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**Pedagogy for a Wicked World: The *Value* and
Hazards of a Transdisciplinary, Dialogue-Driven,
Community-Engaged Classroom Model**

Innovations in Collaborative Modeling Conference
Michigan State University
June 5, 2015

OBJECTIVES

1

- Detail Pedagogy

2

- Recommendations & Strategies

3

- Hazards & Benefits

WICKED



MESSY

CONFLICT

ISOLATION

HIGH STAKES

EXTREME COMPLEXITY

NO IDEAL RESOLUTION

EXPERTISE IS NOT ENOUGH

HIGH LEVEL OF UNCERTAINTY & RISK

Confronting our assumptions

*Make the “unthinkable”
thinkable*

SUGGESTIONS:

- ❖ Manageable actions
- ❖ Plan incrementally
- ❖ Iterate
- ❖ Strategic *thinking*
- ❖ Emphasize *people*



WHAT WE COULD DO...

Experiential,
context bound
learning

Encourage
reciprocity

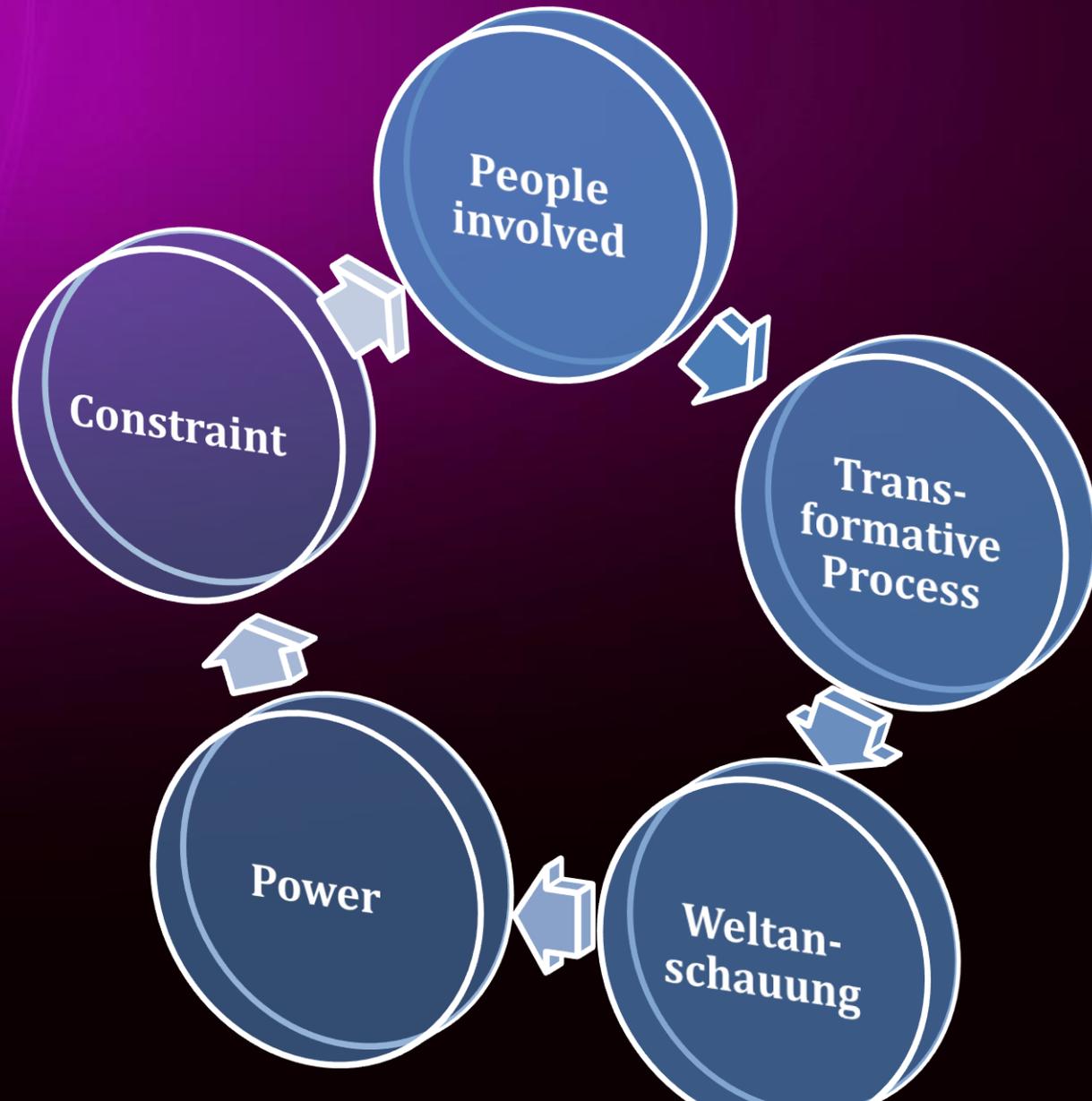
emphasis on
values

iterative
learning
process

stress
