



HOWZAT!



The Rotary Club of Newlands
The Club that Appeals

PRESIDENT JENNY IBBOTSON



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Apologies before 10:00 on a Monday to Heidi Andersson, please.

COMMENT: THE SCIENCE of REASONING with UNREASONABLE PEOPLE

(Adam Grant *via* Peter Ennis)

*Don't try to change someone else's mind.
Instead, help them find their own motivation to change.*

A few years ago, I made the mistake of having an argument with the most stubborn person I know. R., whose initial I'm using to protect his privacy, is a long-time friend, and when his family came to visit, he mentioned that his children had never been vaccinated — and never would be.

I'm no proponent of blindly giving every vaccination to every newborn, but I was concerned for his children's safety, so I started debunking some common vaccine myths. After days of debate, I was exhausted and exasperated. Determined to preserve our friendship, I vowed never to talk with him about vaccines again.

Then came 2020. Fear of the vaccine may be the greatest barrier to stopping Covid-19. It stretches far beyond the so-called anti-vaxxer community: About half of Americans harbour questions about the safety of the Covid-19 vaccines; 39 percent say they definitely or probably won't get one.

I decided to see if I could open R.'s mind to the possibility. What I didn't realize was that my mind would be opened as well.

As an organisational psychologist, I've spent the past few years studying how to motivate people to think again. I've run experiments that led proponents of gun rights and gun safety to abandon some of their mutual animosity, and I even got Yankees fans to let go of their grudges against Red Sox supporters. But I don't always practice what I teach.

When someone seems closed-minded, my instinct is to argue the polar-opposite of their position. But when I go on the attack, my opponents either shut down or fight back harder. On more than one occasion, I've been called a "logic bully."

When we try to change a person's mind, our first impulse is to preach about why we're right and prosecute them for being wrong. Yet experiments show that preaching and prosecuting typically backfire — and what doesn't sway people may strengthen their beliefs. Much as a vaccine inoculates the physical immune system against a virus, the act of resistance fortifies the psychological immune system. Refuting a point of view produces antibodies against future attempts at influence, making people more certain of their own opinions and more ready to rebut alternatives.

That's what happened with my friend. If I wanted him to rethink his blanket resistance to vaccines, I had to rethink my approach.

Several decades ago, when treating substance abuse problems, psychologists developed a technique called motivational interviewing. The central premise: Instead of trying to force other people to change, you're better off helping them find their own intrinsic motivation to change. You do that by interviewing them — asking open-ended questions and listening carefully — and holding up a mirror so they can see their own thoughts more clearly. If they express a desire to change, you guide them toward a plan.

Say you're a student at Hogwarts, and you want to help your uncle reject Voldemort. You might start like this:

You: I'd love to better understand your feelings about He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.

Uncle: Well, he's the most powerful wizard alive. Also, his followers promised me a fancy title.

You: Interesting. Is there anything you dislike about him?

Uncle: Hmm. I'm not crazy about all the murdering.

You: Well, nobody's perfect. What's stopped you from abandoning him?

Uncle: I'm afraid he might direct the murdering toward me.

You: That's a reasonable fear — I've felt it too. Are there any principles that matter so deeply to you that you'd be willing to take that risk?

In controlled trials, motivational interviewing has helped people to stop smoking, abusing drugs and alcohol, and gambling; to improve their diets and exercise; to overcome eating disorders; and to lose weight. The approach has also motivated students to get a good night's sleep; voters to reconsider their prejudices; and divorcing parents to reach settlements.

Recently, thanks to a vaccine whisperer, it has been applied to immunization. Arnaud Gagneur is a paediatrician in Quebec who encourages reluctant parents to immunize their children. In his experiments, a motivational interview in the maternity ward after birth increased the number of mothers willing to vaccinate their children from 72 percent to 87 percent; the number of children who were fully vaccinated two years later rose by 9 percent. A single conversation was enough to change behaviour over the next 24 months.

I set up a conversation between Dr. Gagneur and my friend. After 90 minutes, it was clear to me that R.'s vaccination stance had not changed.

"I have tried to apply all the principles of motivational interviewing, but I have had the unpleasant feeling of not doing so well," Dr. Gagneur wrote to me in email. "R. is very knowledgeable and always ends up finding arguments that support his decision."

Strangely, I didn't feel defeated or irritated. I wanted to learn how my friend's views could evolve.

