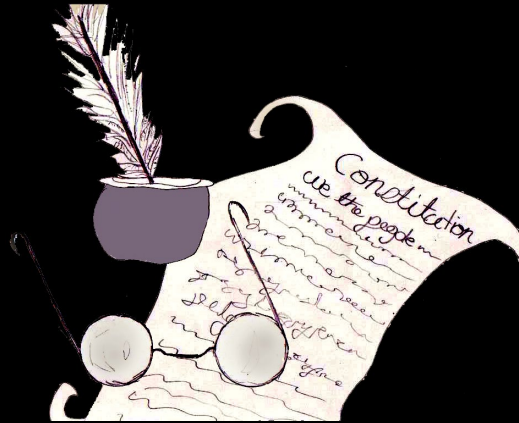


We Live Local: By living locally hometowns can save America (and lead the way)



The Village Square



Tallahassee | Fort Lauderdale | Salt Lake City

-noun

A nervy bunch of liberals and conservatives who believe that dialogue and disagreement make for a good time and a good country.

When others separate, we gather.

This is the beginning:

**13 years of gathering in community +
your local governance experience**

=

**a year of co-creation
around engaging local citizenship
+ a set of tangible resources
to gather people around localism
(email signup)**

**America has forgotten our
own idea.**

**The only place we can
remember it (and live it out)
is in hometowns.**



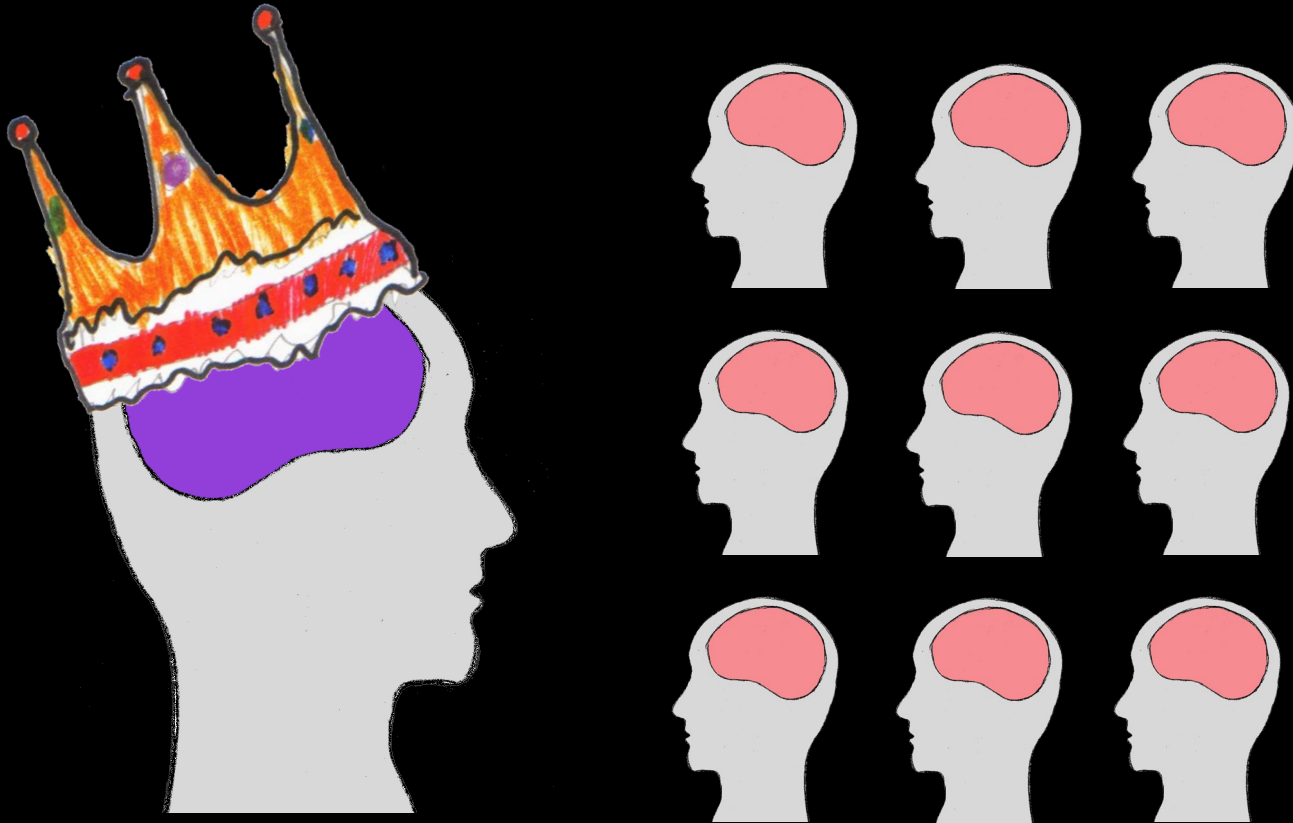
“The constant clashing of opinions”

