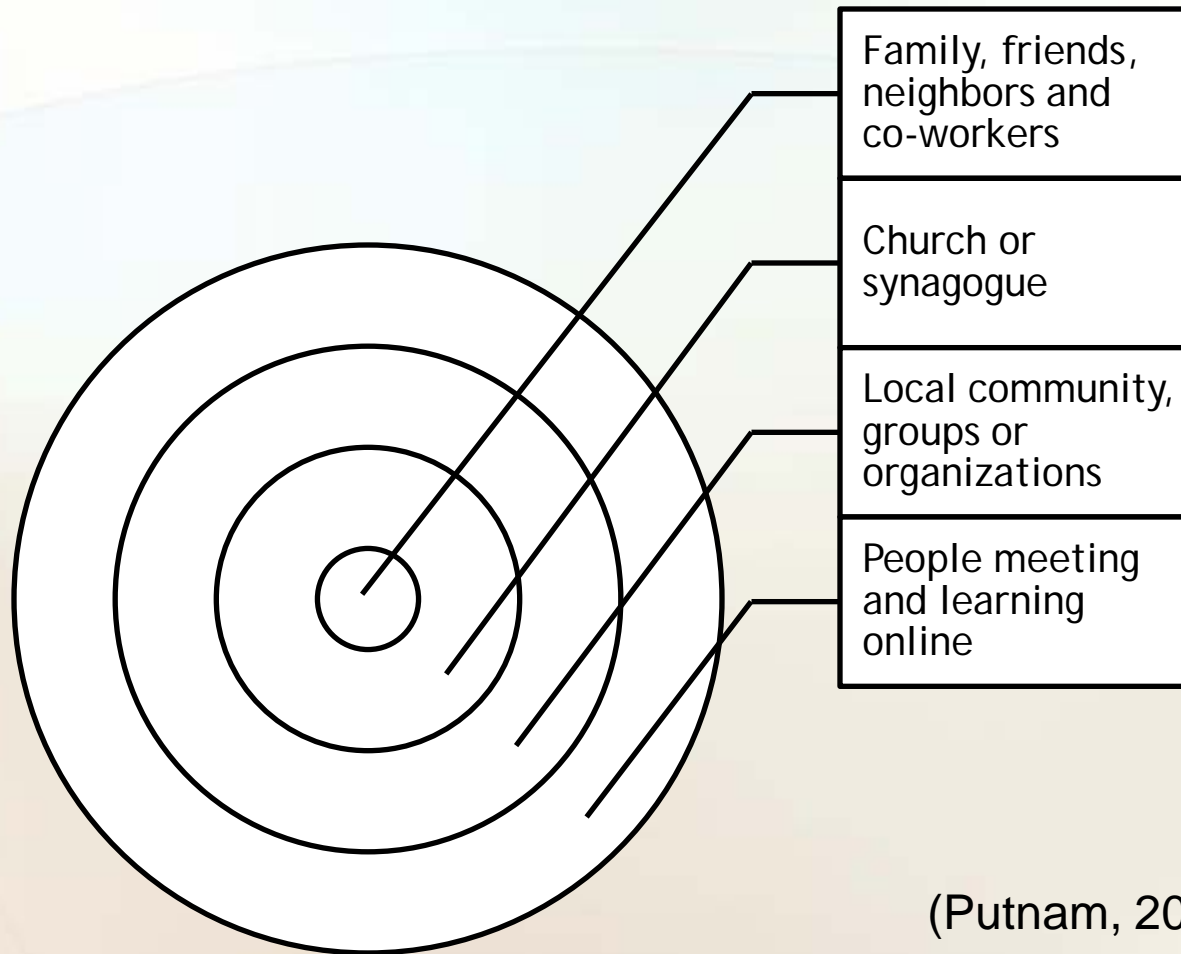
(Pyser & Figallo, 2004)

community, *n.*

- A shared or common quality or state.

- Life in association with others; the social state. Freq. as *in community*.

- An online facility, such as an electronic bulletin board, forum, or chat room, where users can share information or discuss topics of mutual interest.

