Annie Duke - Thinking in bets

5. Dissent to Win

- CUDOS (by Robert K. Merton) - an excellent manual for developing rules of engagement for any truthseeking group
  - Communism (data belong to the group)
  - Universalism (apply uniform standards to claims and evidence, regardless of where they came from)
  - Disinterestedness (vigilance against potential conflicts that can influence the group's evaluation)
  - Organized Skepticism (discussion among the group to encourage engagement and dissent)
- Mertonian communism: more is more (about information)
  - Share
    - 👍 All details of experiment
    - 👍 What can make experiment invalid
    - ⚠️ 👍 What you feel uncomfortable to share (what might require more clarification)
  - 👍 Query group members to extract details when necessary
  - Be a data sharer. That's what experts do
    - sharing data is the best way to move toward accuracy
      - the more detail you provide, the better the assessment of decision quality you get
- Universalism: don't shoot the message
  - When we don't like the person delivering the message
    - 👎 We ignore the message
  - When we like the person delivering the message
    - 👎 We accept the message without much vetting
  - The accuracy of the statement should be evaluated independent of its source
  - Develop exercises to practice and reinforce universalism
    - 👍 When you have the impulse to dismiss someone as a bad player, made yourself find something that they did well
    - 👍 Imagine the message coming from a source we value much more or much less
      - Group may ask: How would we feel about this if we heard it from a much different source?
- Disinterestedness: we all have a conflict of interest, and it's contagious
  - The researchers of fat were getting paid by the sugar industry
    - It led to massive increase in obesity rates and diabetes!
  - Conflicts of interest can come in many flavors
    - 👎 Built-in conflict of interests interprets the world around
      - to confirm our beliefs
      - to avoid having to admit ignorance or error
      - to take credit for good results following our decisions
      - to find reasons bad results following our decisions were due to factors outside our control
      - to compare well with our peers
      - to live in a world where the way things turn out makes sense
    - 👎 Telling someone how a story ends encourages them to be resulters, to interpret the details to fit that outcome
      - The group should be blind to the outcome!
      - 👍 Deconstruct decisions before an outcome is known!
        - Attorneys can evaluate trial strategy before the verdict comes in
        - Sales teams can evaluate strategy before learning whether they've closed the sale
        - Traders can vet process prior to positions being established or prior to options expiring
        - (After outcome) Seek advice to give the details without revealing the outcome
  - Another way to fight biases
    - Reward members for skill in debating opposing points of view and finding merit in opposing positions!
      - 👍 If two people disagree, a referee can get them to each argue the other's position with the goal of being the best debater
        - The key is for the group to have a charter that rewards objective consideration of alternative hypotheses so that winning the debate feels better than supporting the pre-existing position
- Organized skepticism: real skeptics make arguments and friends
  - Skepticism is about approaching the world by asking why things might not be true rather than why they are true
  - 👎 "You're wrong"
    - 👍 "I'm not sure about that"
    - 👍 "Are you sure about that?"
    - 👍 "Have you considered this other way of thinking about it?"
  - Organized skepticism invites people into a cooperative exploration
  - 👍 Find devil's advocate
    - When seeking advice, ask specific questions to encourage the other person to figure out reasons why we might be wrong
- Communicating with the world beyond our group
  - ⚠️ We'll be in the minority when we are away from our truth-seeking group
  - 👍 1. Express uncertainty
  - 👍 2. Lead with assent
    - 1. Listen for the things you agree with
    - 2. State those and be specific
    - 3. And then follow with "and" instead of "but"
      - When the new information is presented as supplementing rather than negating what has come before, our listeners will be much more open to what we have to say
      - Avoid the language of "no"
    - "I agree with you that [insert specific concepts and ideas we agree with], AND . . ."
  - 👍 3. Ask for a temporary agreement to engage in truthseeking
    - If someone is off-loading emotion to us, we can ask them if they are just looking to vent or if they are looking for advice
      - "Do you want to just let it all out, or are you thinking of what to do about it next?"
  - 👍 4. Focus on the future
    - "It's too bad you have all these kooky people creating all that drama in your life. Have you thought about how you might get rid of all this drama in the future?"
      - If they can't talk about the future stop the discussion
    - "It must be hard to have a teacher like that. Do you think there's anything you can do to improve your grade in the future?"