The Framers had a profound grasp of human nature that we have forgotten in modern times. Their ultimate insight is that diversity is a strength to be embraced; it’s how you do democracy, it’s how you solve problems

Hamilton: “The jarring of parties” ... Diversity of opinion “promotes deliberation and circumspection, and serves to check excesses in the majority”

Madison: Factionalism as the ultimate check on power

American marketplace of ideas



the town hall is born



American marketplace of ideas: 1950

The garden club, the bridge club

The PTA

The Elks Lodge, The Masonic Temple

The bowling league

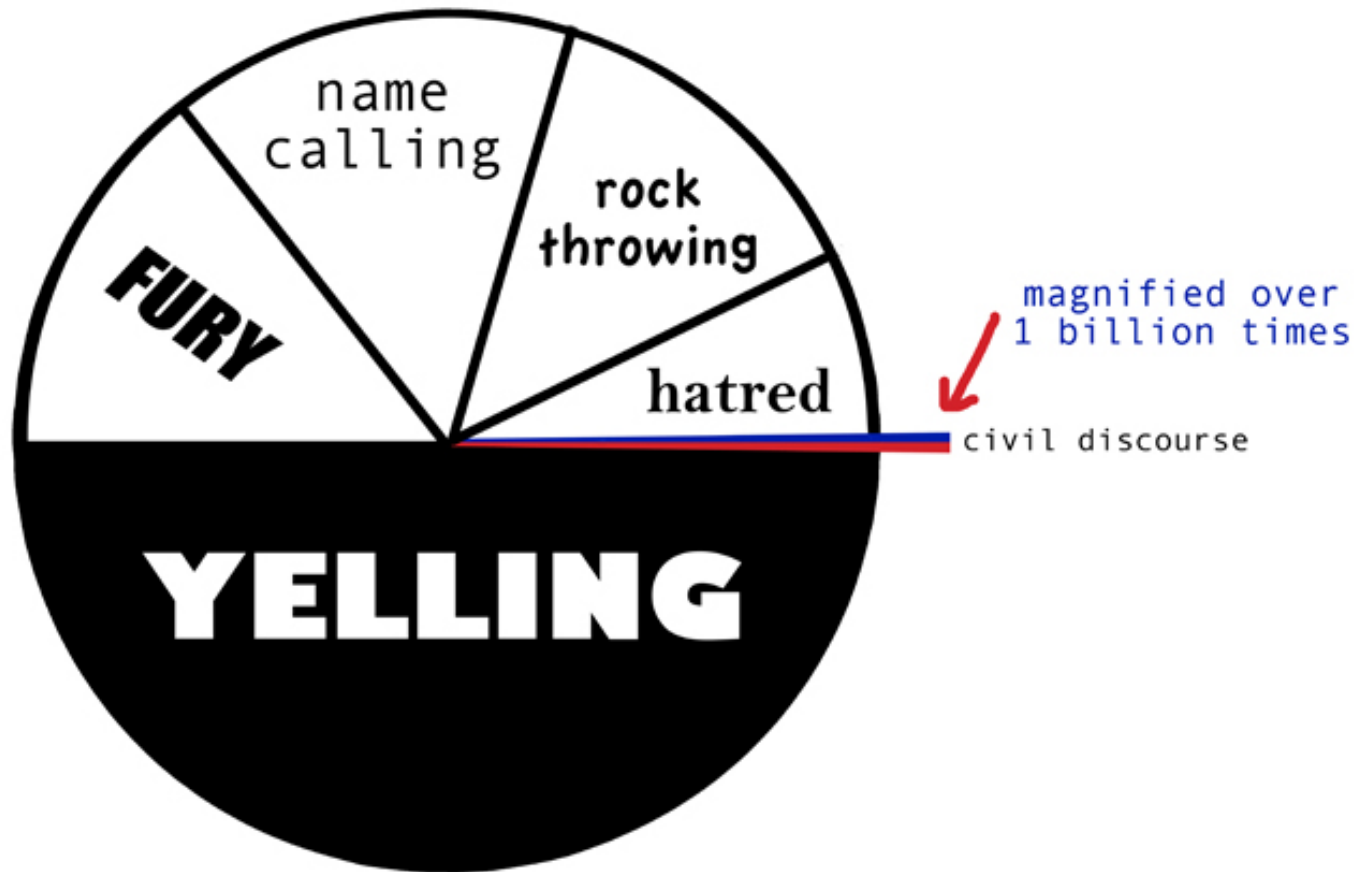
The evening news

The hometown newspaper

The neighborhood church

This is what **not** living locally looks like.
This is **not** the American Town Hall.

Figure 1.1. Conversations on the Internet



American marketplace of ideas today

place-based civil society has weakened
we've formed national red and blue teams
likeminded digital groups replace community
conditions that help us reason are absent

Anger sits on your doorstep as electeds.
Every pothole: battle between good and evil

we are tribal by nature +

we reason in teams.

**we have formed moral tribes around
national issues**

Battle between light and dark

our side = good

their side = evil

Manichaeism

likeminded groups:

*grow more extreme in the direction of the majority view

*BAD on facts
to the point of denying
factual reality

**Engaged bipartisan hometown community
has to exist for democracy to thrive.**

Mandatory, not optional

This will not get better by itself

**We now have to be intentional about forming this
community in our hometowns**

**Self-preservation AND save American
democracy**

**we have a crisis of
rootedness.**

**we've lost the glue
of where we live.**

**opioids, suicide, incels,
white nationalism.**

**we have to replace national tribes
of **left** and **right** with local tribes.**

but how?

when we think of civic engagement:
a forum on public
transportation.
lots of good factual information.

**when we think of civic engagement:
a forum on public
transportation.
lots of good factual information.**

=

strategic mistake #1

**you don't fight angry
national tribal fury with
Hopeful Rationalism.**

**you fight it by understanding rather
than fighting human nature.**

you grow local tribe.

(now you've got a tailwind.)

we need to reinvent civic engagement with
an accurate understanding of

**human
nature**

we humans are not rational.
the rationalist delusion.

intuitions come first
strategic reason follows

Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind*.

confirmation bias:

people generally see what
they look for and hear
what they listen for.

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

**Our project partner
Jon Haidt on Bill Moyers.**

IF YOU WANT PEOPLE TO BE RATIONAL:

“...If you bring people together who disagree, and they have a sense of friendship, family, having something in common, having **an institution to preserve, they can challenge each other's reason... **wisdom comes out of a group of people well-constituted who have some faith or trust in each other.**”**

what works in decreasing polarization:

1. positive interaction (contact hypothesis)
2. superordinate goals =

localism

Source: civilpolitics.org

Don't like populism? Localism is the cure.

what works:

we make good decisions in relation to others; in institutions that check confirmation bias (we check each other):

**jury system + the academy + science
+ community connectedness
across differences**

**tell the
story of “us”**

the good news:
we humans are reciprocal.
a relational kindness will be
returned.
mistakes will be forgiven if we
want to like each other.
we have seen this for 13
years!

it's not about policies or information.

it's about relationships.

it's about neighbors and hometowns.

it's about teams.

now is the time to build hometown tribe.

