



December, 2019 In The Know Summary

## 'Open Mic'

**We took a break from our typical format this month and instead shared resources with the group.**

### Spotlighted Resources

**Gordon MacKensey:** [Orbiting the Giant Hairball](#). Following a successful creative career at Hallmark, MacKensey wrote this book to tell lessons about career success. The premise of the "hairball" is that, as organizations grow, it's 'one more hair' in a hairball. Every time you reorganize, it adds a hair—to the point that you have a big, messy tangled hairball. The goal is to find a creative way to "orbit" around the hairball, while staying true to the core of the organization.

**Vertellis & The Tribe** card decks are similar resources designed to help you have meaningful conversations with family and friends. Examples of questions from Vertellis: What is one thing that will make your year great? And: What is your biggest wish for the upcoming year? One participant commented that these games can also be useful for team effectiveness/leadership activities.

**Kristin Neff:** Series of [meditations focused on Self-Compassion](#) and a [Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook](#).

**Caprice Hollins, Ilsa Govan:** [Diversity Equity & Inclusion Strategies for Facilitating Conversations on Race](#). One participant commented that Fairfax County is using this resource to help lead discussions and encourage reflection.

**Ibrahim Kendy:** [How to be an Antiracist](#). In this book, Kendy provides education to help understand racism in America. Hear Kendy in this [20-minute interview](#) for highlights from the book.

**Douglas Stone, Sheila Heen:** [Thanks for the Feedback](#). There are many books about giving feedback; this book will help those of us who are not good at receiving feedback. This [one-hour Google video](#) features the authors presenting about the book. There's also an [HBR article](#) that summarizes the approach outlined in the book.

**Rosamund Stone Zander, Benjamin Stander:** [The Art of Possibility](#). This is a delightful read by a successful husband-and-wife team. Benjamin Zander was the conductor for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. At the start of a classes, he has students write a letter that starts with: "Dear Professor Zander, I got an A because..." Zander finds that this helps the students do better in his classes.

**Marshall Goldsmith:** [What Got You Here Won't Get You There](#). This book provides guidelines from Goldsmith's coaching practice. It spotlights negative practices that can be career-limiting behaviors.

**Gretchin Rubin:** [The Four Tendencies](#). The book talks about the internal and external drivers that motivate people. Rubin presents a model with four types - Rebel, The Questioner, The Upholder, and Obliger. For each type, Rubin provides tips for how to manage/work with people of that type.

**Tara Westover:** [Educated: A Memoir](#). This memoir is the story of a woman who grew up unschooled and worked her way into university—ultimately to earn a PhD at Cambridge. Along the way, she had to abandon her family and transcend years of abuse. It is an extraordinary story of resilience.

**Michael Siegel:** [The President as Leader](#). In this book, Siegel discusses the structure, politics, and policies of recent American presidents, from Jimmy Carter through Donald Trump.

**Doris Kerns Goodwin:** [Leadership in Turbulent Times](#). This book spotlights Lincoln, Roosevelt and other presidents. The author talks about the president's leadership qualities as demonstrated in early life/childhood, and how personal crises affected/shaped their leadership abilities. She talks about the behaviors and competencies that served them well – including skills such as storytelling and empathy.

**Jay Heinrichs:** [Thank You for Arguing](#). Rhetoric is not about debating. It's about examining the logic of the argument. This book provides insights into strategies and logic for presenting an argument, and helps you think critically about how to respond when challenged—and how to interact with someone with an opposing viewpoint.

**KITBOGA's You Tube Channel.** This entrepreneur (whose identity is secret!) has found a way to get back at scammers. He strings out scammers, wastes their time, and baits them. (One participant commented that this is a great example of how to build an argument and logic.)

**The Aspen Institute/The Atlantic** proposed five principles for Americans to [have better arguments](#) with each other. The principles: take winning off the table, prioritize relationships and listen passionately, pay attention to context, embrace vulnerability, and make room to transform.

**Rebecca Shafir:** [The Zen of Listening](#). Trained as a speech pathologist, the author explores the mechanics and behavior of what is happening with speech. In this book she explores the art of mindful listening in the “age of distraction.”

**Yuval Harari:** [Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind](#). The book talks about why we as humans act as we do now, and applies this information to organizations. Interesting tidbit: tribes include 150 people or fewer. Along those lines, the manufacturing company Gore (Gore-Tex fabric) limits its factory size to 150 people. This is the max number that you can know personally and it is the optimal number for the organization.

**Amy Edmondson:** [The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth](#). This book explores the question: How can leaders create safety conditions to avoid bad outcomes? One participant commented about a coworker who quipped, “Hindsight is not 20/20. It's 20/200.” This means, when we look back at events that happened, we start crafting narratives.

**Google:** Research at Google shows that psychological safety is crucial for effective teams. Highlights from the research are in this [HBR article](#).

**Ingrid Fetell Lee:** [Joyful](#). This book provides examples of how to increase the joy in your daily life. The tips are useful in all aspects of life—including career, home decorating, etc. A light and delightful read.

**David Epstein:** [Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World](#). In today's world, generalists have the ability to combat the world's most wicked problems. A summary of the key points in the book is in this [NYT article](#).

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**Margaret Heffernan:** TED talk on [pecking order](#). Heffernan urges us to forget the pecking order at work. “Companies don't have ideas. Only people do.”

\*The Chesapeake Bay Organizational Development Network (CBODN) Book Club is a monthly session, open to all learners. Each month, a presenter shares highlights from a book related to leadership, business, or coaching. There's no obligation to pre-read the book. The session summary is intended to provide a recap of the conversation at Book Club, rather than serve as a thorough book summary. [Register here](#) for upcoming events. For a listing of Book Club summaries, [click here](#).