The pioneers of motivational interviewing, William Miller and Stephen Rollnick, have long warned against using the technique to manipulate people. It requires a genuine desire to understand people's motivations and help them reach their goals. Although R. and I both want to keep his children healthy, I realized I had never tried to understand his perspective on vaccines before. So the next morning, I called him.

In our past debates, R. had focused only on the potential downsides of vaccinations. With Dr. Gagneur, though, he acknowledged that vaccines could be good for some but not necessarily for others. If he lived in a country experiencing an outbreak of, say, malaria, would he consider immunization? "You weigh the pros and cons," he said.

Psychologists find that when we listen carefully and call attention to the nuances in people's own thinking, they become less extreme and more open in their views. I wondered how my friend's ambivalence applied to Covid, and I knew that the kinds of questions I asked would matter. Social scientists have found that asking people how their preferred political policies might work in practice, rather than asking why they favor those approaches, was more effective in opening their minds. As people struggled to explain their ideal tax legislation or health care plan, they grasped the complexity of the problem and recognized gaps in their knowledge.

So for my second attempt, instead of asking R. why he was opposed to Covid vaccines, I asked him how he would stop the pandemic. He said we couldn't put all our eggs in one basket — we needed a stronger focus on prevention and treatment. When I asked whether vaccines would be part of his strategy, he said yes — for some people.

I was eager to learn what might lead R. to decide that he is one of those people. In motivational interviewing, there's a distinction between sustain talk and change talk. Sustain talk is commentary about maintaining the status quo. Change talk is referencing a desire, ability or commitment to making a shift. A skilled motivational interviewer listens for change talk and asks people to elaborate on it. This was my third step.

I asked R. what the odds were that he would get a Covid vaccine. He said they were "pretty low for many different reasons." I told him it was fascinating to me that he didn't say zero.

"This is not a black-and-white issue," R. said. "I don't know, because my views change." I laughed: "This is a milestone — the most stubborn person I know admits that he's willing to change his mind?" He laughed too: "No, I'm still the most stubborn person you know! But at different stages of our lives, we have different things that are important to us, right?"

I don't expect R. or his children to be vaccinated any time soon, but it felt like progress that he agreed to keep an open mind. The real breakthrough, though, was mine. I became open to a new mode of conversation, with no points to score and no debate to win. The only victory I declared was against my own prosecutor tendencies. I had prevailed over my inner logic bully.

Many people believe that to stop a deadly pandemic, the end justifies whatever means are necessary. It's worth remembering that the means are a measure of our character. If we succeed in opening minds, the question is not only whether we're proud of what we've achieved. We should also ask whether we're proud of how we've achieved it.

I no longer believe it's my place to change anyone's mind. All I can do is try to understand their thinking and ask if they're open to some rethinking. The rest is up to them.

From The New York Times (nytimes.com)

Adam Grant (@adammgrant) is an organizational psychologist at the Wharton School and the author of Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know, from which parts of this article are adapted. His research focuses on motivation, generosity and creativity.

MINUTES of the ORDINARY MEETING on ZOOM (8TH FEBRUARY, 2020; 19h00)

Scribe: Shân Biesman-Simons

Sergeant Jamie called the meeting to order.

President Jenny welcomed our speaker **Sarah Oliver** and her newly appointed colleague **Nyasha Karratteewa**.

Johan T lit the peace candle and shared two peace related quotes from **Charles Swindoll** and **Kimberly Jones**.

Wendy recited the The Four-Way Test.

John S shared a general spiritual prayer and toasted Rotary International and Rotary Club of Newlands.

GUEST SPEAKER: Sarah Oliver

Glynis introduced **Sarah** to those online. **Sarah** is the Associate Director of Global Programmes for Youth Engagement for the United Religious Initiative (**URI**). She is based in Cape Town and works to support, connect and inspire young people as interfaith activists and peacebuilders around the world. **Sarah** has worked in the interfaith sector for ten years.

Sarah told us that while working on her talk she realised that there were a number of connections between Rotary and URI and that she had a colleague who was going to be a Peace Scholar in Costa Rica. **Sarah** shared aspects of her childhood and says when she thinks about it 'the word community comes to mind'. Her father brought communities together so she had exposure to different communities and learnt to appreciate the culture and diversity in South Africa. When **Sarah** was 16 she attended a multi-cultural youth camp in America. She appreciated differences in groups of people and this was a catalyst for her interfaith peace and reconciliation journey.