**the home rule rally last year =
team bonding / “muscular bonding”**

**get
them in
the room.**

strategic mistake #2

**don't let it feel like work +
don't assume they will come.
(make it feel social.)**



Eat your broccoli civics is dead



Our future. Our choices.
OUR TOWN

Annual Town Hall



Our future. Our choices.
OUR TOWN

Speed Date Your Local Leaders

the
longest
table





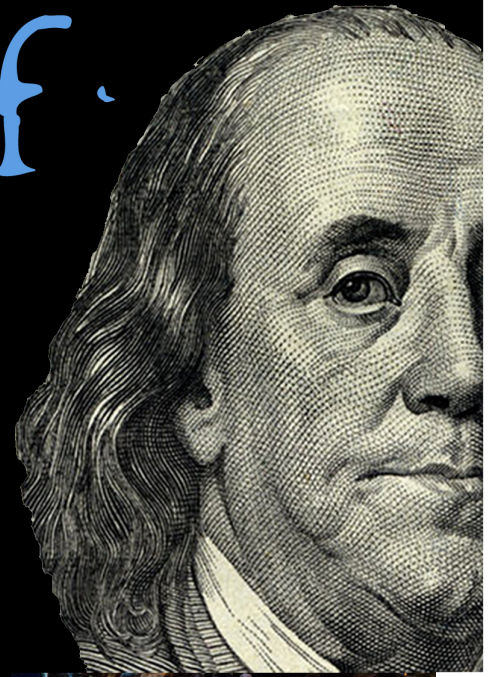


fast forward

TALLAHASSEE



The Club of Honest ~~Whigs~~ Citizens





CITIZENS + GOVERNMENT



CITIZENS + GOVERNMENT

Race to the Movies

an ongoing unflinching conversation on race + popcorn

first this → then this:





April 11 | 6-7:30 PM

Individuality & Identity Politics

The Junction @ Monroe



HONESTY · CONSERVATIVE · REBEL · STORY · LOCAL · RIGHTS · MAJORITY · TECHNICAL · DIFFERENT · BLACK · HOMETOWN · RESPECT · WHITE · GATHER · BECOME · YIN · RESPONSIBILITIES · IDEOLOGY · CULTURE · IDEAS · BROWN · MINORITY · YANG · BE · SAME · HUMAN · RESILIENCE · HONESTY · CONSERVATIVE · REBEL · STORY · LOCAL · RIGHTS · MAJORITY · TECHNICAL · COLOR · TRUTH · LIBERAL · DIFFERENT · BLACK · HOMETOWN · RESPECT · WHITE · GATHER · BECOME · RESPONSIBILITIES · IDEOLOGY · CULTURE · IDEAS · BROWN · MINORITY · YANG · BE · SAME · HUMAN · RESILIENCE



