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DEEP  
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The background is a solid olive green color. It features several abstract geometric elements: a large, thin white circle that is mostly obscured by the text; a thin white line forming a large triangle that points downwards; and several smaller, solid white circles of varying sizes scattered across the page. The text is centered and consists of four lines.

**Deep Democracy for**  
a good conversation  
a better conflict  
and the best decision

# Introduction

**April 2020**

Working together ... how to give space to all the voices in your group or team? How to reach a decision that you and all your colleagues want to commit to?

To maximize the wisdom of your group, we would like to introduce to you a new way of thinking: Deep Democracy. This philosophy and method gives you tools to keep talking to each other in an open and constructive way, whether you meet each other physically or online. A tool to start difficult conversations and get as many issues on the table as possible, also in online meetings. A tool to make decisive decisions, even if you do not immediately agree.

In this zine you'll find three rituals that are of value when you will work together.

Enjoy!

*Ingrid van Aert en Marlies Leupen*

More about us: [kijkdeepdemocracy.nl](https://kijkdeepdemocracy.nl)





Deep Democracy originated in South Africa after the apartheid, 90s. Black and white citizens had to work together on an equal basis in the workplace. A big challenge because that did not happen before. Greg and Myrna Lewis, both trained by psychologist and quantum physicist Arnold Mindell, were instructed to learn 5,000 employees to work together in an electricity company. They translated their expertise into a number of practical tools to get started with. They called their method Deep Democracy, already applied in 21 countries.





*So, can you  
say simply  
what Deep  
Democracy  
is ?*



Deep Democracy is a practical method to maximize the wisdom of the group. It's a new view on decision making and group dynamics. It is about inclusive decision making: taking advantage of diversity of perspectives. Hearing different opinions in a group: both the rational and the emotional ones.

Read more [in English](#)

Read more [in Dutch](#)

[Jamming with difference](#) (video)

[Wisdom of the minority](#) (video)



# Read more

about three rituals that are of value when you work together. These rituals come from the philosophy and method of Deep Democracy.

# 1<sup>th</sup> ritual: CHECK-IN!

Start each project meeting with a check-in: an exploratory round to see how everyone is personally involved.

Start with a question that triggers the thinking, feeling and experience in your group. What do you find important for today?

Make an appointment together about the end time. Everything is possible. From a quick round in five minutes to as long as it takes ...

Share everything you want to share with each other.

Use a popcorn style: take your turn when you feel so, pop when you're hot. Note: only 'sharing & dumping': do not react to each other and don't ask any questions!

Create a role map (summary) of everything that is shared. What was the essence of the check-in? Write down the most important keywords. Stay as factual as possible, don't interpret. Make sure that everyone recognizes themselves in the role map.

The check-in increases the group consciousness.

Unspoken thoughts, feelings and experiences affect a conversation. You will come to better conversations and decisions if you know how others think and feel.



**HUNT**

**for the**

**NO**



## 2<sup>nd</sup> ritual: COLLECT ALL OPINIONS!

**Take a question as a starting point.** What relevant question is there in the group?  
E.g. How should we proceed now?

**Collect as many opinions as possible.** Who has what opinion? Does anyone have a different view? The moderator asks: Is there anyone with a completely different angle?

### **Hunt for the no!**

You may contradict yourself and others by coming up with a very different opinion. The more different perspectives, the better.

### **Sharing and dumping!**

The moderator guards: no questions, please come with concrete opinions, ideas and suggestions.

**Write down all the opinions in a role map.**

The note taker writes: what opinions are there in the group?

Write down as factually as possible. Make sure everyone recognizes her-/himself in the role map.

**Consider each other as fellow researchers.** Invite each other to share his or her opinion with the group.

Contradictions are not obstacles, but opportunities for a creative process in which everyone's wisdom is taken into account.



## 3<sup>rd</sup> ritual: COME TO THE BEST DECISION!

Look at the role map with all the opinions you have collected. Ask everyone to choose three proposals that they like most and circle them.

**Which three proposals have the greatest support?** Look at all circled proposals. Which are most frequently circled? Choose  $\pm$  three. That will be the options that you are going to vote on.

**Take the three options to a vote.** One of you leads the discussion and calls the three selected proposals out loud again. Then he/she asks the group: you can choose one of these three options, who chooses **option A** (can I see hands?), **option B** (can I see hands?), who chooses **Option C** (can I see hands?). You can also abstain from voting.

There are now three possibilities: **1.** You all choose for the same proposal. Then that is what you are going to do. **2.** There is no clear majority for any of the proposals. Then you will have to lobby to get a majority for your own proposal. **3.** There is a majority for one of the proposals. That is what you are going to do. But before you do that, you ask people who proposed something else: What would you need to go along with the majority decision? You add their wisdom to the majority decision.

**See if you can come to an inclusive decision together.** What wisdom of the minority in our group can we include in our majority decision? A deeply democratic decision is a decision that everyone can support.



## **DEEP DEMOCRACY**

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