Collaborating with the Enemy

SUMMARY

Berrett-Koehler and Reos Partners have just published Adam Kahane’s new book, *Collaborating with the Enemy: How to Work with People You Don’t Agree with or Like or Trust*.

Collaboration is increasingly difficult and increasingly necessary. Often, to get something done that really matters to us, we need to work with people we don’t agree with or like or trust. Adam Kahane has faced this challenge many times, working on big issues like democracy and jobs and climate change, and on everyday issues in organizations and families. He has learned that our conventional understanding of collaboration—that it requires a harmonious team that agrees on where it’s going, how it’s going to get there, and who needs to do what—is wrong. Instead we need a new approach to collaboration that embraces discord, experimentation, and genuine co-creation.

This book is available in paperback, e-book, and audiobook editions from Amazon, Indiebound, Barnes&Noble, Indigo, and Berrett-Koehler. Discounted bulk order can be obtained from Leslie Crandell. Reader resources including free downloads are available here.
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   “The miraculous option is that we work things through together”
   There are three alternatives to collaboration
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BOOK EVENTS

Collaborating with the Enemy addresses an increasingly central challenge of our time: how we can deal effectively with complex and conflictual situations that we find problematic and want to change, but that—no matter how much we wish to—we cannot change alone or by working only with our colleagues and friends. The book offers a simple framework (“stretch collaboration”) and set of practices (three “stretches”) for working with this kind of situation.

Adam and his colleagues are keen to share this framework and these practices with people who are working with complex and conflictual situations. They are doing this in multiple ways, including for example:

1. A 3.5-hour interactive seminar with a group of 10-15 government, business and NGO leaders (from the same organisation or from across multiple organisations) who are committed to addressing complex social challenges, understand that to do this they need to collaborate (including with people they don’t agree with or like or trust), and want to build their capacity to do this.
2. A 2.5-day experiential workshop with a group of 25-50 people (comprised on multiple teams, each working on a specific complex social challenge) to build their capacity for stretch collaboration.

3. A one-hour lecture on “Collaborating with the Enemy” for audiences of 100 or more. This lecture, consisting of a 30 minute presentation (or interview) followed by 30 minutes of questions and answers, can be delivered in person or via videoconference or webinar.

ADAM’S BIOGRAPHY

Adam Kahane is a Director of Reos Partners, an international social enterprise that helps people move forward together on their most important and intractable issues.


During the early 1990s, Adam was head of Social, Political, Economic and Technological Scenarios for Royal Dutch Shell in London. He has held strategy and research positions with Pacific Gas and Electric Company (San Francisco), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (Paris), the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (Vienna), the Institute for Energy Economics (Tokyo), and the Universities of Oxford, Toronto, British Columbia, California, and the Western Cape.

Adam has a B.Sc. in Physics (First Class Honours) from McGill University, an M.A. in Energy and Resource Economics from the University of California, and an M.A. in Applied Behavioural Science from Bastyr University.

PRAISE FOR ADAM’S BOOKS

“Kahane writes with humility, sharing what he has learned from both his successes and failures over a long career dedicated to helping address some of the world’s toughest problems. Collaborating with the Enemy offers practical guidance for how to work with diverse others, which is a precondition for confronting many of the complex challenges we face.”—Morris Rosenberg, President, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation; former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada

“Adam Kahane worked with us on the future of our country. The four scenarios we built have come to life one after another, and today we are living the best one. In Transformative Scenario Planning, Kahane explains how scenario planning can transform the future. In Colombia we can attest that such transformation is really possible.”—Juan Manuel Santos, president of Colombia; winner, Nobel Peace Prize

“Power and Love is a profound book that offers us a wise way to negotiate our toughest group, community, and societal challenges.”—William Ury, Distinguished Senior Fellow, Harvard Negotiation Project; co-author, Getting to Yes

“Solving Tough Problems is a breakthrough book that addresses the central challenge of our time: finding a way to work together to solve the problems we have created.”—Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa; winner, Nobel Peace Prize

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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