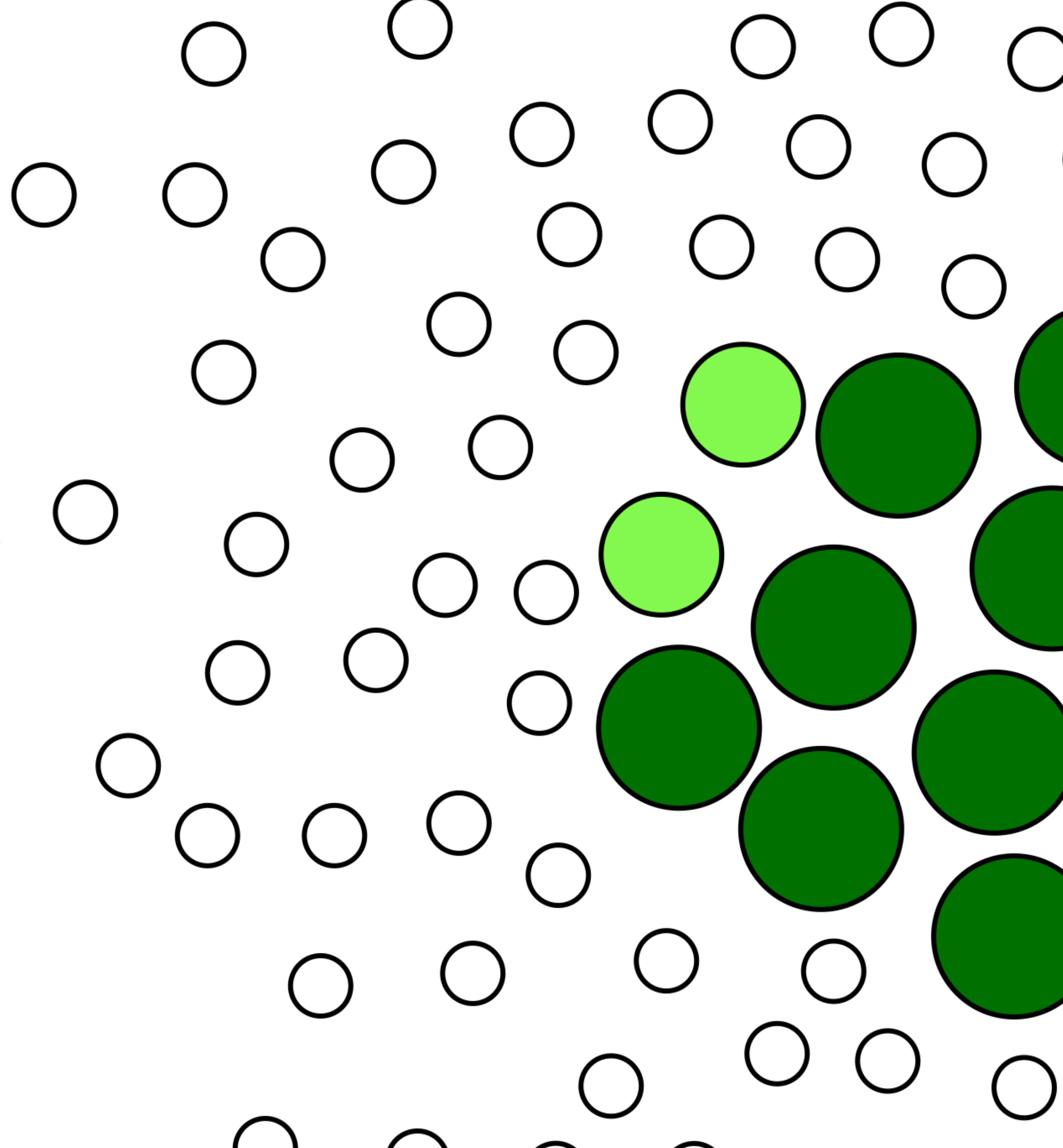


# STURGEON'S BIASES

WORKSHEET V1.8

[QUIETSTARS.COM/STURGEONS-BIASES](https://quietstars.com/sturgeons-biases)



