Facilitator moves

THE MAIN MOVE

"What supports that?" Ask for the grounds of a conclusion, and ask it of reassuring explanations as readily as troubling ones.

Then ask: **"Who sees it differently?"**

When the room needs help

- **Silence.** Wait ten seconds. Then return to the case: "What do we actually know here?"
- **Dominating.** "Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken and wants to."
- **Rushing to comfort.** "They were probably busy." Ask what supports that, too.
- **Stuck in "we can't know."** "What does the deadline give you reason to do while the motive is open?"
- **Solving the problem.** "Before we decide what to do, which judgment are we testing?"
- **Personal hurt.** Thank them; offer a pause, the email case, or moving on. Do not probe.

PROTECT THE TIME

Open for 10 minutes; discuss until minute 55, including the reading at question 3. Apply until minute 80, omitting the reveal if needed. Close at minute 80 and finish at 90.

When asked for your view

Offer it briefly: "Here's my tentative view. What would make you doubt it?" Keep the question open.

Notes and follow-up

Fuller explanations, sample responses, and the readings are in the January expanded guide and Meeting Primer. Key texts: Epictetus, *Enchiridion* 1 and 44; *Discourses* 3.12. *On Stoic Living*, Weeks 1–4.

When Your Mind Jumps to Conclusions

What am I being asked to believe — and what supports it?

Today we examine why a conclusion feels convincing, what supports it, and how firmly to hold it.

THE MEETING

Date: _____ **Place:** _____

90 minutes of discussion · Wisdom · Discipline of Assent

Before you begin

Silence your phone, set a quiet timer, and keep this guide open. Have the reading ready on a phone or printout, and a pen for your own notes.

Open (10 minutes)

Welcome. Challenge ideas, give reasons, and share the floor. Passing is always fine. The shared case gives everyone a starting point; no experience with the weekly lessons is needed.

THE SHARED CASE · READ IT ALOUD

You emailed a colleague this morning. You need an answer by tomorrow. It's late afternoon, and there's no reply. You think, **"They're deliberately ignoring me."**

Ask the whole group: **"What does the unanswered email give you reason to believe?"** Read the shared case aloud before asking the opening question. Hear two or three initial interpretations without settling them, then carry them into the discussion.

Discuss

1. Why can a first impression feel like something you already know?

Probe: Which came first: the observation, the feeling, or the explanation?

2. What belongs to your judgment here, and what depends on someone else?

Probe: How does needing an answer differ from knowing why none has arrived?

READ ALOUD · EPICTETUS, DISCOURSES 3.12.13–17

Read the passage aloud from the linked text or the QR code. Epictetus compares examining an impression to a night watch who asks every visitor for credentials before letting them pass.

Discourses 3.12

Read it aloud as the group considers what counts as grounds. Then use question 3 to test troubling and reassuring explanations alike.

3. What would make deliberate avoidance more likely than ordinary delay?

Probe: If a kind explanation came to mind first, what evidence would you ask of it?

4. How much certainty does the evidence support? What can you leave open?

Probe: What one piece of new information would change your confidence the most?

5. If your first judgment still stands, what did testing it accomplish?

Probe: How would you tell a sound first judgment from a lucky guess?

GOING DEEPER · IF THE ROOM IS READY

What could justify a firm judgment about a *pattern* of missed replies while leaving the motive for any one delay uncertain?

Application: test a judgment

Work through the steps aloud. Take two or three answers at each step.

1. **Pause.** Your judgment is yours to examine. Name it: "I have the impression that…"
2. **Bracket.** What do I know? What am I adding? (Known: the email was sent; no reply yet. Added: they saw it; they meant it.)
3. **Weigh.** How much certainty do those grounds justify? Accept, revise, reject, or leave it open.

IF TIME ALLOWS · THE REVEAL

Your colleague acknowledged the email this morning and promised a reply by noon. It's now late afternoon.

Probe: What can you now say with more confidence? What remains open? What could a short follow-up say without claiming more?

Compare how firmly you held the claim before and after examining it. A confirmed, revised, rejected, or unsettled judgment needs grounds.

Close

Return to the opening: **"What am I being asked to believe — and what supports it?"** Ask what became clearer or what question remains unsettled. Hear a few brief answers, including reasons for a changed view; passing is welcome.

UNTIL NEXT TIME

Notice one convincing impression and ask what supports it.

Thank members, confirm the next meeting, and finish on time. Next month we turn to the Discipline of Desire: **How can I learn to pursue and avoid wisely?**

After the meeting: send a short recap through your group's usual channel with one or two insights or open questions and the take-home invitation.