(Oxford English Dictionary)

Bowling Alone?
Ways of a Sense of Belonging

Family, friends, neighbors and co-workers

Church or synagogue

Local community, groups or organizations

People meeting and learning online

(Putnam, 2000, p. 275)

The Nature of Groups

Ideas
- Beliefs
- Desires
- Hopes
- Fears

Ways of Speaking
- Levels of Tolerance

Internal Dialogue
- Patterns behavior
- Sense of humor

(Hunter, Bailey, & Taylor, 1995, p. 2)

Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Respect diversity
- Engage the motivation of a broad range of students
- Create a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment

- Derives teaching practices from across disciplines and cultures
- Promotes equitable learning
- Norms: explicit shared assumptions, values and purposes

(Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009, p. ix)

Interconnection– Non Linear

Build Alliances

Community

Co-creation
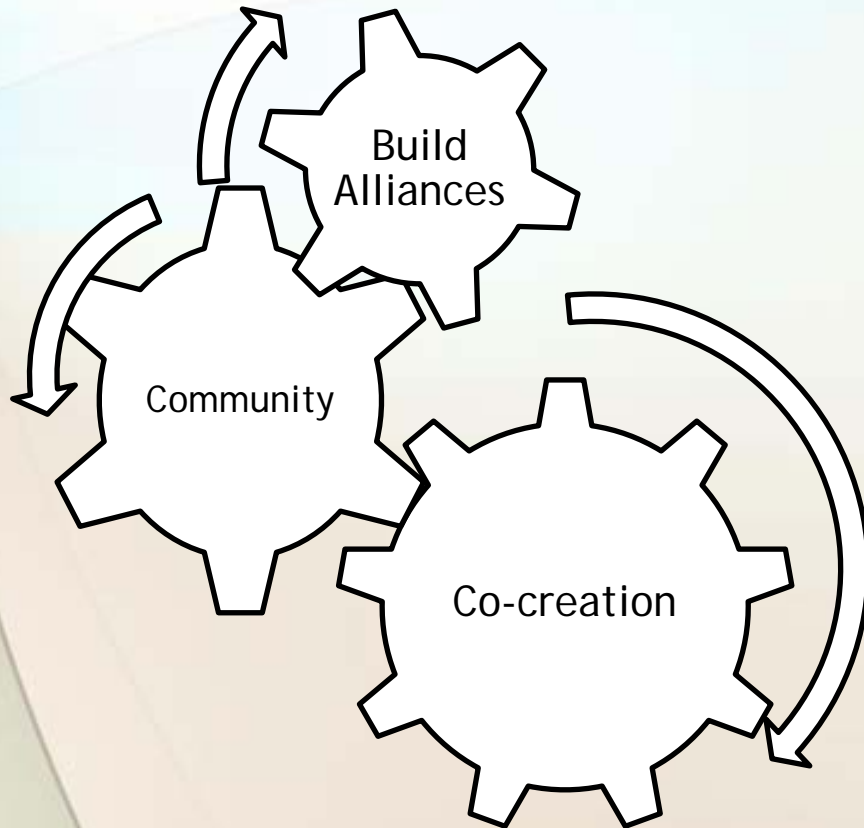
- Reality check - Hypercompetitive market place
- Need for e-learning innovation/integration
- Resiliency - adapt to economically volatile business/learning environment

Respect for Learners

- Decision makers in <u>their</u> own learning

- Honest dialogue of learners and teacher

- Knowledge, skills and attitudes meaningful to context

- Learning Needs and Resources Assessment (LNRA)

- Constructivism: Learning appropriate to one's context

(Vella, 2008, p. 97)

