Name of collection

When two worlds collide: Achieving wisdom in online groups

Contributors name:

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There are two worlds, My World and the Shared World. I call them M-World and S-World. M-World is mine. Here I can be independent, solitary, and private.

Yes, but focusing on yourself can leave you poorly equipped to work in S-World. The scale of the issues which confront us when we work in groups can leave us feeling disempowered.

I've seen the dark side of M-World too. Isolation, self-obsession, and self-preservation.

Instinctive reactions that are unhealthy in S-World. In S-World, we have to include other people's views and assumptions. In S-World, you need empathy, listening, mutual sustainability. All rational and reflective characteristics.

In their own worlds, they were ordinary people, but when they meet, they become the S-Force, a formidable team capable of powerful results in online collaboration.

But it's not as simple as consenting to S-World and everything gets better.

It's hard to empathize with strangers. We don't share world views, time zones, or objectives. And we can't always trust our own perceptions.

When S-World goes wrong, we get shared activities that look collaborative, but are actually competitive. But when we work harmoniously together, we can really make things happen. Great teams, groups, and communities have been the basis of human progress.

What are the ground rules for S-World?

There are so many. Most importantly, you need to support your fellow contributors with empathy and encouragement. Avoid assumptions. It's always best to explain and check people understand. You can make this easier by summarizing arguments. And if in doubt, everyone needs to always ask for support.

M-World is mine. It's where I go to think, to meditate, to relax, but when we meet in S-World, I'm part of a community. My perspective is confronted and completed by yours and others.

Yes, the perfect balance is to cycle in and out of M-World and S-World. That way, we get the best from our solitary time and can work effectively in online collaborations.

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