Dinner at the Square

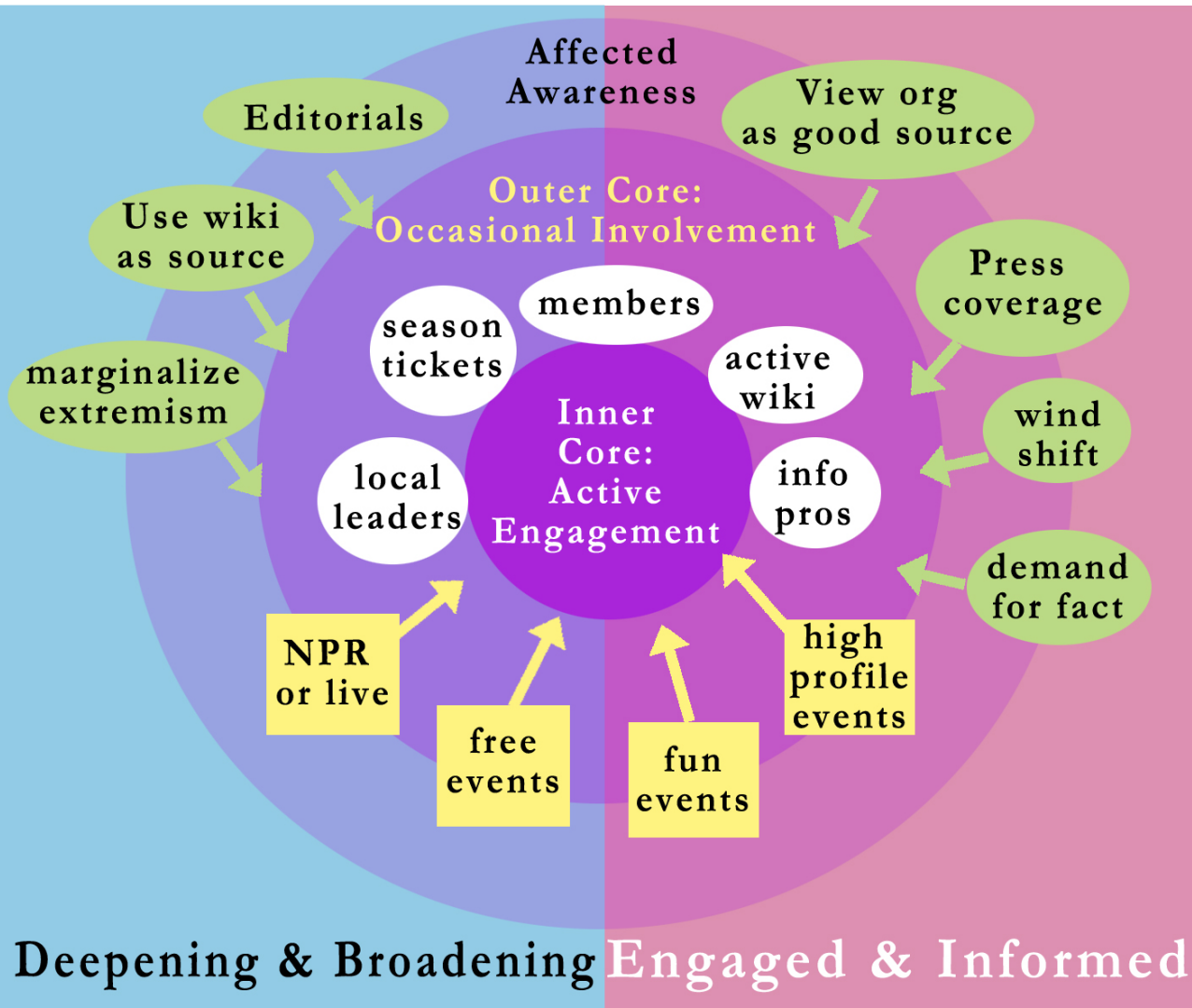


GOD  **squad**
Improbable conversations on faith + politics no matter your beliefs