**"90% OF EVERYTHING IS  
CRUD"**

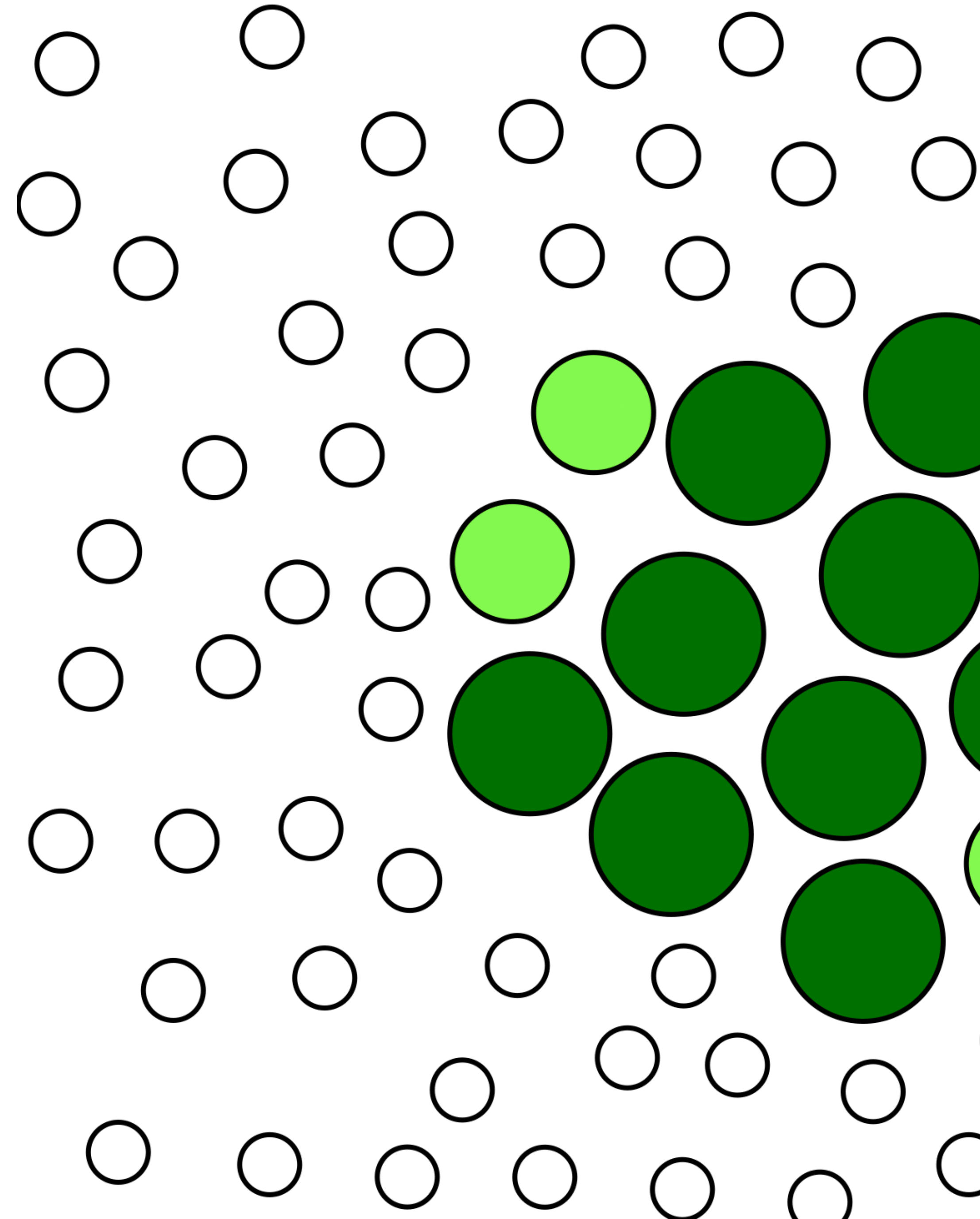
**THEODORE STURGEON**

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# STURGEON'S BIASES

The best people in a community experience 90% awesome, when the reality is 10% awesome