Sarah shared a short video clip which is a trailer to a documentary highlighting stories relating to URI and the way their Co-operation Circles work. The link to the documentary is [here](#).

Circles are formed when at least 7 people come together to represent a cause and in each circle there are a minimum of 3 religions represented. Globally there are over 1000 Co-operation Circles in 113 countries. URI was started in San Francisco 21 years ago. **Sarah** shared the theory and purpose behind

the programme and also told us about some of the local circles. Her passion is dialogue as without dialogue we cannot have collaboration.

After her presentation **Sergeant Jamie** invited Newlands Rotarians to pose questions. **Mike** spoke a bit about Peace Scholarships and asked **Sarah** to share details to potential applicants. **Mike** (on behalf of **Sheila**), **Janey** and **Jeremy** related connections to **Sarah's** family. **Geraldine** suggested that there may be potential for Rotaract and URI to interact.

Jeannine thanked **Sarah** for addressing us in such a gentle manner and for the passion she has for this much needed collaboration.

SPOTS:

- **Sergeant Jamie** then announced that he was 'going backwards' as he had forgotten the 'wooden spoon'. On **Nora's** behalf **Jamie** virtually handed the Just Desserts Spoon to **Mike** for his work in assisting Rotary Clubs to minimise import duties on incoming containers etc.
- **Jamie** then disappeared into cyber space and **Master Sergeant Mike** took over his duty.
- There was then discussion about the Membership initiative 'The Face of Newlands Rotary'. The aim is to gain inclusive membership. The membership portfolio committee had a fruitful meeting and ideas included new projects to gain new members but to do this we need to understand what we have now and also understand the skills we have available. PLEASE complete audit questionnaires that have been emailed to you. There is also a focus on keeping existing members interested and motivated.
- **Richard B** reminded us of the role My Job talks have in helping us know more about our fellow members.
- **Wybe** feels exercise events have been the core of our some of our successful income generators and we should investigate potential for other events

PRESIDENT JENNY'S SLOT:

- Thanked **Sarah** for her inspiring presentation and invited **Sarah** and **Nyasha** to join our meeting when **Mike** talks to us about Rotary Peace Fellows
- Thanked **Janey** and **Jeremy** for the great *Howzat!*
- Informed us that **Jeremy** has taken over the Vocational portfolio.
- Reminded Newlands Rotarians to contact her if they were unhappy with 7:00 pm as starting time for weekly meetings
- Reported that at the last board meeting there were discussions about new avenues of fundraising and asked for members who are willing and interested to look at new and exciting ways of fundraising to let her know
- Wished **Richard H** a speedy recovery
- Extended birthday greeting to **Glynis** (10th) and **Diana** (11th) and reminded **Mike** about his anniversary (14th)

MEETING CLOSURE:

Acting Sergeant Mike closed the meeting

NEWSLANDS ROTARY NEWS

Vanessa writes: "On Saturday at 11am some 18 Newrots gathered on Zoom for Rochelle's baby shower. For some it was a first, but for all it was a great pleasure. Rochelle, looking radiant, received many 'pearls of advice', many of them meeting with laughter and nodding of heads in agreement.

'Guess the baby', featuring baby pics of several Newrots, provoked more hilarity. Ian Pursch regaled the zoomers with a demonstration of how to fold a nappy and how not to stick the safety pin into the baby.

Rochelle received a voucher to buy books for soon to arrive, Hudson Meyer, who at this stage is set to greet the world on 24 Feb. Jenny Lancaster baked Rochelle and Deon a gorgeous cake, in her inimitable style.



We all wish Rochelle and Deon much happiness with their baby boy and hopefully, plenty of sleep."



More news from Newlands is that we have a new Vocational Services Director. Jeremy Opperman now leads this portfolio while Jeannine Ibbotson moves to Membership and Graham Finlayson to CSI. Welcome Jeremy! (And the updated Board pic will follow, soon-soon.)

NEWS FROM THE ROTARY WORLD

In news from District and DG Carl-Heinz, District Assembly and Conference will now be online. This will be a huge disappointment for RC Oudtshoorn, which last hosted (an incredible) Conference in 2009. Assembly and Conference will both now be online, on 17 April and 1 May respectively.