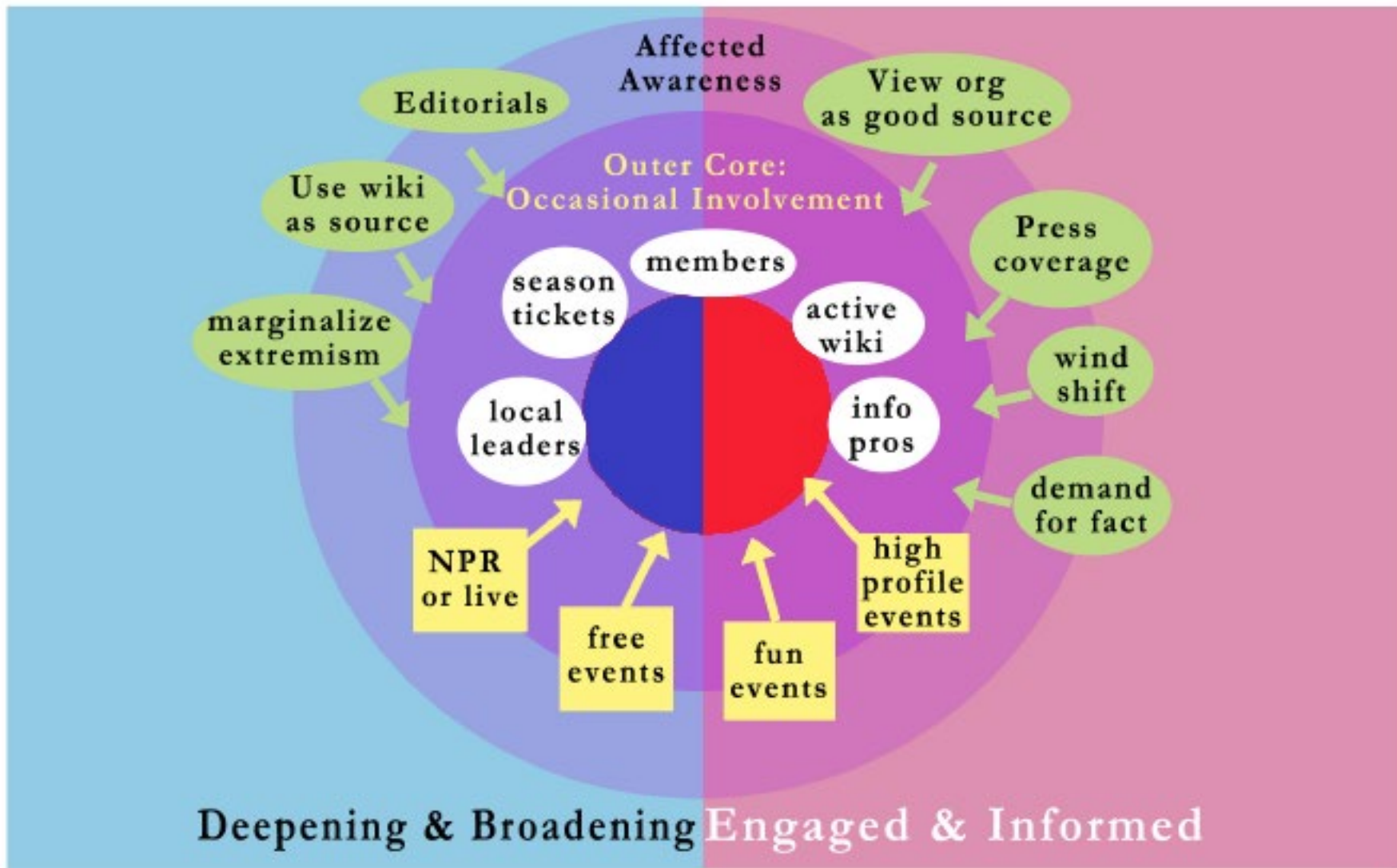
strategic mistake #3

not engaging conservatives

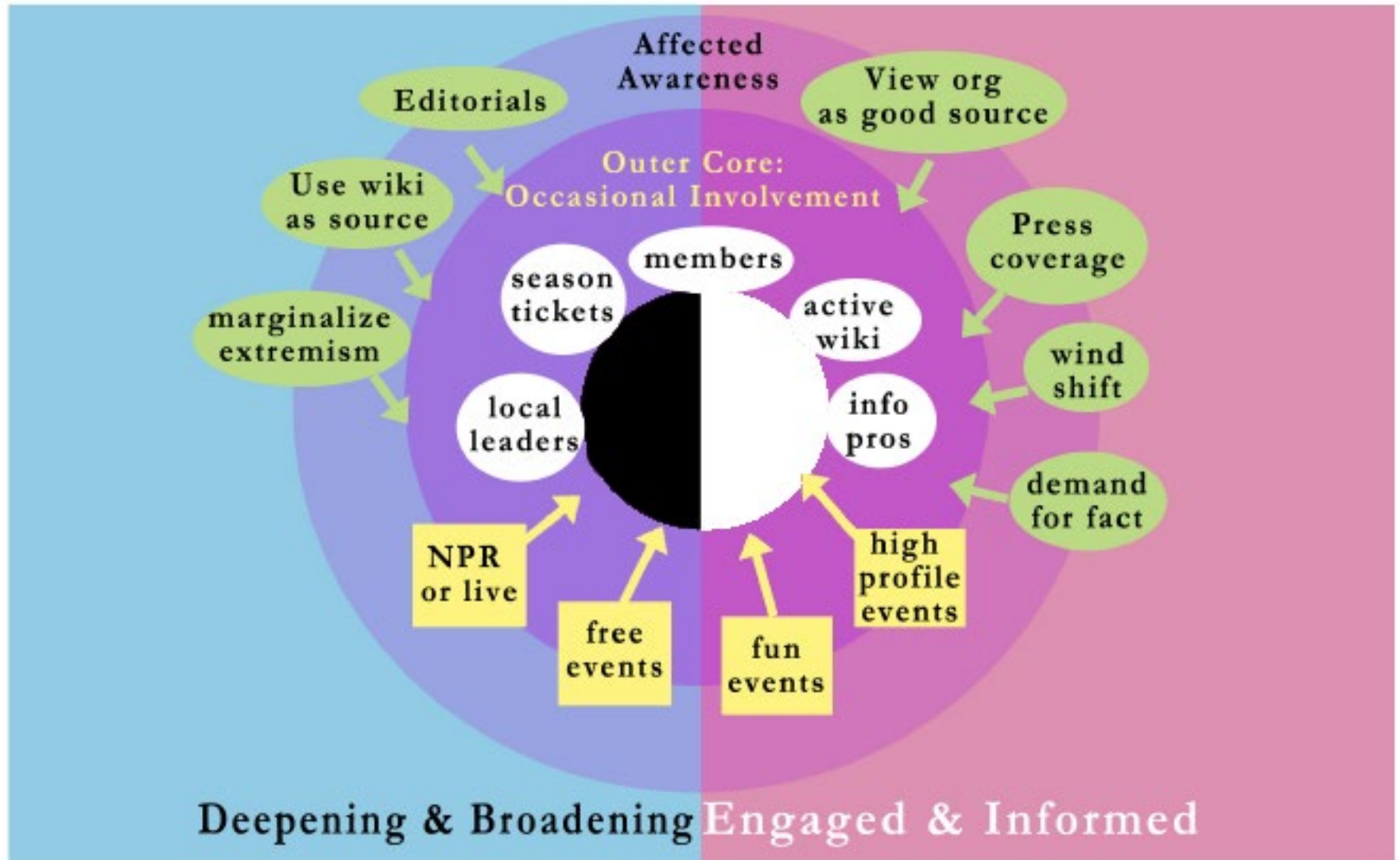
The Village Square  *We the People*
 one community - two years - toward a more perfect union



