GAMES FOR LEARNING ABOUT CONFLICT RESOLUTION
And they built it right over those two stubborn Zax
And left them there, standing un-budged in their tracks.
Where all think alike, no one thinks very much.

Walter Lippman, *The Stakes of Democracy* 1915
INTRODUCTION
Navigating

Foundering

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PERCEPTION
ESCALATION
North-Going Zax:
Senior team member who believes that working alone will make it easier to get work done quickly

South-Going Zax:
Junior team member who wants to pair in order to learn more about the work
ESCALATION
Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Modes

- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

Cooperativeness
Assertiveness

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CONTAGION
Level 5: World War
- Destroy the Other!
- Little or No Language Is Exchanged

Level 4: Crusade
- Protecting One's Own Group Becomes the Focus
- Language Is Ideological

Level 3: Contest
- Winning Trumps Resolving
- Language Includes Personal Attacks

Level 2: Disagreement
- Personal Protection Trumps Collaboration
- Language Is Guarded and Open to Interpretation

Level 1: Problem to Solve
- Information Sharing and Collaboration
- Language Is Open and Fact Based
What might you do?:

- Peacekeeping/Protection
- Shuttle diplomacy to de-escalate
- Accommodate
- Negotiate
- Get factual
- Support and safety
- Consensus

Adkins: http://agile.dzone.com/articles/agile-managing-conflict
Clearing the AIRR

AGREE – start by identifying a shared interest in the situation

IMPACT – describe how the situation is affecting you

RESPECT – acknowledge importance of other person in the situation

REQUEST – what do you need to move towards a resolution?
You are part of a new team that is embarking on an ambitious project. One of the experienced developers is openly dismissive of working in an Agile way having had some challenges with her previous team. Her only contribution to the discussion in the team’s first retrospective was “Agile is a waste of my time and is slowing us down. Just let me do my job.”

What do you say to her?
Everyone is right...but only partially

Lyssa Adkins and Michael Spayd
CONTRADICTION
North-Going Zax

Two heads are better than one
South-Going Zax

If you want something done right, do it yourself
Recap

- **Perception**: What’s your perception of conflict? What kind of conflict are you engaged in?
- **Escalation**: What escalates conflict? What is your reaction to conflict?
- **Contagion**: How does your behaviour affect other people?
- **Conversation**: Use AIRR model to structure difficult conversations
- **Contradiction**: How can we appreciate multiple truths and recognize our biases?
Great relationships rely on passionate disagreement.

Patrick Lencioni
Thank you!
Resources

PUBLICATIONS
• Thomas & Kilmann Conflict Modes: http://www.kilmanndiagnostics.com/overview-thomas-kilmann-conflict-mode-instrument-tki
• Adkins, Navigating the 5 Levels of Conflict the Agile Way: http://agile.dzone.com/articles/agile-managing-conflict

GAMES
• Perception (What Color is Conflict?): http://www.teachervision.fen.com/classroom-management/activity/2922.html
• Escalation (Role Plays): http://esrnational.org/resources/lessons-from-connected-and-respected/
• Contagion (Social Virus): http://www.thiagi.com/pfp/IE4H/august2011.html#Jolt
• Constellation (Problem Constellation): http://agilemeditation.wordpress.com/2013/09/12/problem-constellation/
• Contradiction (Au contraire): http://www.thiagi.com/pfp/IE4H/february2013.html#Jolt

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Furlong’s Circle of Conflict

Games for Learning About Conflict Resolution
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