plurality and
creativity

need for
Empathy

SOFT SYSTEMS THINKING



Course Strategy 1

Examine course content/issue through local problem

Analyze issue through 2 + disciplinary lenses

Share and integrate findings

Analyze conclusion
& act



Strategy 2: SPAN BOUNDARIES

INVITE IN ←

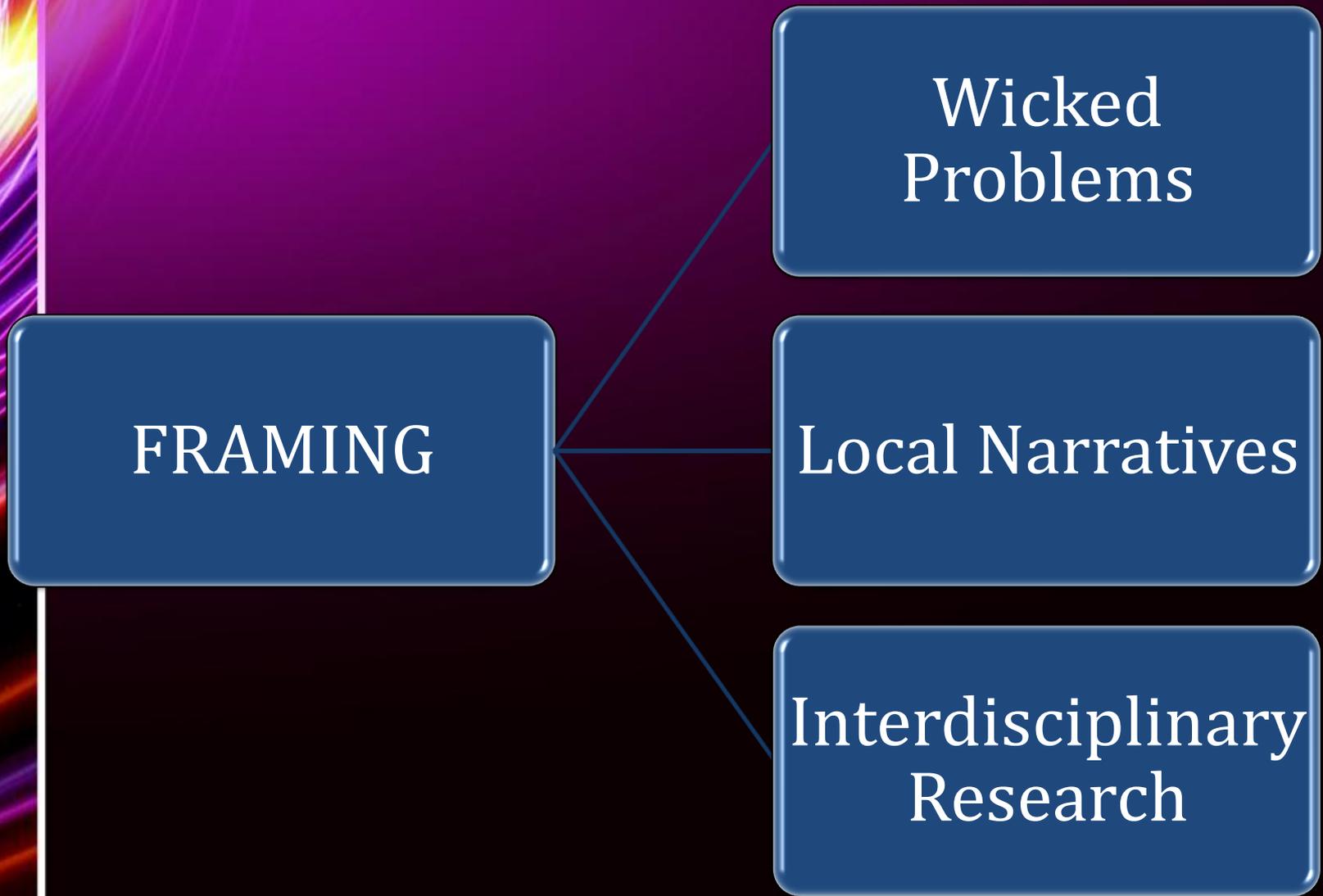
GET OUT →

Require ACCOUNTABILITY

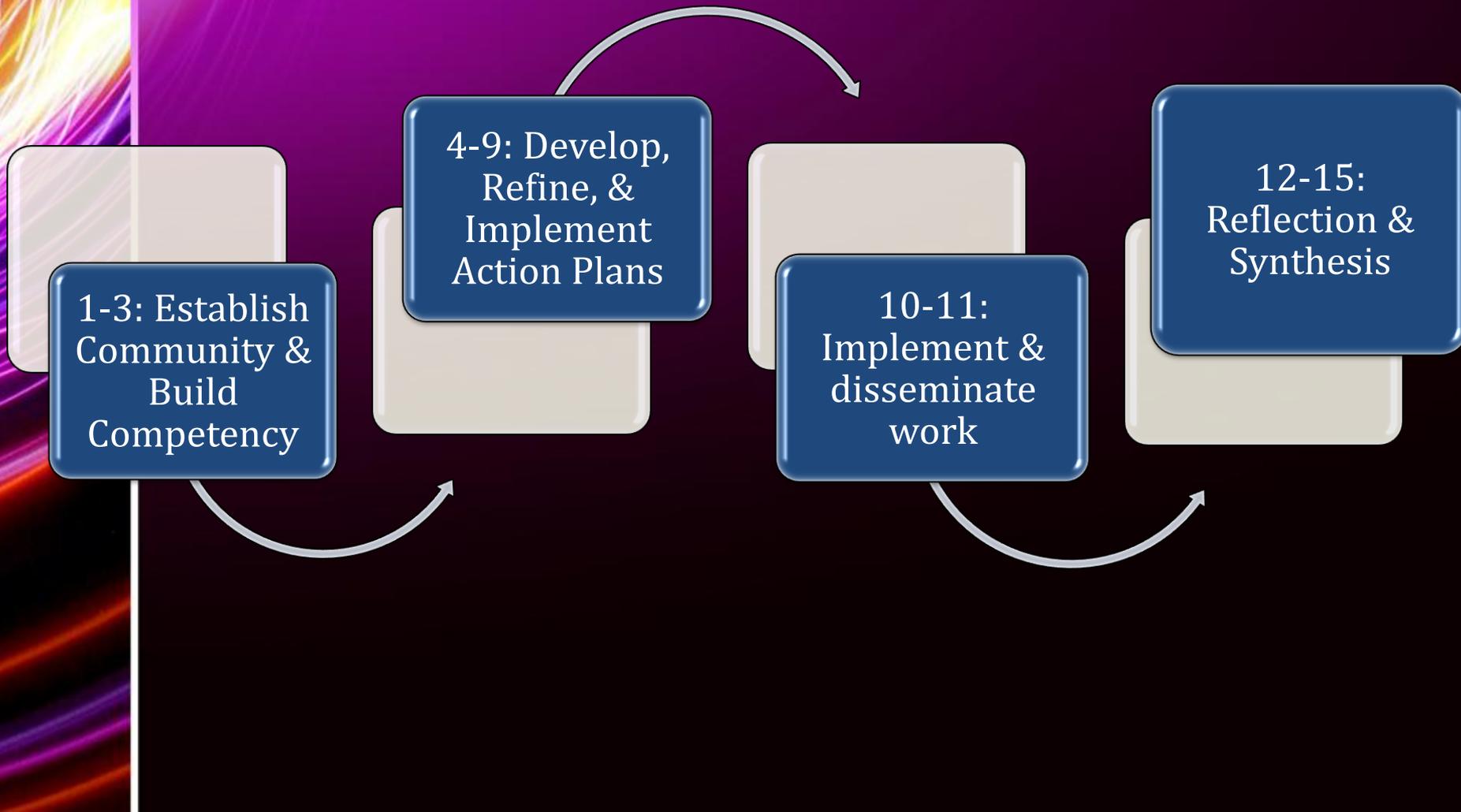
INTEGRATE in order to GENERATE *new* knowledge