Space and Place for Dialogue

Participation

Social interaction

Communication
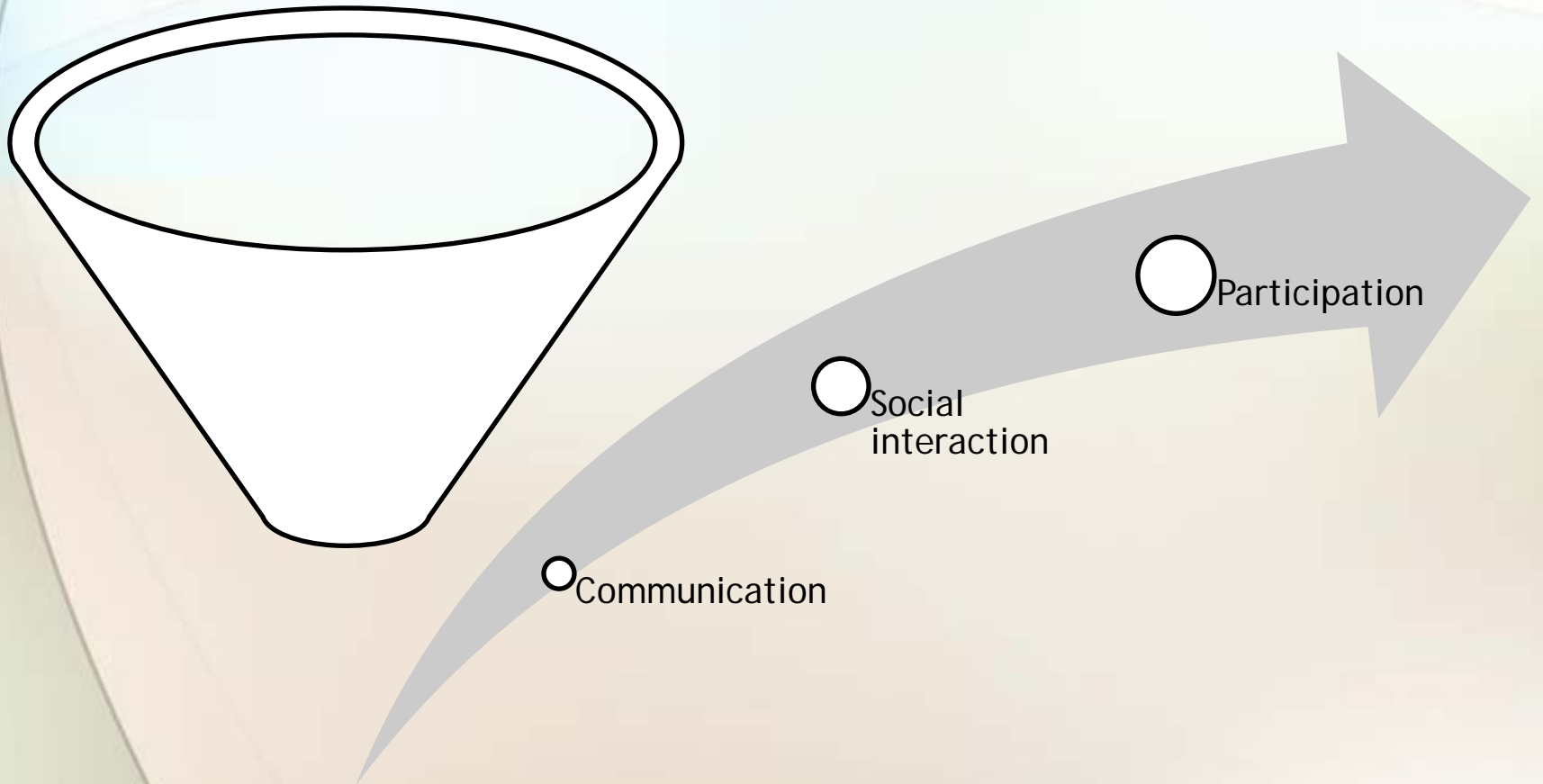
Dialogue as Collaboration Tool

People	Difficult Issues	Understanding and Learning
Small groups	Not debate	Builds trust
Share perspectives	Not about winning	Opens perspectives

NCDD (2010)(para. 3-4)