For those who are not yet familiar with the events, the annual district assembly is the major leadership training event in each Rotary district of the world. Workshops offer motivation, inspiration, Rotary information and new ideas for club officers, directors and key committee chairs of each club.

Conference usually follows and is for club members to learn about what's happening in Rotary and their district and meet other Rotarians in the area. The conference usually lasts one to two days typically includes a visit from the RI President's representative, who gives an update on Rotary International and inspires and motivates participants.

Convention is RI's international event, this year to have been held in Taipei but now, again, online.

RCN FUTURE FIXTURES (*Online, for now.*)

FEBRUARY – PEACE and CONFLICT RESOLUTION / PREVENTION

- 15 Ordinary Meeting *Godfrey Mokaeano, Breadline Africa: Social Impact Investing and Raid by RC Melkbos*
- 17 Board Meeting
- 22 Business Meeting

MARCH – WATER and SANITATION

- 1 Partners Meeting *Ngwe Tiyo: President of Khayelitsha Rotaract.*
- 8 District PI Workshop (18h00 to 19h00)
Ordinary Meeting *Mike Walwyn: Rotary Peace Fellowship programme*
- 15 Ordinary Meeting *Quiz: Wendy Goddard*
- 17 Board Meeting
- 22 PUBLIC HOLIDAY
- 29 Business Meeting

APRIL – MATERNAL and CHILD HEALTH

- 5 PUBLIC HOLIDAY
- 12 Ordinary Meeting
- 17 District 9350 Assembly
- 19 Ordinary Meeting
- 21 Board meeting
- 26 Business Meeting

MAY – YOUTH

- 1 District 9350 Conference
- 3 Partners' Meeting
- 10 Ordinary Meeting
- 17 Ordinary Meeting
- 19 Board Meeting
- 24 Business Meeting
- 31 Ordinary Meeting



BIRTHDAYS	18 th February	Lungie Gwaai
ANNIVERSARIES	21 st February	Pieter and Judy van Aswegen
		Tony and Lyn van der Lith
JOINED ROTARY		
JUST DESSERTS SPOON		Mike Walwyn

UMPIRES and SCORERS

	15 February 2021 <i>Ordinary</i>	22 February 2021 <i>Business</i>	1 March 2021 <i>Partners</i>
Sergeant	Richard Burnett	Graham Finlayson	Henry Campbell
Four-Way Test / Object	Brian Pickup	Johan Beukman	John Winship
Grace and Loyal Toast	Melinda Stapleton	Michael Walwyn	Wendy Goddard
Peace Candle and Quote	Bill Holland	Geraldine Nicol	Ian Pursch
Minutes	Pieter van Aswegen	Wybe Meinesz	Johan Taljaard
Intro speaker	Terry Lancaster		Jamie Hart
Thank speaker	Tony Davidson		Jeremy Opperman
Comment	Lew Botha	Richard House	Glynis Menné-Hart

- *If you cannot make this duty, please arrange a substitute and let the Sergeant know.*
- *Peace Candle duty includes lighting a candle and providing a quote.*
- *Comment is due on the date above. Publication is the Monday following. Usually. Please submit a text file and, if you have pics, please attach these.*

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS



President
Jenny Ibbotson



Past President
Terry Lancaster



Treasurer
Peter Ennis



Secretary
Janey Ball



Environment Chair
Tony Davidson



ECD Project
Geraldine Nicol



Vocational Service
Jeannine Ibbotson



Foundation Chair
Mike Walwyn



Club Services
Heidi Andersson



Youth Service
Wendy Goddard



International Service
Shân Biesman-Simons



Entrepreneurship
John Stephenson



Community Services
Wybe Meinesz



Vanessa Rosseau



Graham Finlayson



Shelley Finch

----- **Membership & Publicity Cluster** -----

AND the LAST WORD

The Ed this week faced a deluge of mail from protesting members hoping for a repeat performance from Cale Brown, only to find that the link where they'd hoped to find him didn't work. Oh, the shame. But [here it is](#). No, really!

Still, just when you thought you'd caught up on the finest music (and dancing) trends, sorry to say Cale's paled.

He's been replaced by Warren "Wawa" Snipe's unbelievably joyful (and fabulous) (and unforgettable) signing, at the Superbowl, of *The Star Spangled Banner*.

[Check it out](#). You'll be so glad you did.

See you on the moro....