The presentation of a community is 90% awesome, when the reality is 10% awesome

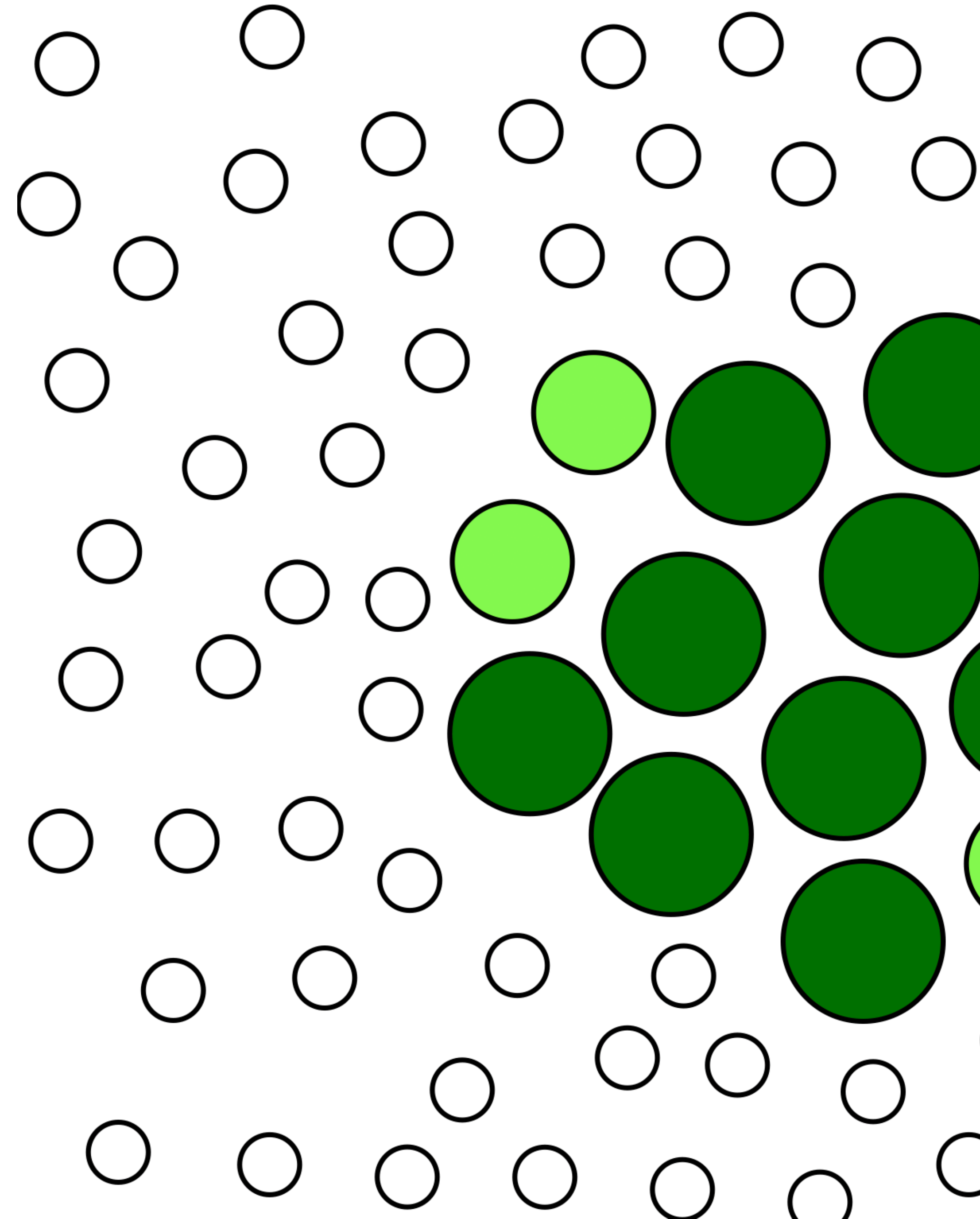


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# THE BIG 5 TIPS

## FIND WAYS TO...

1. **Believe lived experiences** (empathise first)
2. **Ask for stories** (good & bad)
3. **Use different words** (avoid preconceptions)
4. **Outcomes first** (get alignment)
5. **Question your experiences**  
(what bubbles are we in?)



