



Value-Added Facilitation

**Presented by Joan Frye Williams
Wednesday, December 10, 2014**

This presentation is not about basic facilitation skills

Rules.

- Welcome to the YES room.
Please don't use No use Yes and ...
- Everyone's input is equally valued
- Respect each speaker; listen + ask clarifying questions
- Keep jargon to a minimum
- Cut to the chase
- Signal when we are going off track
- Discussions will focus on interests not people + criticisms
- No idea is bad
- Phone silent
- Job titles are left at the door
- Have fun

**It is possible to serve and lead
at the same time**

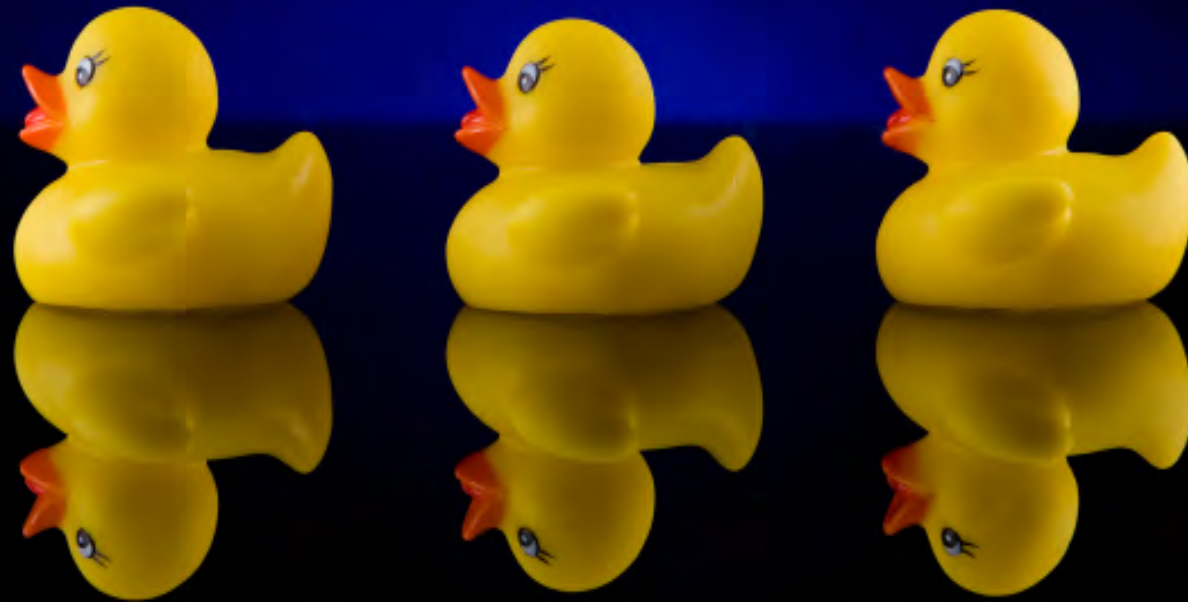


Today's discussion

1. Before you start facilitating
2. Ensuring credibility
3. Addressing conflicts
4. Stimulating the group's best thinking
5. Consolidating progress



1. Before you start facilitating

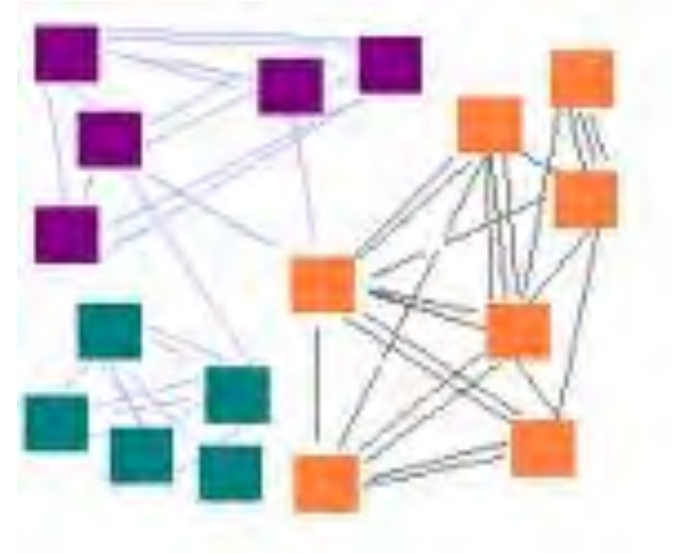




**Identify
the client**

Review the context

- Topic(s) for discussion
- Perceived problem(s)
- Related or larger issue(s)
- What happens after this discussion
- Time constraints



