

**We must be prepared to be surprised.**

*Martin Buber*

**'You are a very irritating person,' said the Rocket, 'and very ill bred. I hate people who talk about themselves, as you do, when one wants to talk about oneself, as I do.'**

Oscar Wilde, *The Complete Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde*

# “CONVERSATIONAL NARCISSISM”

Charles Derber

# COMMON CONVERSATIONAL PATTERNS

In the face of a partner's different interpretation:

"All interpretations are equally valid"

**Self silencing**

"Different people have different beliefs and therefore come up with different interpretations"

"Awesome interpretation. I agree"

*Let us talk about something else*

# COMMON CONVERSATIONAL NORMS

**AGREE** with  
interpretation



Provide  
**SUPPORT** to  
**strengthen**  
interpretation

**DISAGREE** with  
interpretation



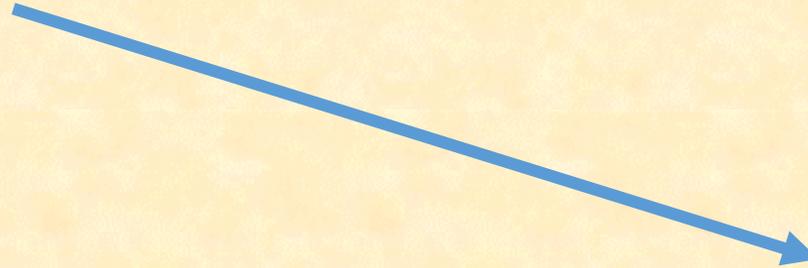
**CHALLENGE**  
interpretation to  
**raise doubt**

# NORMS for 'GOOD' LEARNING

**AGREE** with  
interpretation



Provide  
**SUPPORT** to  
**strengthen**  
interpretation



**CHALLENGE**  
interpretation to  
help **STRENGTHEN** it

# NORMS for 'GOOD' LEARNING

**DISAGREE** with  
interpretation

Provide  
**SUPPORT** to  
strengthen  
interpretation

**CHALLENGE**  
interpretation to  
help **strengthen** it

**HAVRUTA- HAVER- COMPANIONSHIP**

# **Journal Writing**

**What did I learn from using the prompts for supporting/challenging?**

**What did the practices of supporting/challenging afford and constrain?**

Rabbi Yirmiyah said in the name of **Rabbi Shimon the son of Lakish**:

**"When two scholars are amiable to each other in their discussion of halacha, the Holy One, blessed be He, gives heed to them" . . .**

Rabbi Abba said in the name of **Rabbi Shimon the son of Lakish**:

**"When two scholars pay heed to each other in halacha, the Holy One, blessed be He, listens to their voice . . . But if they do not do thus, they cause the *Shechina* to depart from Israel."**

*Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 63a.*

## **Rashi**

*Two scholars are amiable to each other:* as a calm exchange of ideas, so that the scholars can learn from each other.

*When two scholars pay heed to each other:* teach one another and understand from each other.

[*Shechina* is a name used for God that indicates God's immanent presence in the world, and particularly in human relationships. Efraim Elimelech Urbach, *Chazal: Emunot VeDeot* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1979)]

Rabbi Yochanan:

**I have done good to you by bringing you under the wings of the Shechina [the divine presence]**

Resh Lakish:

**When two scholars pay heed to each other in halacha, the Holy One, blessed be He, listens to their voice . . . But if they do not do thus, they cause the *Shechina* to depart from Israel."**

וַיִּתֵּן אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, כְּכַלְתּוֹ לְדַבֵּר אֵתוֹ בְּהַר סִינַי, שְׁנֵי, לַחַת הָעֵדוּת--לַחַת אֶבֶן, כְּתוּבִים בְּאֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים.

Exodus 31:18

And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end **of speaking with him** upon mount Sinai, the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

*Rabbi Shimon the son of Lakish* asked: What is the meaning of the phrase “of speaking with him”? It can be compared to a disciple whose master taught him Torah; before the student had learned it, the teacher would recite and he would repeat, but after he had acquired the knowledge, the teacher said to him: “Come, we will both recite.” Similarly, when Moses went up to heaven, he began to recite the Torah after his Creator, but after he had learned it, God said: “Let us say it together” —hence the words “of speaking with him.”