# **SOLO ACTIVITIES**

# SELF-REFLECTION

## ASK YOURSELF SOME QUESTIONS

- What disciplines do I have the most problems with?
- When was the last time I had a bad experience with \_\_\_?
- Who can I talk to who has had a good experience of \_\_\_?
- What was my theory about why the bad experiences happened?
- What alternative explanations could there have been?
- How can I find out which (if any) explanation is true?
- How did that experience change my behaviour?
- etc.

# PRACTICE USING DIFFERENT LABELS

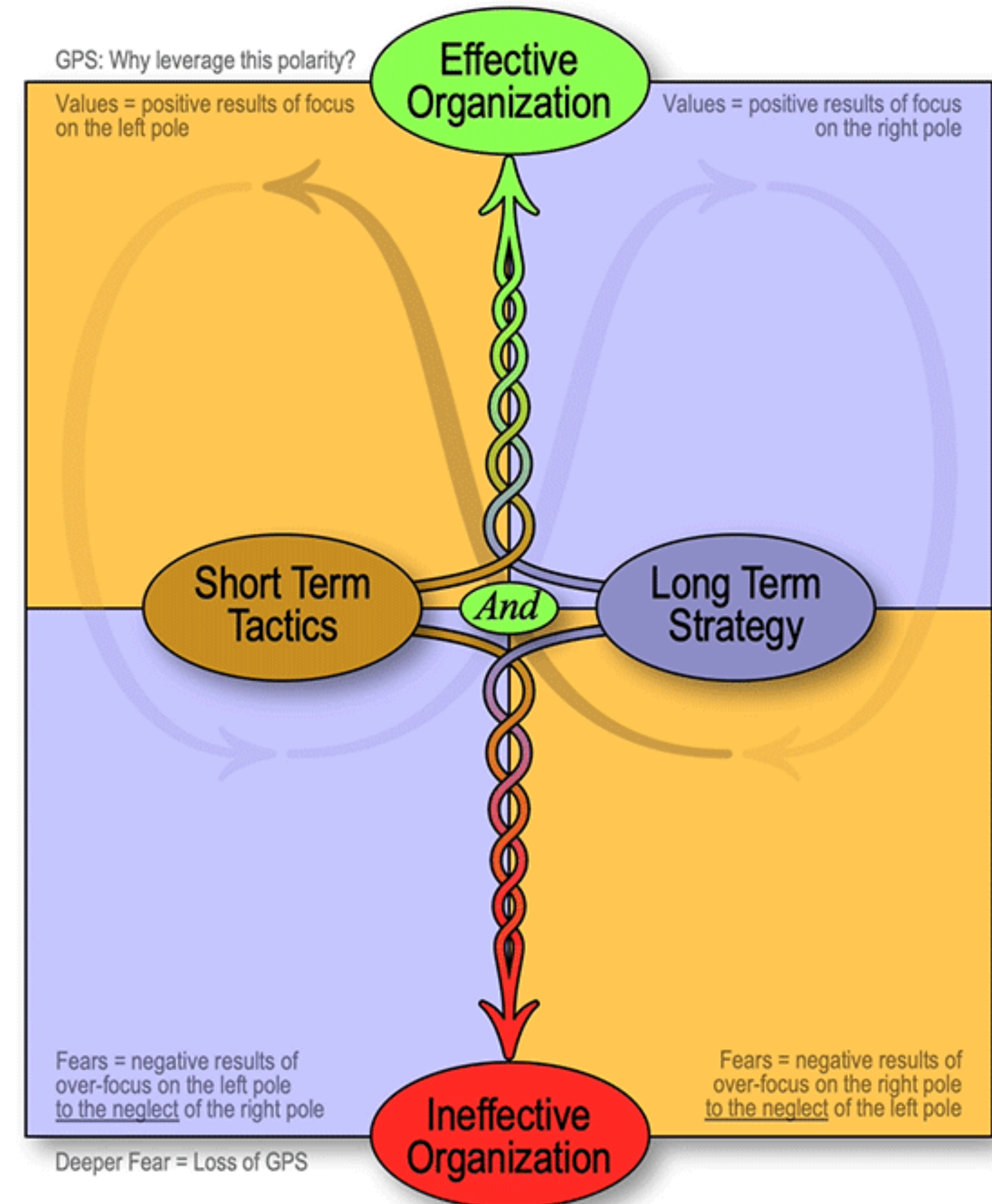
## USE DIFFERENT WORDS TO AVOID PRECONCEPTIONS