Identify and scope the desired work product



Identify the client's evaluation criteria



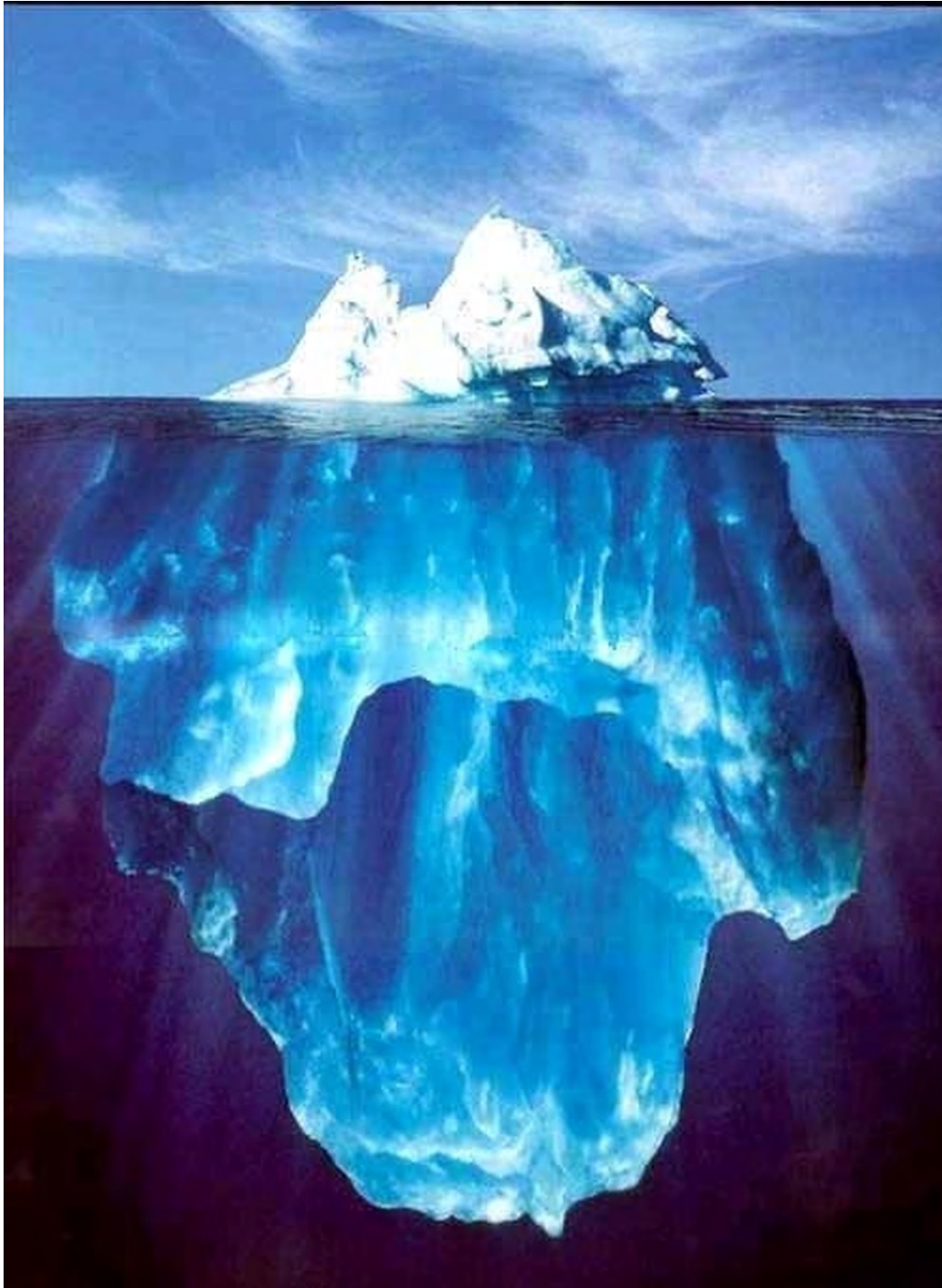
Confirm the group's level of authority

- Comment
- Recommend
- Decide
 - For the group
 - Beyond the group



Share all of this with the group





**Other things
to ask the client
up front...**

How was the group constituted?

- Selection process/criteria
- Standing group or this task only?
- Participating as individuals or speaking for a specific constituency?
- Well acquainted with one other?
- Similar levels of authority?



Are there likely points of conflict?