Creating the Ideal Conditions

Trust
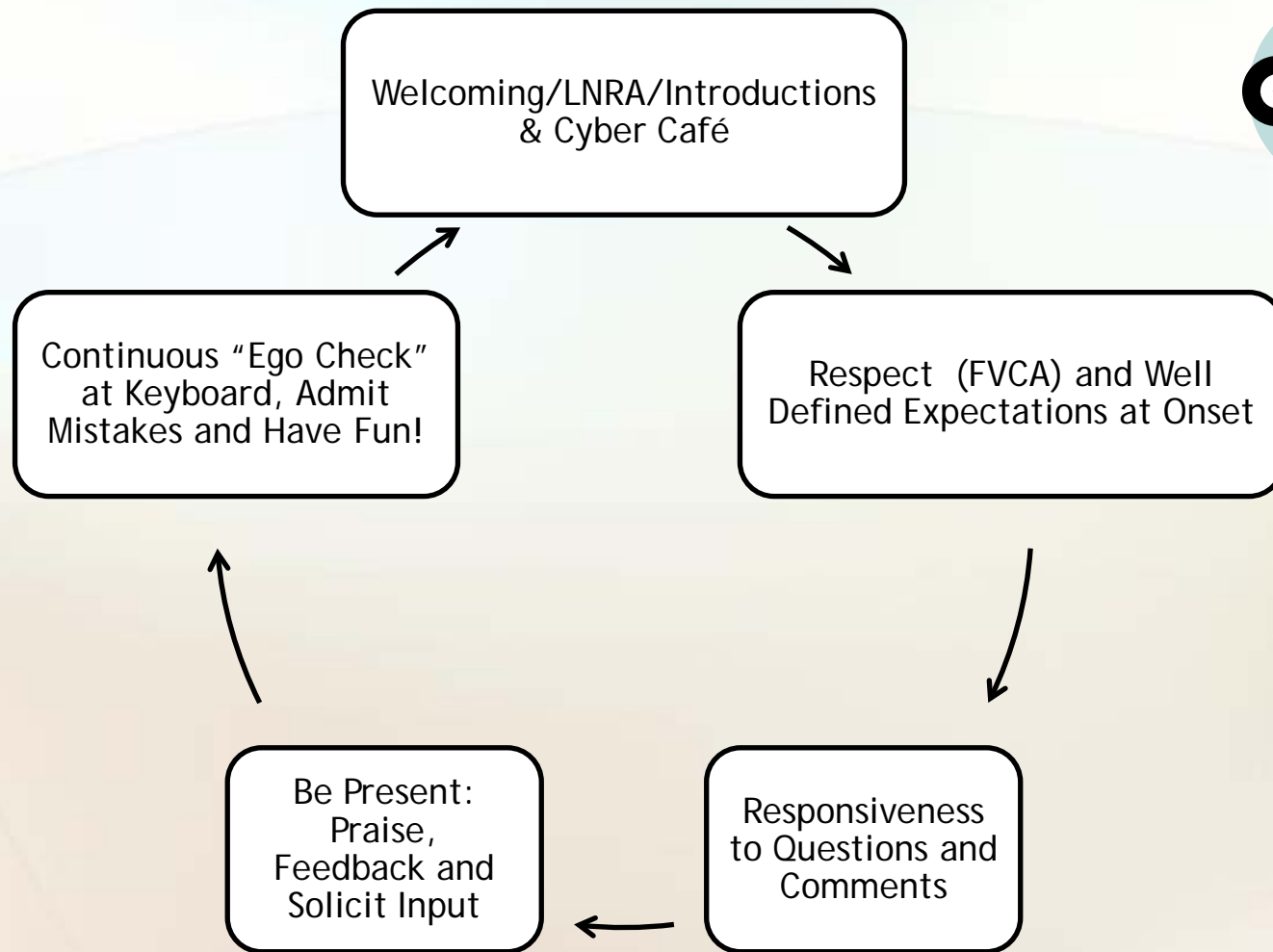- sharing
- not exploited or used against me

Tolerance
- contribution
- not criticized unfairly or bring personal attack

Reward
- benefit from exchange if contribute

(Figallo & Rhine, 2002, p. 114)

Cycles of Engagement: "Online Environment Headset"

Welcoming/LNRA/Introductions & Cyber Café

Respect (FVCA) and Well Defined Expectations at Onset

Responsiveness to Questions and Comments

Be Present: Praise, Feedback and Solicit Input

Continuous "Ego Check" at Keyboard, Admit Mistakes and Have Fun!