- **List the labels for roles, activities and outputs that cause the most problems for you** (e.g. “user interviews”)
- **Try inventing new labels that could mean the same thing** (e.g. “customer discovery session”)
- **Try expressing it in a more abstract way** (e.g. “qualitative insight gathering”)
- **Try expressing it in a more concrete way** (e.g. “Asking potential customers about their typical work day”)
- **Try connecting it to an outcome** (e.g. “... so we can identify possible areas of new product functionality”)
- **And then practice with real people!**

# POLARITY MAPPING

## EXPLORE HOW POSITIVES CAN BECOME NEGATIVES

- Useful method to explore impact of practices in your own and other disciplines
- For more information:
  - <https://uxmastery.com/the-joys-of-polarity-mapping/>
  - [https://universityinnovation.org/wiki/Resource:Polarity\\_Mapping](https://universityinnovation.org/wiki/Resource:Polarity_Mapping)
  - <https://www.polaritypartnerships.com>



# 1-1 ACTIVITIES

# 1-1 INTERVIEWS

## ASK OTHERS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES

- "Can you tell me about your last experience working with \_\_\_?"
- "What was your worst experience of working with \_\_\_?"
- "What was your best experience of working with \_\_\_?"
- **IMPORTANT: RESEARCH FIRST**  
(leave problem solving to later)
- Peers within your organisation are ideal, but needs high levels of trust
- Talking to similar people in different organisations can sometimes be easier
- Asking similar questions to people higher/lower in the org chart can often get interestingly different responses

# **PAIR ON THE SOLO EXERCISES**

**EXPLORE THE SOLO EXERCISES WITH A PEER**

- **Explore answers to self-reflection questions with a trusted peer from a different discipline**
- **Practice using different labels with a trusted peer from a different discipline**
- **Work through a Polarity Mapping exercise with a trusted peer from a different discipline**