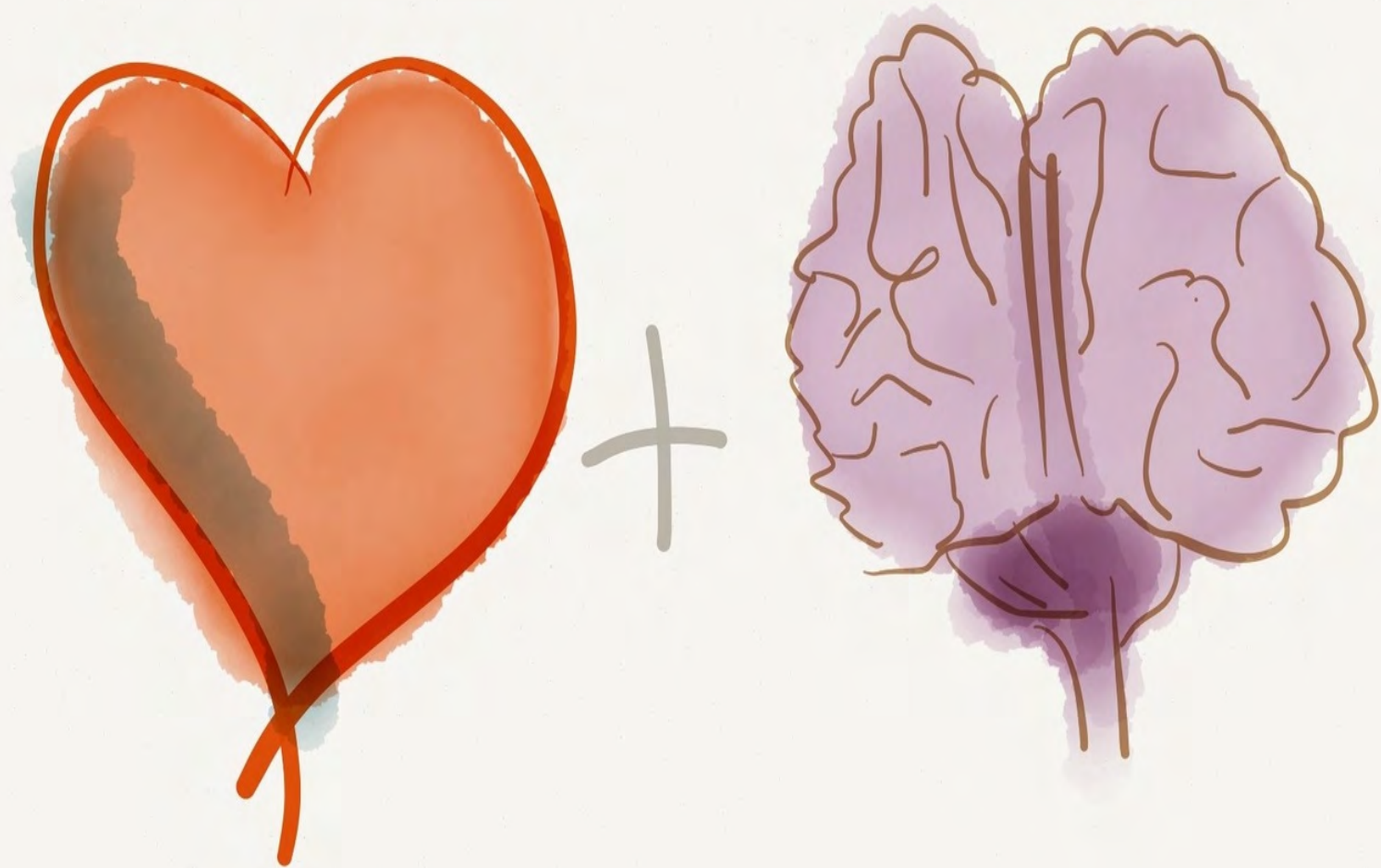
- Trigger event(s)
- Past attempts to address the same topic
- Challenging relationships



**Is there any option
we should be sure to consider?**



**Do you have
developmental expectations?**



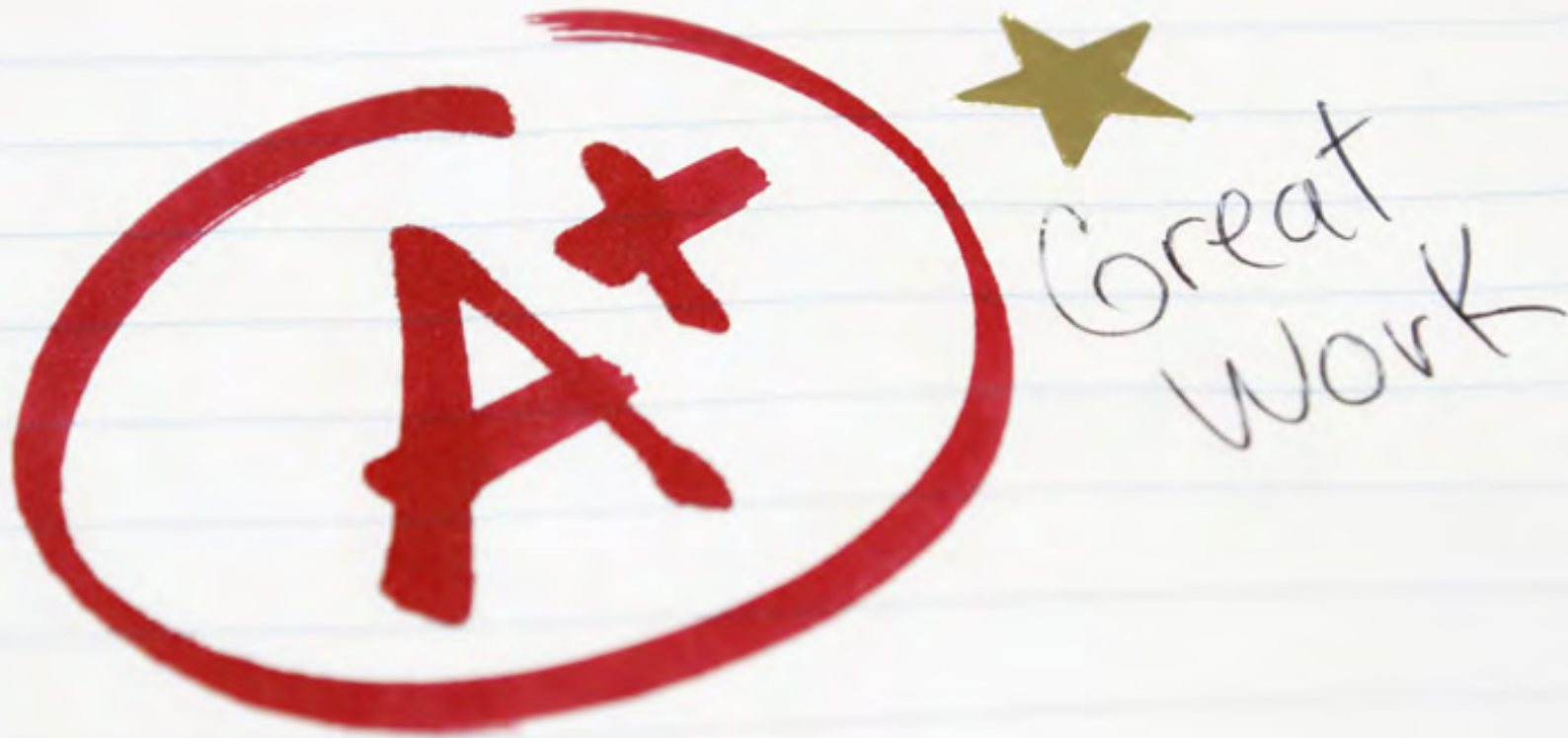
How much leeway do I have to challenge or redirect group members?