Community/Knowledge Sharing
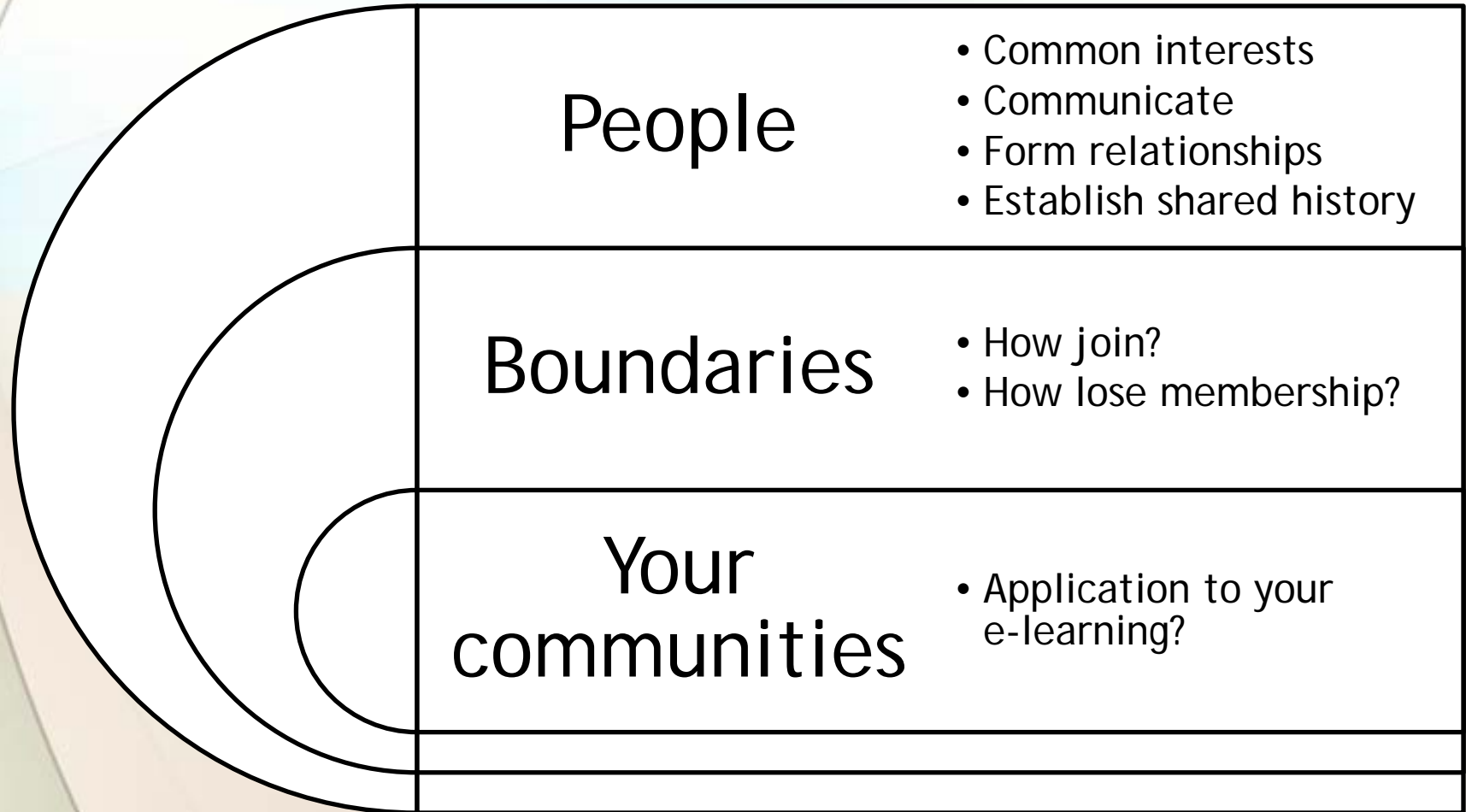
Sense of Place
- Trust
- Openness
- Helpfulness
- Collaboration

Conversation
- Return regularly to "check-in"
- Engagement
- Informality

(Figallo & Rhine, 2002, p. 115)

Community as Social Structure

People	• Common interests • Communicate • Form relationships • Establish shared history
Boundaries	• How join? • How lose membership?
Your communities	• Application to your e-learning?