DISSEMINATE ideas to interested stakeholders

STRATEGY 3: COLLABORATIVE, & ITERATIVE ISSUE-FRAMING



POSSIBLE TIMELINE



POINT-OF-VIEW PRESENTATION

Demonstrate base-level competency

Motivate integrative action plans

Underscore wide-range of knowl, exp, & values

Expose to the complexities involved

connect across disciplines



The Hungry Games:

Tackling *Wicked* Food Problems at Black River Public Schools through a New Experiential Project Term Course



THE HUNGRY GAMES

Authors: Timothy Deters, Michael Garnaat, Isabel Gonzales, Megan Kupres, Evelyn Lugo, Ashley Munniksmä, Jose Rivera & Nathan Spencer, Grand Valley State University.

Abstract

Environmental activist and culture critic, Wendell Berry states in “The Pleasures of Eating,” “When food, in the minds of eaters, is no longer associated with farming and with the land, the eaters are suffering a kinds of cultural amnesia that is misleading and dangerous” (Berry 2) The obesity epidemic, mass hunger, the invasion of overly-processed and GMO-contaminated foods are just a few of the frightful consequences of our society’s overall disconnect with the food system. With so many obvious shortcomings, how does one even begin to tackle the wicked problem of food? According to several culture critics, including Michael Pollan, the raising of awareness via the education of students is an excellent starting point (Pollan 2008). Following the vision of The Sprout Society—a Grand Valley State University student project proposed during the winter 2014 semester of LIB 322: Wicked Problems of Sustainability—our LIB 342: Food Matters class partnered with Black River Public Schools to create “The Hungry Games”—a nine day program that can be utilized by the school during their spring 2015 Project Term. The purpose of “The Hungry Games” is to develop food literacy and expose students to the corporate and industrial take-over of the food system. We have provided an overview of our research, design and collaborative process, a sample curriculum and an idea for the final project that instructors can use to develop, in students, the knowledge and tools to be active and critical consumers of food. “The Hungry Games” curriculum explores the following four themes: 1) Why should we care; 2) Where does our food come from; 3) Nutrition; and 4) Food Waste. Lastly, the program incorporates a variety of hands-on activities including a lesson on making green smoothies and a field trip to Holland’s Eighth Day Community Farm. Time proved to be a primary limiting factor in the development of this program. It is hoped that this program will prove successful enough for a second installment, so that these food issues can be further developed.

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LIB 322: WICKED PROBLEMS OF SUSTAINABILITY

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Submissions from 2014

-  [Fresher Start Team Project Analysis](#), Michael Carlson, Andrijka Macko, and Katie Johnston
-  [The Sprout Society](#), Michelle Haapala, Craig Coolman, and Jamie Groendyk
-  [Tackling Wicked Food Issues](#), LIB322 students
-  [Michigan Medley Project Analysis](#), Josh Lorenz, Kyle Ramsey, Anna Kathryn Sluka, and Tyler Wiewiora

Submissions from 2013

-  [Fresh Start: Inspiring our Youth with Knowledge, Experience, Access to Farming, Local Foods, and Life Skills for Healthy and Sustainable Living](#), Evan Bell, Ross Damon, Dana Eardley, and Jessica Siemen
-  [C.A.R.R.O.T. / G.A.R.D.E.N.S.: Communities About Resource Responsibility Of Tomorrow Growing A Resource Dense Environment in Schools](#), Joel Cambell, Jessica Dake, Breanna Dubanik, and Marisha Ibrahim
-  [Tackling 'Wicked' Food Issues](#), Grand Valley State University

<http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/wickedproblems>

STRATEGIC DOING



Recommendations



REFLECTION

ANALYSIS

SYNTHESIS

Learn	Research	Reflect back 15 weeks
Experience	Frame Focus	Integrate experience with course content
Future Direction	Action Plan	Describe difficulties
	Methods	Values, Knowledge, & Skills Gained
	Outcomes	Application to professional, personal, and civic lives
	Challenges & Recommendations	Share findings & Celebrate efforts