The Village Square  *We the People*
one community - two years - toward a more perfect union



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one community - two years - toward a more perfect union



How Village Square can help:

1. follow us on social media; retweet localism content; co-create ideas
2. a la carte menu of programming (pick one, try it)
3. in the box resources
4. consultation
5. Flying Pig Academy
6. start a Village Square
7. (we will comp you tickets if you visit)

you are here

The Year of Living Locally



At a time when partisans can agree on almost nothing,
it's possible that one solution might be right under our feet *

* *actual location of feet may vary*





OCTOBER 1 @ 6 PM | DINNER EVENT | ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Local Patriotism: The Goliath of national dysfunction vs. The David of local community

Localism isn't just a distraction (though thankfully *it is* a distraction) – it's an antidote for the rising tribal nationalism overtaking the globe. In our hometown is where “those people” don't look like the enemy, they look like *us*. Here is where we don't have to wait for Washington, D.C. to fix it. And it's possible that's the way it ought to have been all along.

[MORE](#)



THE FLYING PIG

SOCIETY



this place.
these people.



local patriot



STAND
IN THE
PLACE
WHERE
YOU
LIVE

millennials:

only 30% believe it's
“essential to live in a
democracy”

Democracy in Technicolor





Benjamin Franklin
“A Republic,
If you can keep
it.”

mccain to america:

“I hope those who mourn my passing and even those who don’t will celebrate as I celebrate a happy life lived in imperfect service to **a country made of ideals whose continued success is the hope of the world.**”

1.

**the most essential part of our polarization
can ONLY be solved in
America's hometowns.**

**and communities that want to invest in
hometown civic fabric have a competitive
advantage as civic and economic leaders.**

**The “David” of community vs.
the “Goliath” of national government**

People still like their communities

AEI Survey:

**Only 43% satisfied with how things are going
nationally**

**Fully 73% satisfied with how things are going
locally**

2.

**the wicked problem of polarization is
easier to solve than you think
if you do the right thing
with the right people
in the right place.**

**the right place is in your
hometown. the right people are
your neighbors.**

3.

It's not about policy.

**Tend to your hometown
tribe – to the glue that holds you together
as a community
as you engage in and celebrate
"the constant
clashing of opinion"
gather across your differences**

**Our gratitude
for the inspiration to
President Longworth +
We Live Local +
Florida League of Cities**

The Village Square



Tallahassee | Fort Lauderdale | Salt Lake City

Civil Society