(Figallo & Rhine, 2002, p. 37)

Online Community Formation

- Course content
- Personal Communication

Active Interaction

Collaborative Learning

- Primarily student to student
- Not student to instructor

(Palloff, & Pratt, 1999, p. 32)

Support and Encouragement

Socially Constructed Meaning

- Between students
- Sharing of resources

- Agreement or questioning
- Intentional to achieve meaning agreement
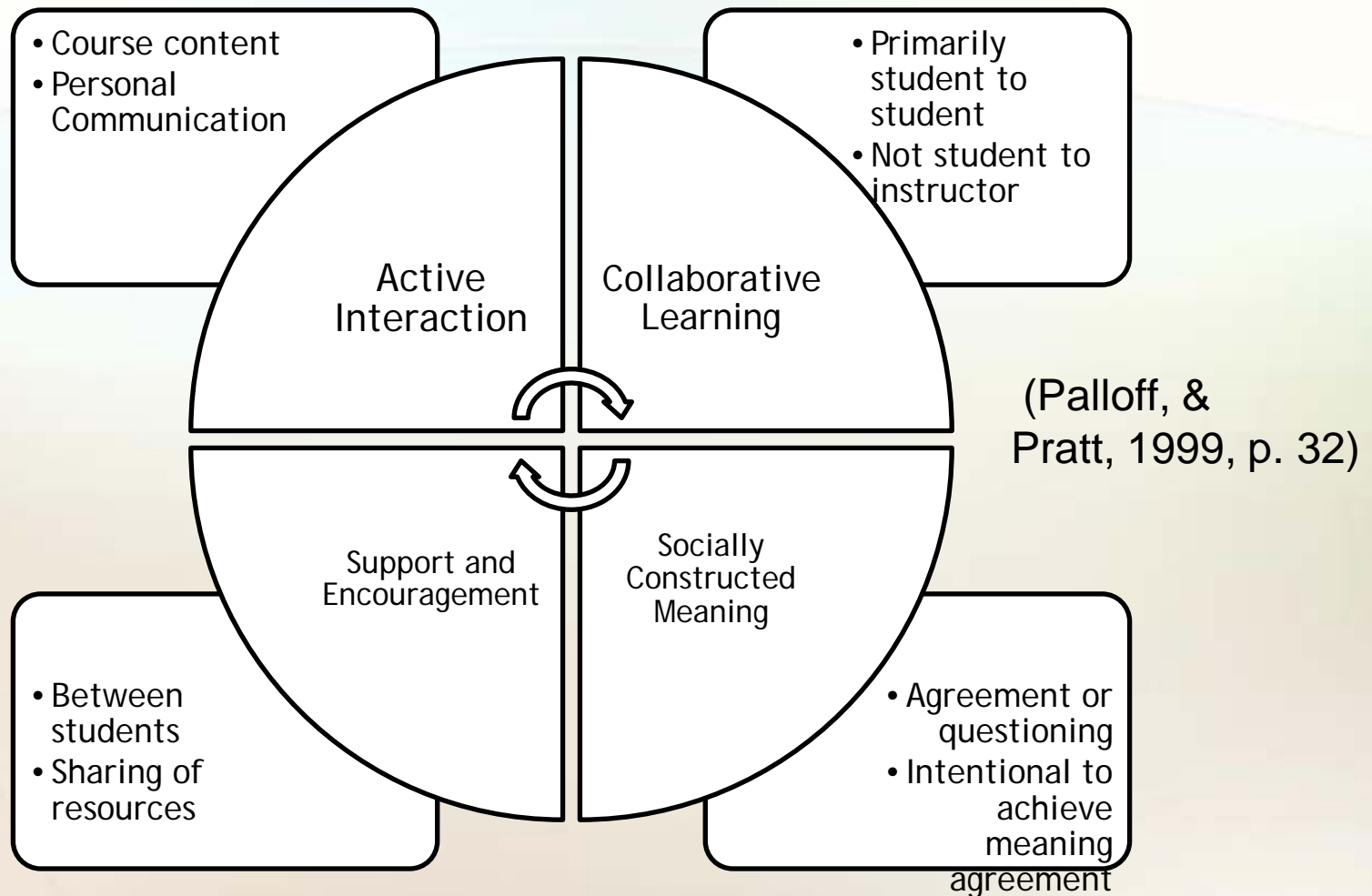
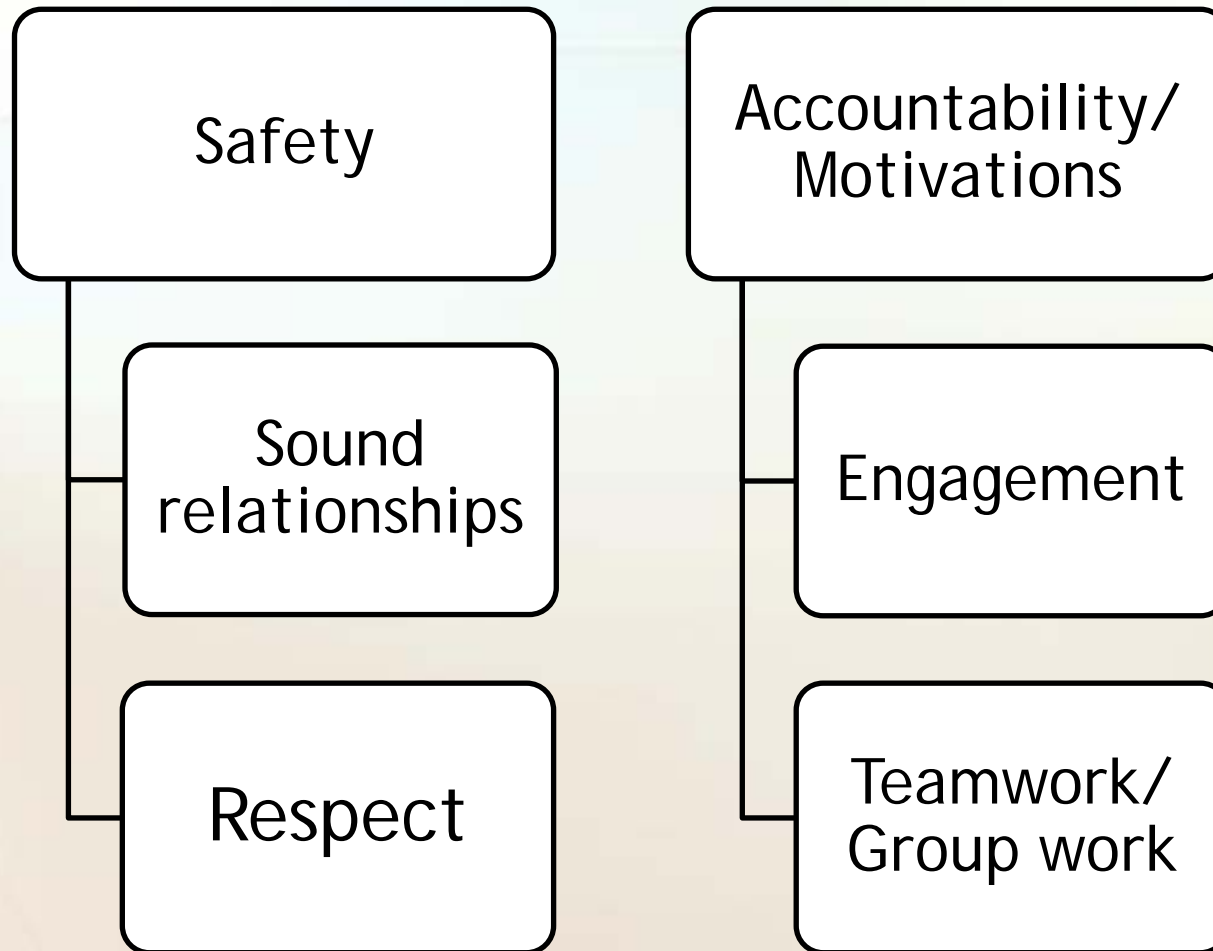# Strength Based Communities