Outcomes & Recommendations



Content
Mastery



Community
Action



Method/Skills
acquisition

Flexibility

Understand Assumptions

Humility

Tenacity

Emotional Intelligence

Cultural Maturity

Require and Reinforce Reciprocity

Foster Perplexity

Build Fellowship

Collective Action

Empathetic
understanding

*“All participants —
faculty, community
organization
participants and students
— expect that they will
receive as well as give,
learn as well as teach,
and be served as well as
serve” (Jacoby, 11).*

MEASURES

(Turnpenny, Lorenzoni, &
Jones 2009)

frame issue

Acknowledge conflicts

process inclusion

Types of evidence

Response to
uncertainty

Perspectives changed

Impact reality

MEASURES

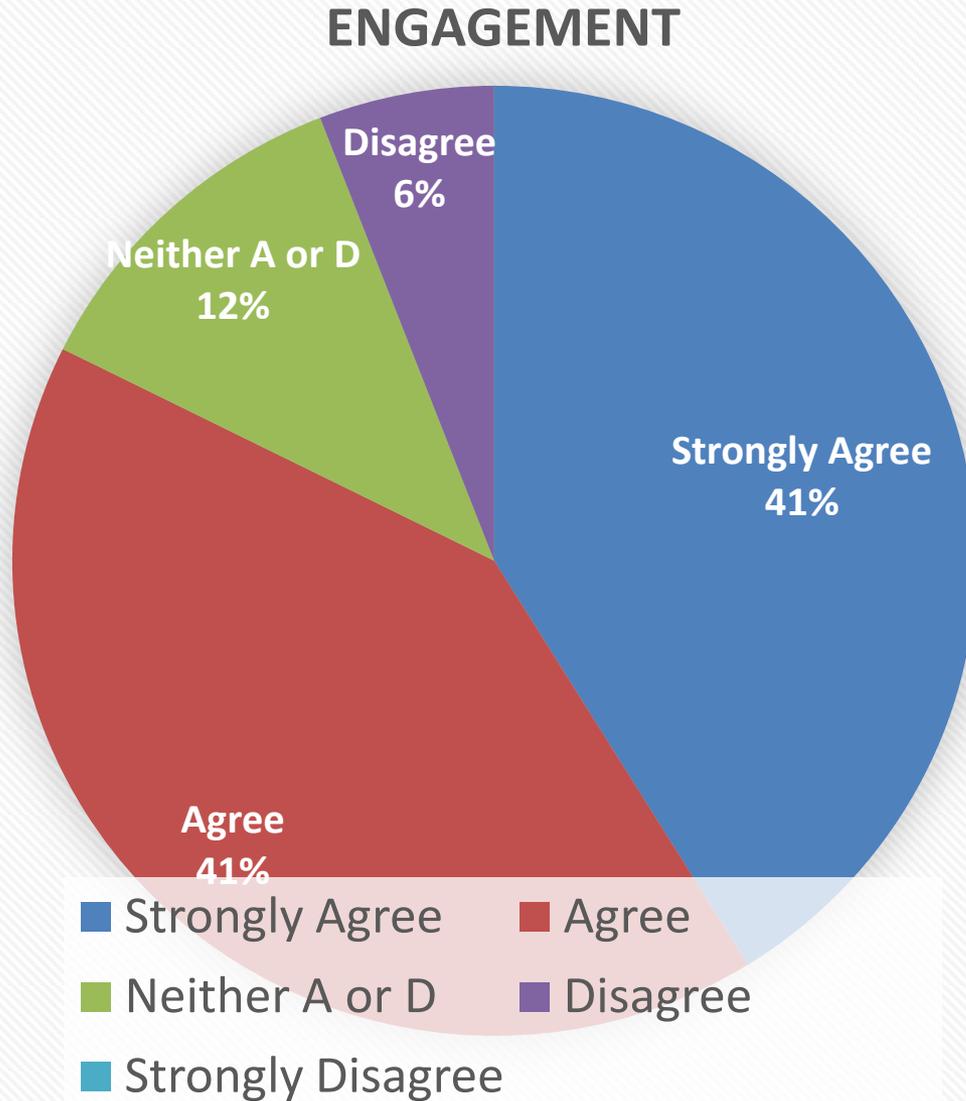
(Jacoby)