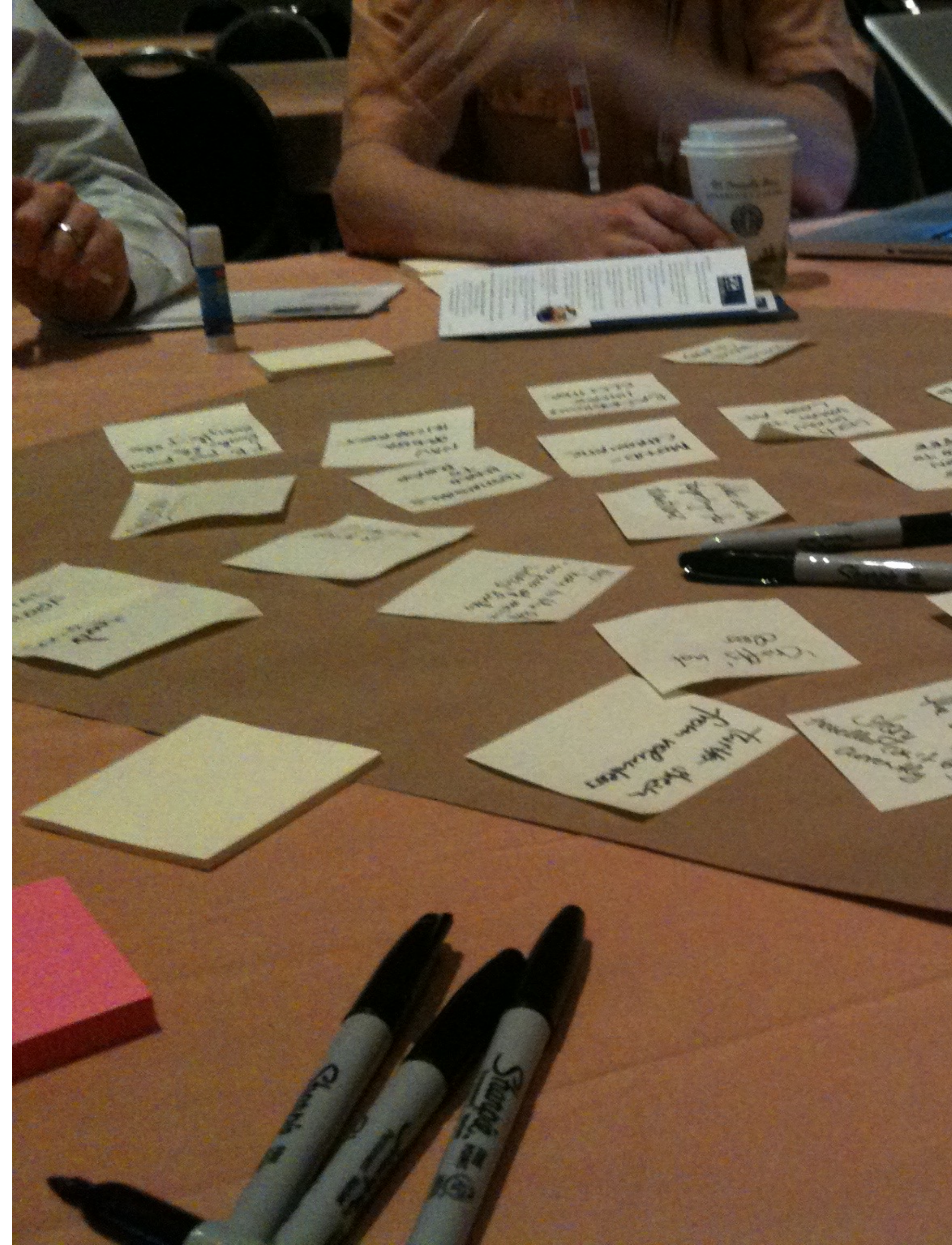
# **GROUP ACTIVITIES**



# PRE-MORTEM

[GAMESTORMING.COM/PRE-MORTEM/](https://gamestorming.com/pre-mortem/)