Ownership/Personal Stake

Participation

Social Interaction

Individual Identities

Group Identities

Generative Processes – Knowledge

Principles and Practices

Safety

Sound relationships

Respect

Accountability/ Motivations

Engagement

Teamwork/ Group work

Mystery Solved: The Six Keys

- Create ideal conditions
- Respect for learners
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Space and place for dialogue

- Understand the nature of groups
- Co-create strength based community

Questions

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Figallo, C., & Rhine, N. (2002). *Building the knowledge management network: Best practices, tools, and techniques for putting conversation to work*. San Francisco: Wiley Technology Publishing.

Ginsberg, M. B., & Wlodkowski, R. J. (2009). *Diversity and motivation: culturally responsive teaching in college* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hunter, D., Bailey, A., & Taylor, B. (1995). *The zen of groups: A handbook for people meeting with a purpose*. Tucson, AZ: Fischer Books.

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Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of american community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

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Pyser, S., & Figallo, C. (2004). The "listening to the city" online dialogues experience: The impact of a full value contract. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 21(3), 381-393.

Vella, J. (2008). *On teaching and learning: putting the principles and practices of dialogue education into action*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Further Study Resources (Pyser – I of III)

Book Chapters

Pyser, S., & Weiss, M. (2007). Web Lab's Small Group Dialogues on the Internet Commons. In P. Holman, T. Devane, & S. Cady (Eds.), The change handbook: The definitive resource on today's methods for engaging whole systems (2nd ed., pp. 294-298, 702). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Pyser, S. (2005). Effective strategies for designing and facilitating dialogue. In S. Schuman (Ed.), The IAF Handbook of Group Facilitation: Best Practices from the Leading Organizations in Facilitation (pp. 205-223). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sokoloff, H., Steinberg, H., & Pyser, S. (2005). Deliberative city planning on the philadelphia waterfront. In J. Gastil & P. Levine (Eds.), The Deliberative Democracy Handbook: Strategies for Effective Civic Engagement in the 21st Century (pp. 185-196). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Resources (Pyser – II of III)

Writings on Educational Issues

Pyser, S. (2007, Fall). Community of practice: Your online portal to expanding professional skills and expertise. Adjunct Advocate, 22-23.

Pyser, S. (2007, July/August). Seven tips to be a successful first-time course developer. Adjunct Advocate, 20-21.

Pyser, S. (2006, September/October). Getting the tap: Securing continuous online work. Adjunct Advocate, 20-21.

Pyser, S. (2006, July/August). Ten timesaving tips for part-time distance learning faculty. Adjunct Advocate, 20-21.

Pyser, S. (2006, November). In S. Pyser & M. Schiller (Eds.), Building a sustained capacity for connection: AI and lifelong learning. AI Practitioner, 9-13.

Pyser, S., & Ugras, J. (2006, November). In S. Pyser & M. Schiller (Eds.), AI and faculty development: discovering facilitation and dialogue tools and techniques for effective adult learning. AI Practitioner, 22-26.

Resources (Pyser – III of III)

Pyser, S. (2005, August). Dialogue and action: A call to build community – developing solutions for respecting diversity and creating harmony in bristol township, pennsylvania. AI Practitioner, 27-35.

Pyser, S. (2009, May). Building capacity and connection: Intergenerational community dialogue in the USA. AI Practitioner, 34-39.

Op-Ed Articles

Pyser, S. (2007, October 26). Citizens must bring themselves back into government. The Philadelphia Inquirer