2. Ensuring credibility

**Compare the group's evaluation criteria
with the client's**



Establish baseline facts

1. What do we know?
2. How do we know it?
3. Can we agree on these facts?
4. Is there anything else we need to know before we can move forward?





**Check for
assumptions**

Always pause to illuminate

- Unsupported assertions
- Vivid anecdotes
- Editorial comments
- Attributions of intent



Engage reluctant participants

- Eliminate competition
 - Round robin
 - One-on-one pairs
 - Show of hands
- Anonymize input
 - Write, then hand in
 - Write, then post



**Mine past
successes**



**Speak up for
absent
stakeholders**

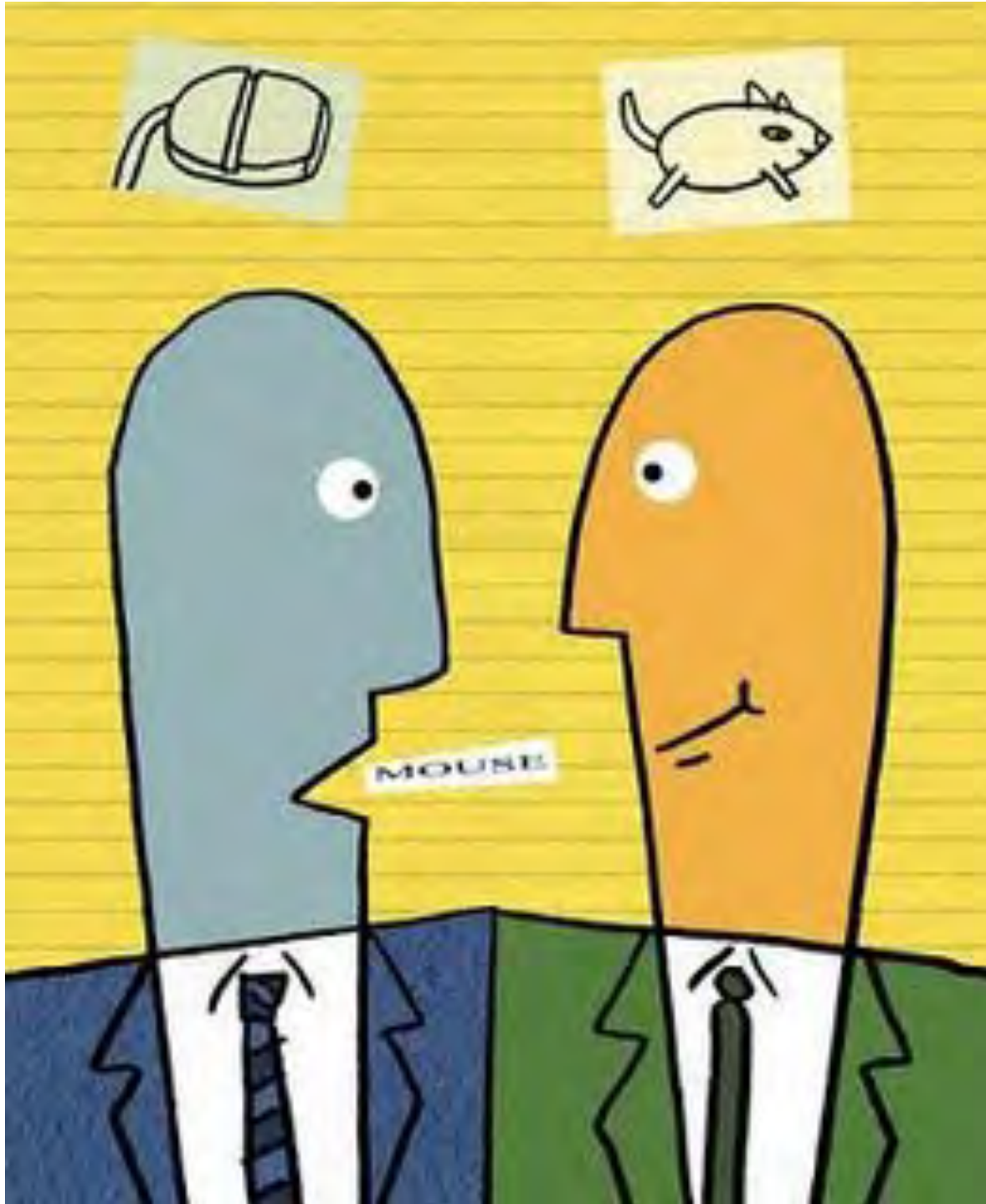


Document your work in progress



3. Addressing conflicts





**Acknowledge
the point(s) of
disagreement**

Reframe as a design question