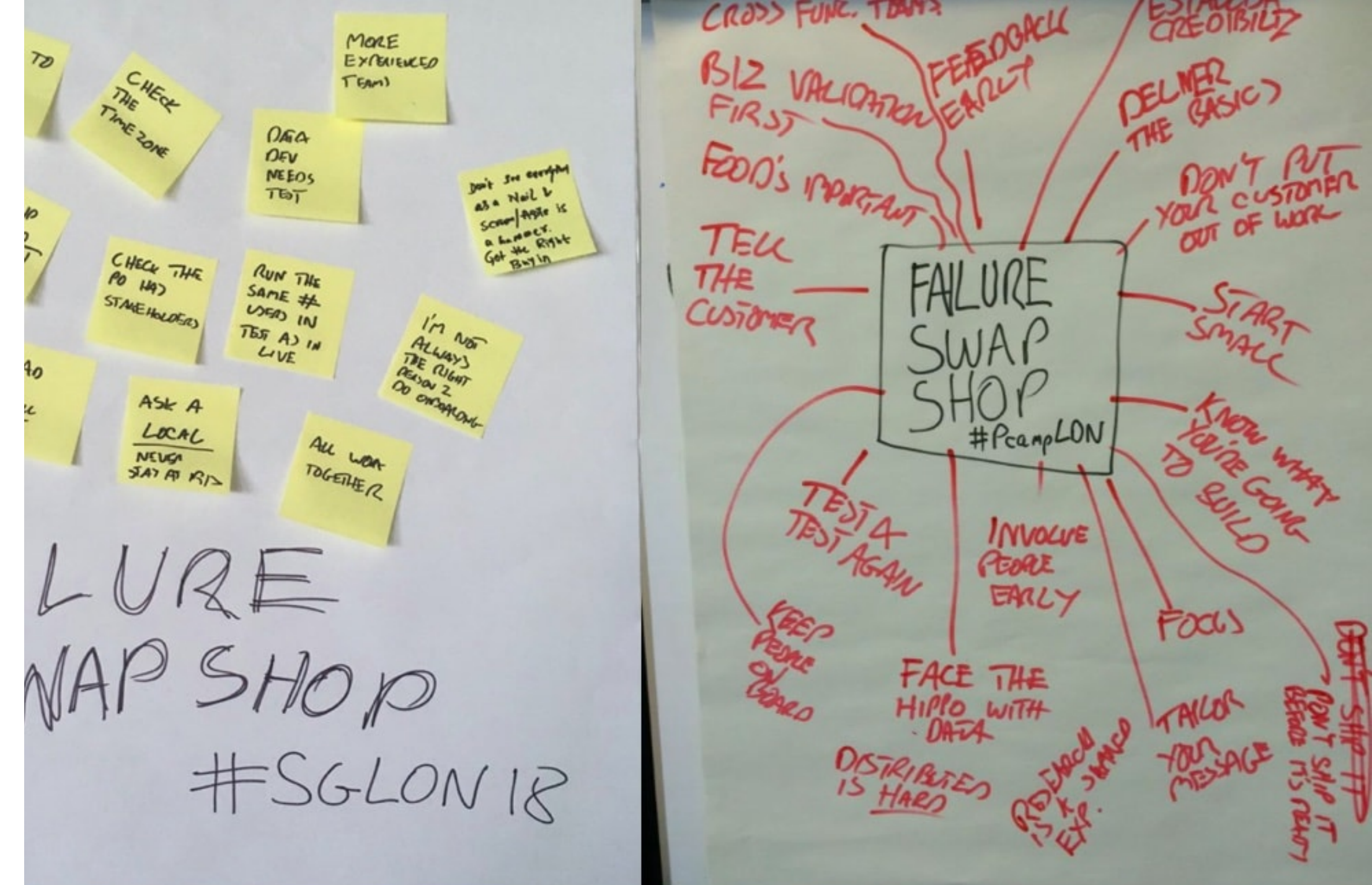
- Ask questions like “How could DesignOps cause this programme to fail?” or “How could Product cause this programme to fail?”
- A great way to explore worst case scenarios as a group
- Comparing the output of different single discipline groups can highlight very different problems



# FAILURE SWAP SHOPS

[ADRIANHOWARD.COM/POSTS/FAILURE-SWAPSHOP/](http://ADRIANHOWARD.COM/POSTS/FAILURE-SWAPSHOP/)

- Celebrate learning from failure
- A fun activity to discover and share stories
- BUT only advisable where there is already a reasonably high level of psychological safety in the group