Understand
interdisciplinary
nature of problem

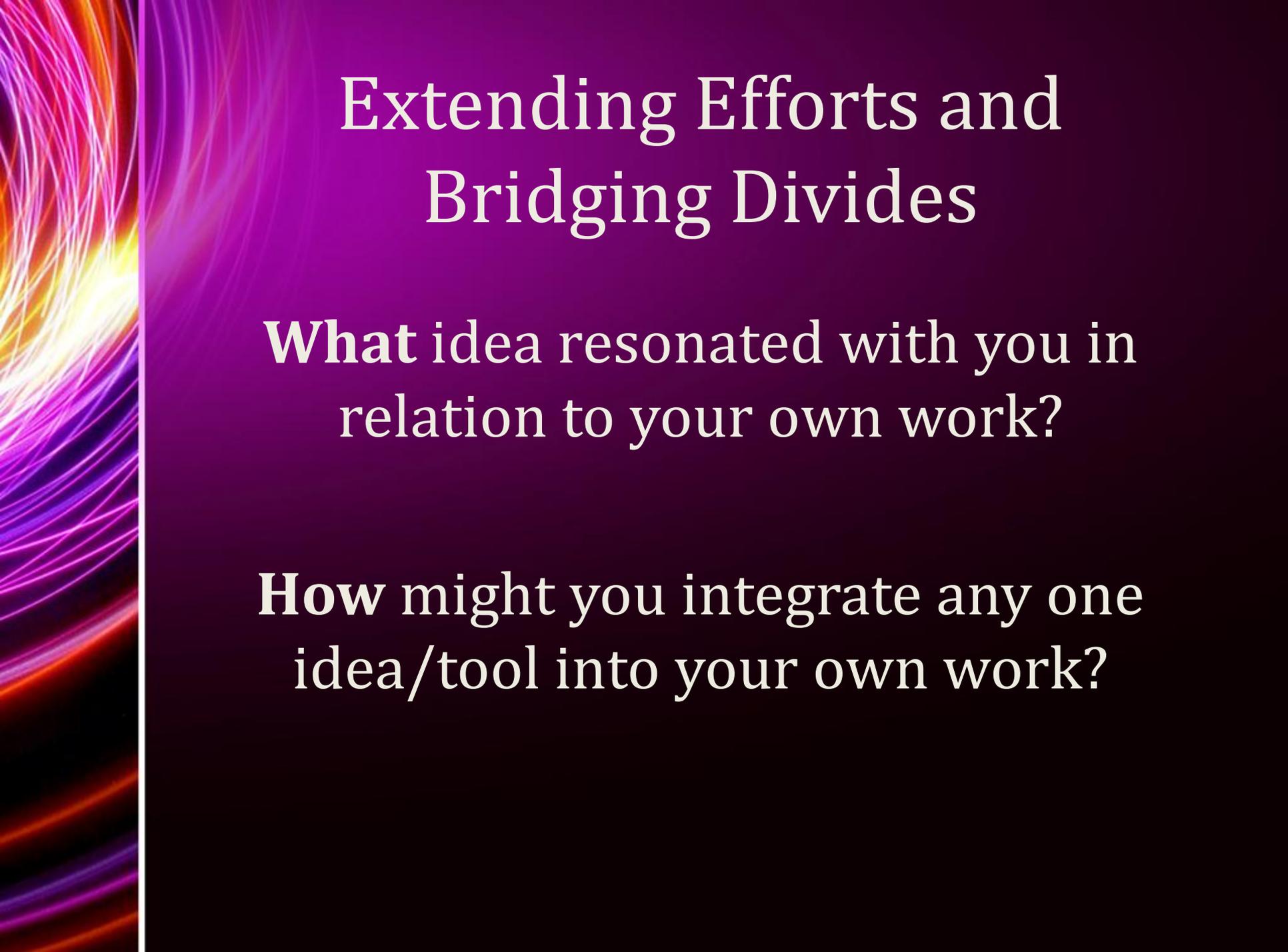
Learn about the
complexity of society

Learn to be a part of
the **SOLUTION** instead
of the problem.

As a result of this course, I am more likely to volunteer or participate in community work.



←
“I think that when you open someone’s eyes to these issues though they remain forever open, at least a little.”



Extending Efforts and Bridging Divides

What idea resonated with you in
relation to your own work?

How might you integrate any one
idea/tool into your own work?