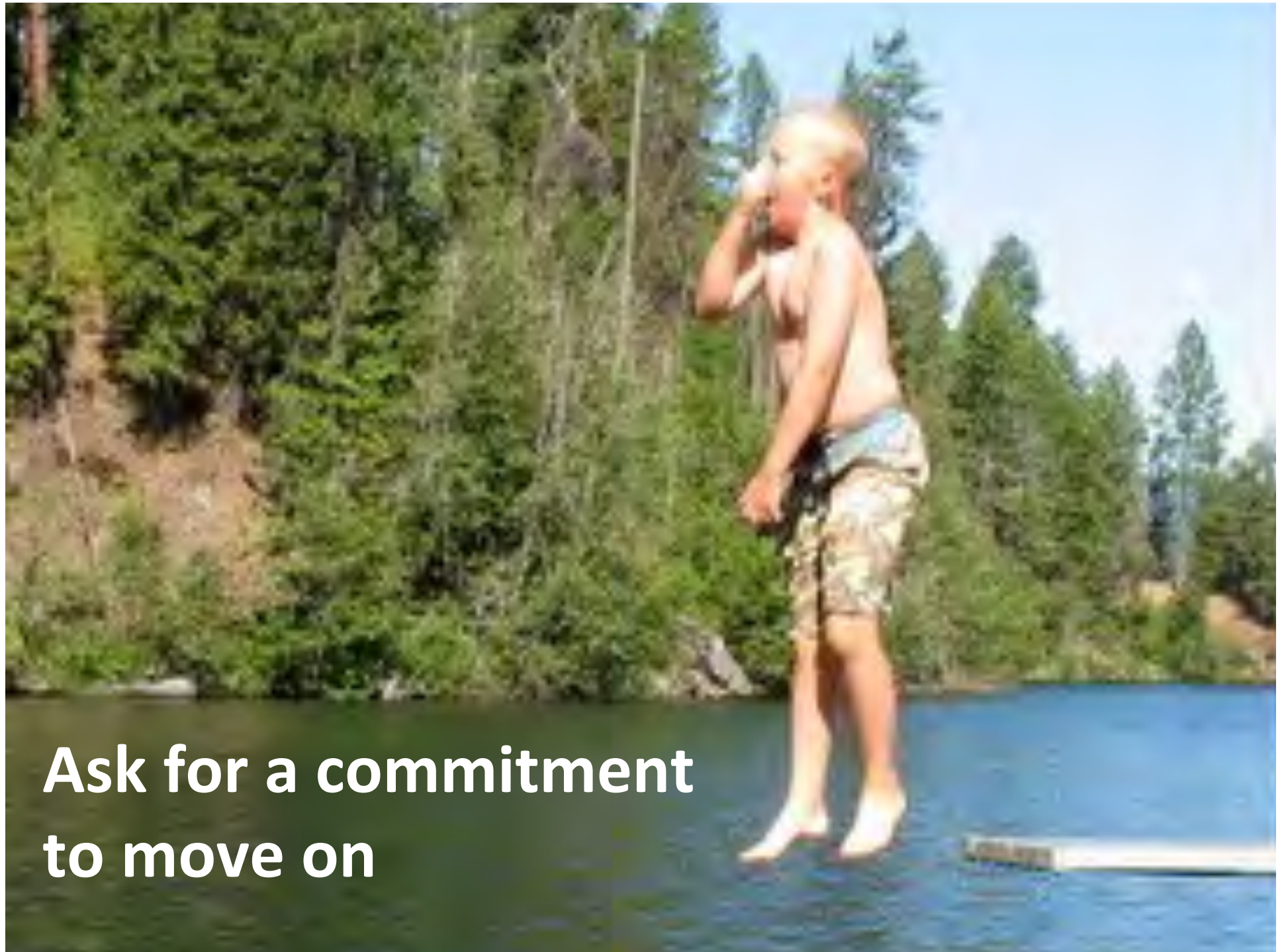
Assess the stakes

**Explore a
variety of
choices**



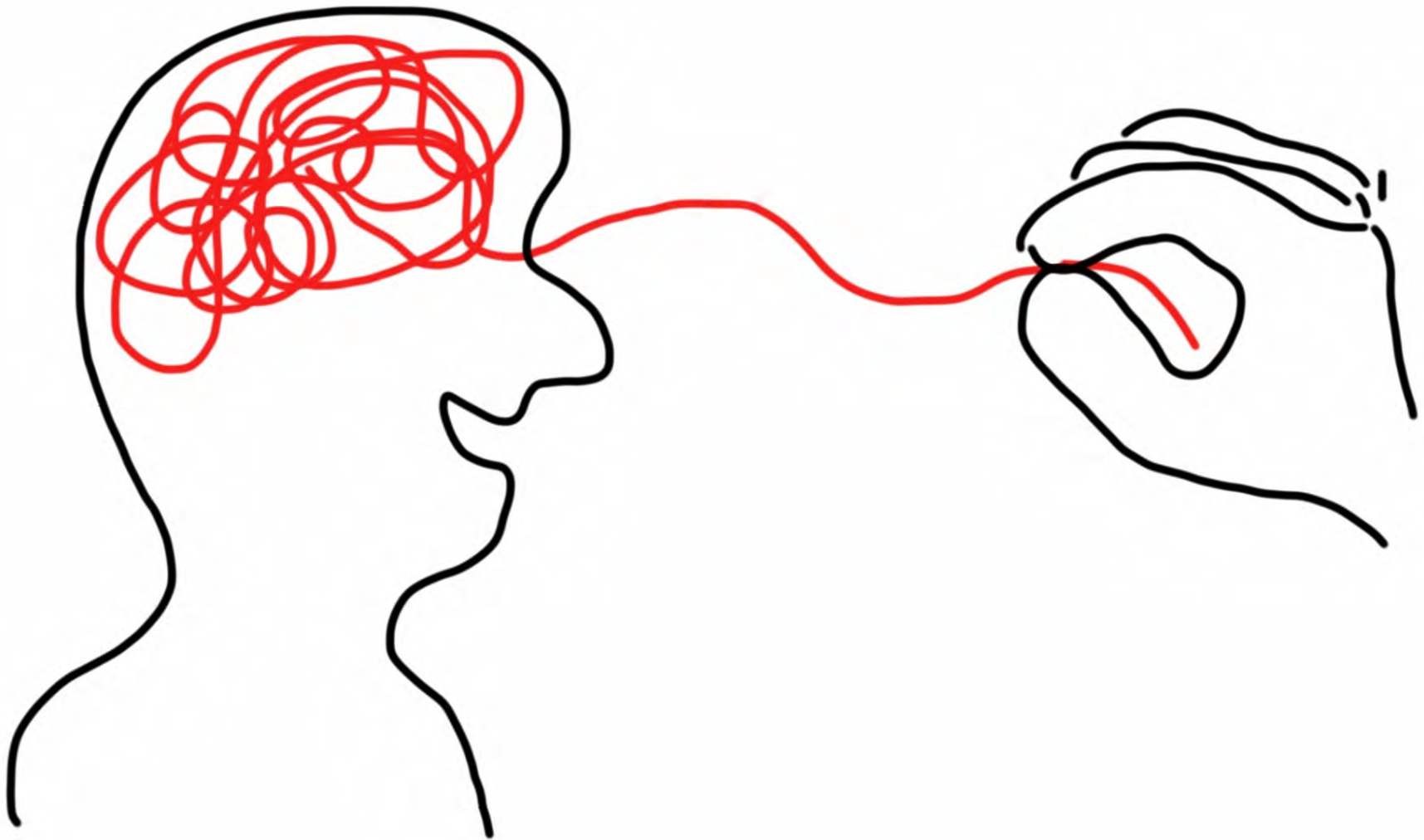


**Propose an
acceptable
solution**

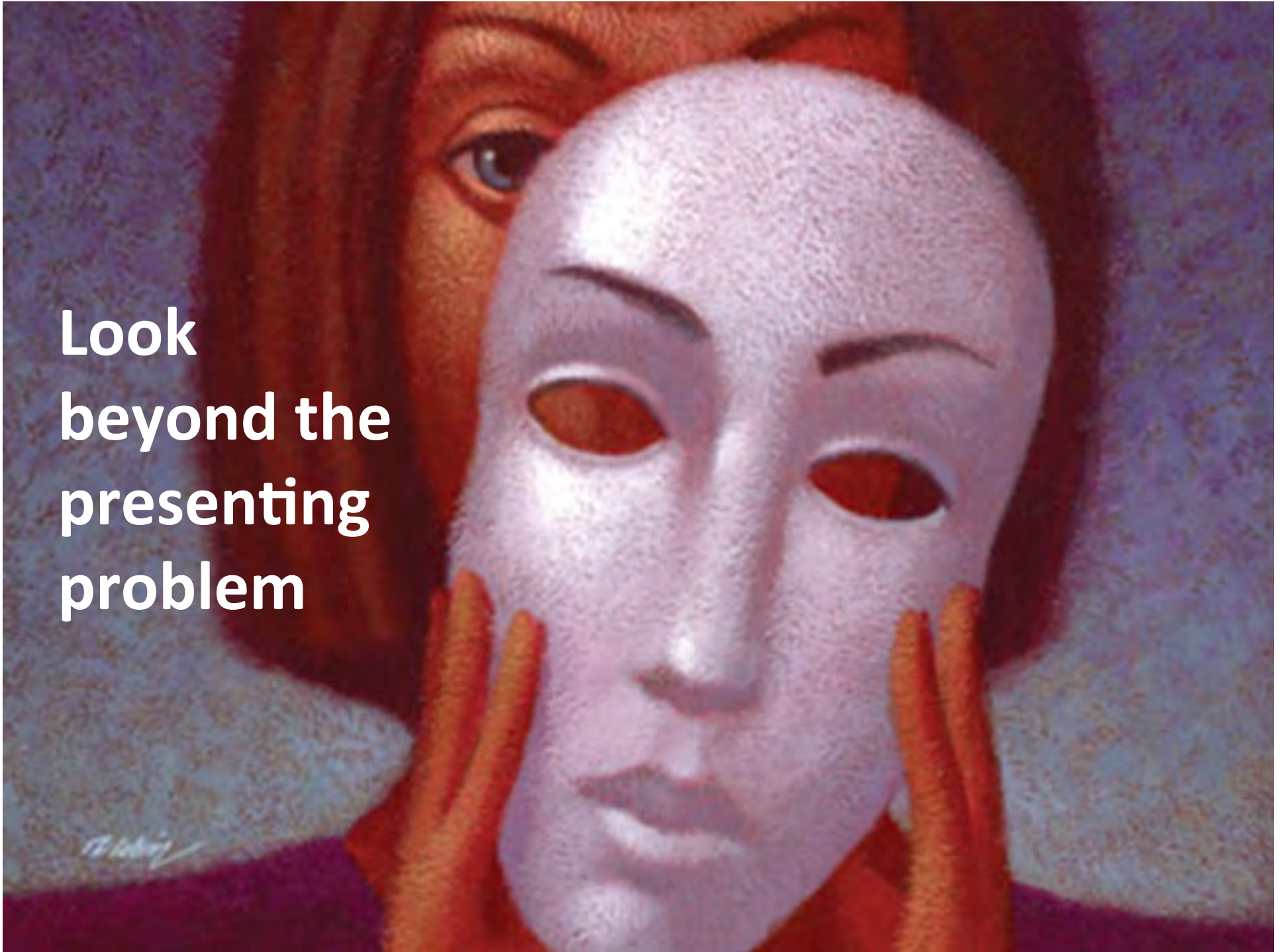



**Ask for a commitment
to move on**

4. Stimulating the group's best thinking

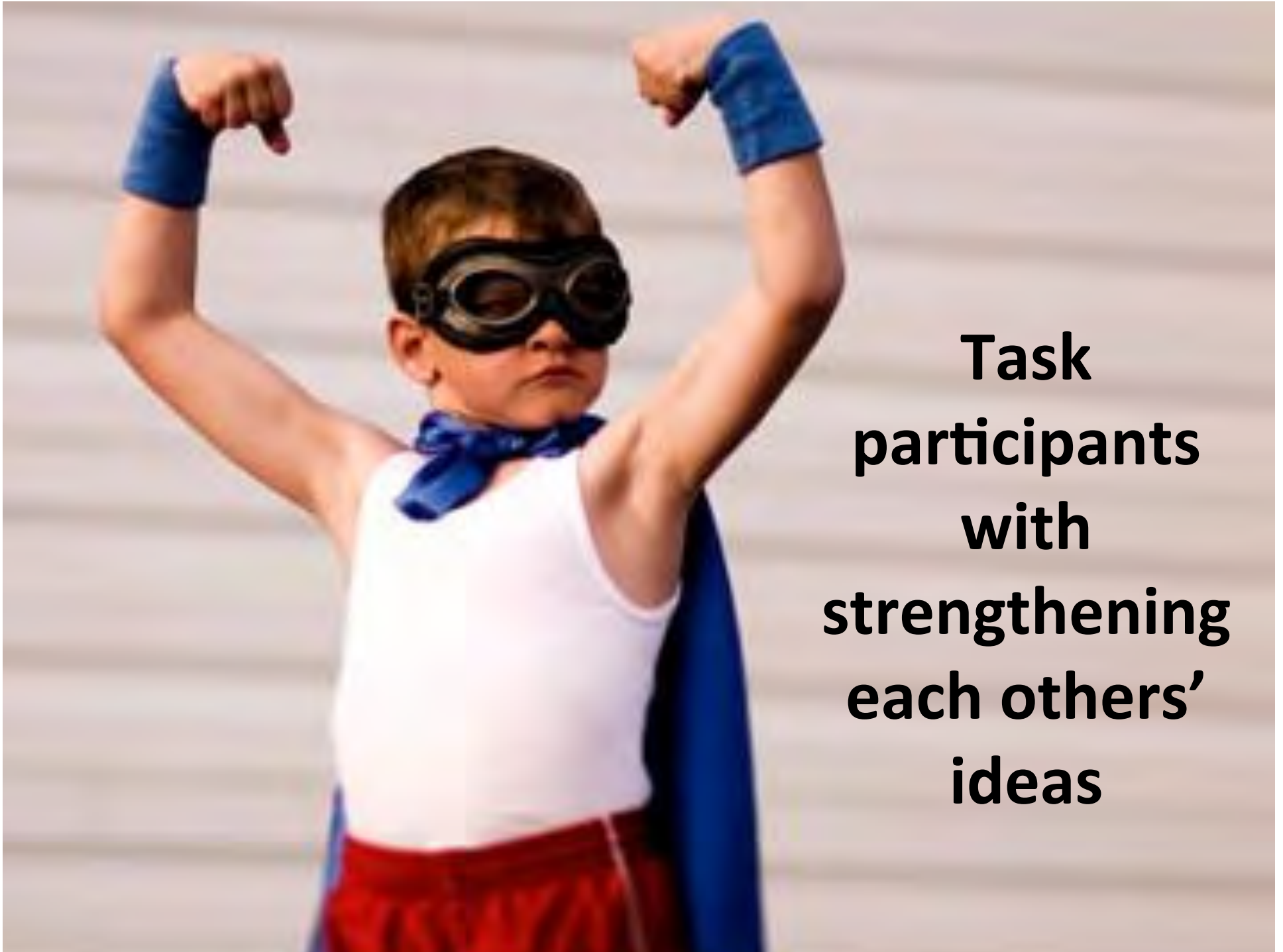


**Look
beyond the
presenting
problem**



A group of people are walking away from the camera on a concrete sidewalk. To the left of the sidewalk is a green lawn. A yellow-painted curb runs along the edge of the sidewalk in the foreground. The people are dressed in casual to business-casual attire. Long shadows are cast on the sidewalk, indicating it is either early morning or late afternoon. The text "Challenge perceived barriers" is overlaid in white on the lower-left portion of the image.