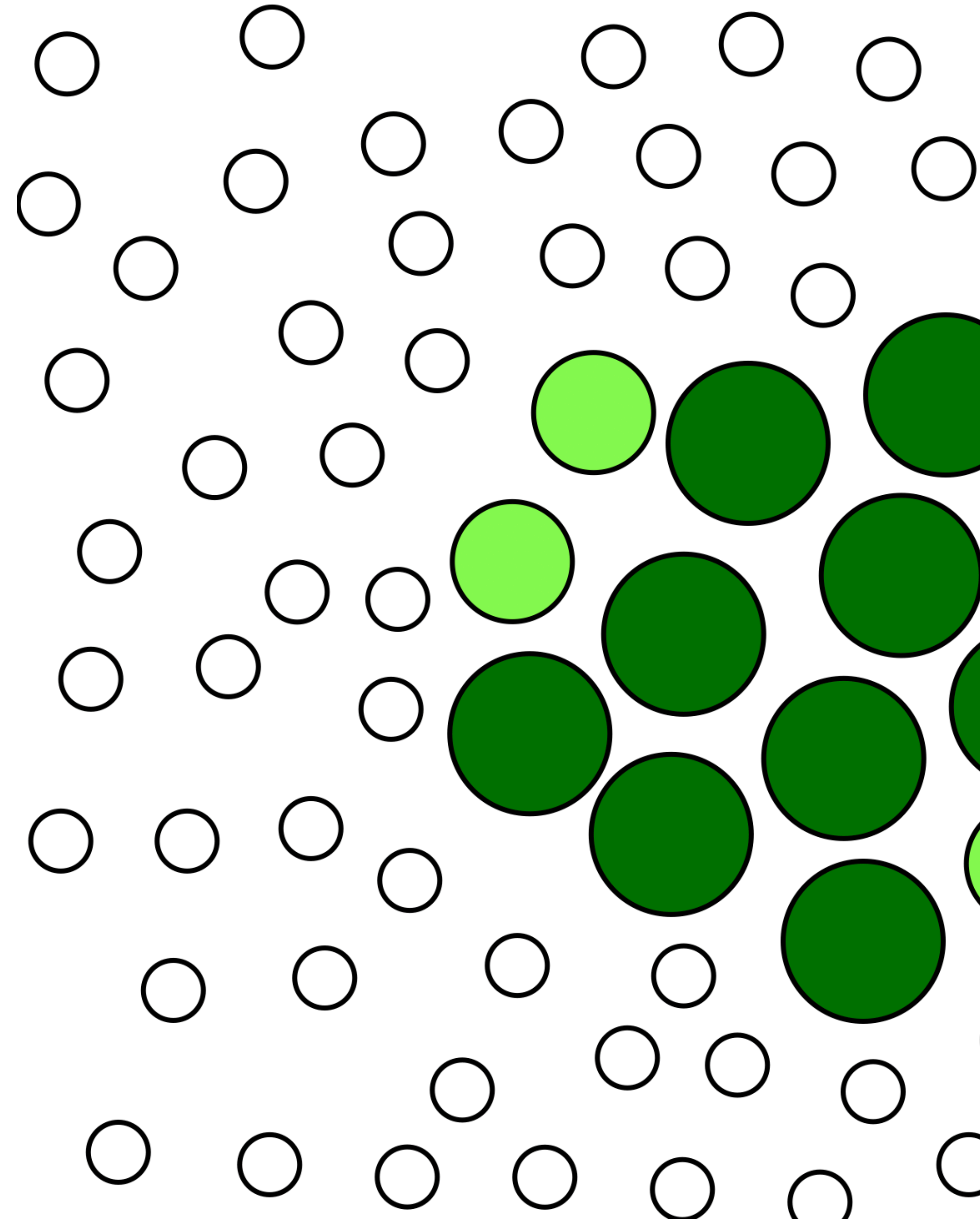


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# A REMINDER

## FIND WAYS TO...

1. **Believe lived experiences** (empathise first)
2. **Ask for stories** (good & bad)
3. **Use different words** (avoid preconceptions)
4. **Outcomes first** (get alignment)
5. **Question your experiences**  
(what bubbles are we in?)



# STAY IN TOUCH

I ❤️ TO HEAR ANY AND ALL FEEDBACK — IT'S A GIFT

- [adrianh@quietstars.com](mailto:adrianh@quietstars.com)
- [linkedin.com/in/adrianh/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/adrianh/)
- [mastodon.social/@adrianh](https://mastodon.social/@adrianh)
- [quietstars.com](https://quietstars.com) (work)
- [adrianhoward.com](https://adrianhoward.com) (blog)

Plus we have an [awesome free newsletter!](#)