**Challenge
perceived
barriers**

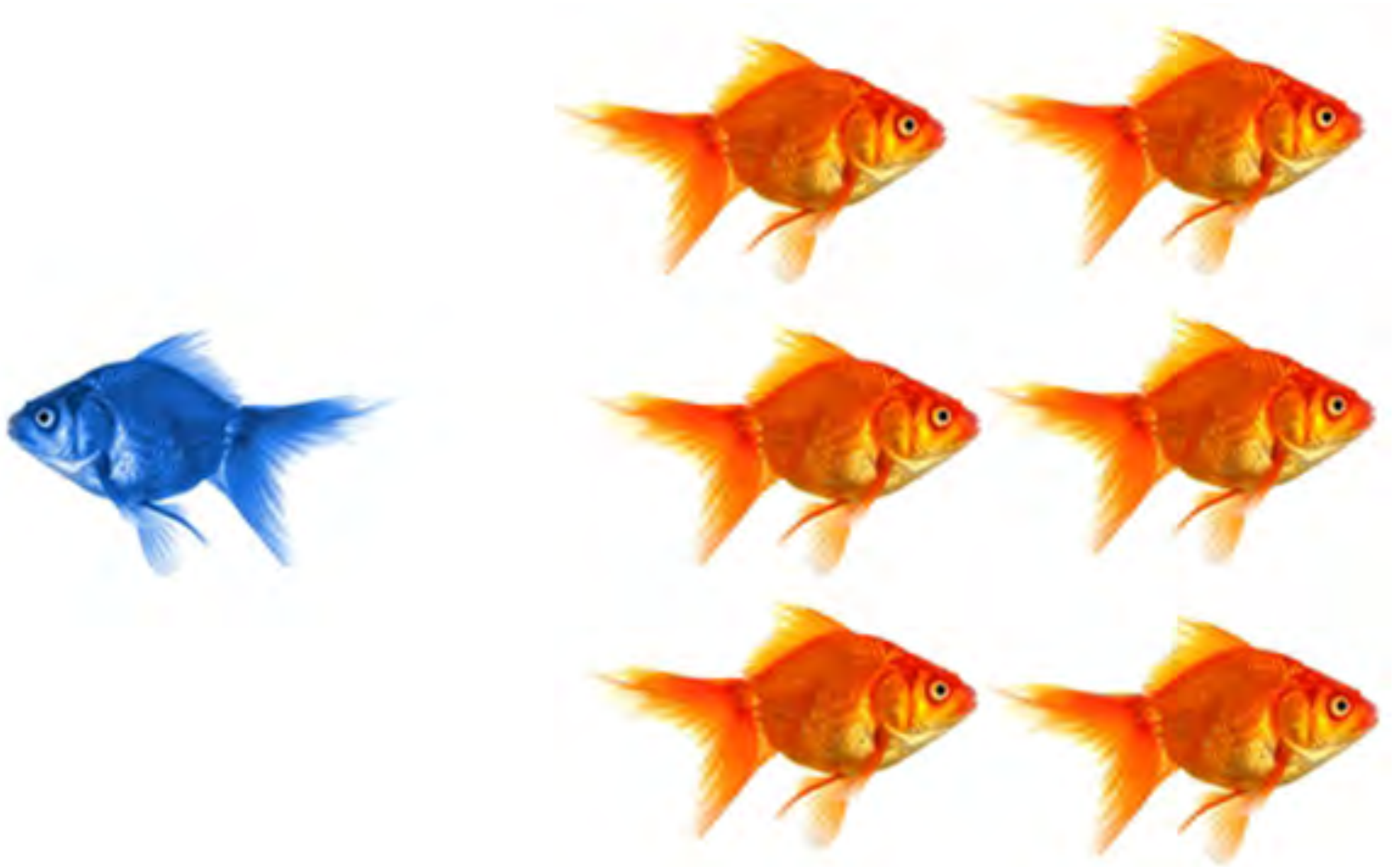


**Task
participants
with
strengthening
each others'
ideas**

Point out recurrent themes



Explore the contrarian view



Extend trend lines



**Combine the
best elements
of multiple
ideas**



A silhouette of a hand holding a bright sun, with rays of light emanating from the sun and filling the sky. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The hand is positioned on the left side of the frame, with the sun held in the palm. The sun is a bright, glowing yellow-orange sphere. The rays of light are visible as thin, straight lines radiating from the sun. The overall scene is a metaphor for achieving a goal or consolidating progress.

5. Consolidating progress

Recap key points separately



**Create one or more versions of
the work product**



**Test against the client's criteria
and revise as necessary**





Ask each participant to confirm buy-in



- The process was fair
- I understood the decision criteria
- There was an opportunity for my voice to be heard
- Even if the result isn't exactly what I would have chosen, I will support it with positive communications and actions



Move forward

joan@jfwilliams.com



**Let's continue
the
conversation...**

Photo by Martin Helmke



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