

# Not Fake News: You Can Disagree and Get Along

*Canadian philosopher claims that even in today's world of post-truth politics, alternative facts and fake news, disagreements need not escalate to incivility, hatred or violence*

## Six Steps to Better Thinking by Dr. Christopher DiCarlo

Dr. Christopher DiCarlo, executive director of The Critical Thinking Project and philosophy lecturer at the University of Toronto, is on a mission to reintroduce the idea of *civil disagreement*. In his new book, *Six Steps to Better Thinking: How to Disagree and Get Along*, he outlines critical thinking skills developed over centuries by philosophers, mathematicians, logicians, scientists and writers and distills them into six steps that will empower readers to have meaningful discussions about important issues, disagree entirely and not hate the other person.

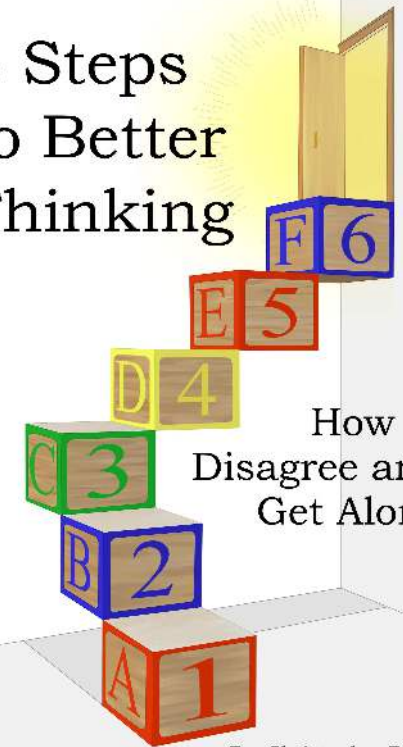
"It's easy to agree and get along. But we have forgotten how to value and use the art of disagreement in civil and political discourse," says Dr. DiCarlo. "We need to accept it's okay to be diametrically opposed to another's viewpoints and still be their neighbor, friend, in-law, or co-worker. It has become quite fashionable today to claim that what people 'feel' about issues should be taken as seriously as the facts about issues. It's not as though a person's feelings are not to be validated; they are. However, one's feelings should only be validated up and until the point where they conflict with the facts. And so it's time to make facts and critical thinking sexy again."

In *Six Steps to Better Thinking*, Dr. DiCarlo explains how the skills of critical thinking provide us with the capacity to be mature, diplomatic and fair and allow us to disagree in a civilized manner. He says that developing such skills will not happen overnight—it is something that is generational. Critical thinking takes time to practice, which is a difficult concept in today's "age of immediacy," and is perhaps one of the reasons why so many people are feeling their way through issues rather than critically thinking about them.

The book cites practices used during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, including excessive use of "echo chambers," a media term indicating the uncritical way in which unchecked and untrue information can be stated over and over again until it appears to be factual. Once "fake news" becomes accepted as factual, it feeds on confirmation bias and becomes entrenched in the minds of people who want to believe it to be true. However, in attempting to respond to and correct the falsities, those who wish to fact check such claims often come under attack as belonging to a grand conspiracy, trying to suppress the truth.

Dr. DiCarlo writes that after learning the six steps, you will more effectively communicate what it is you believe and why it is you believe it, so that people will have an easier time understanding you. You will be empowered with the ability to better understand what people are saying and to know why it is they are saying it. Learning these skills will lead to more civilized disagreement, allowing readers to value discourse over hatred, dialogue over violence, and most importantly, fairness and understanding in our disagreements on important issues.

## 6 Steps to Better Thinking



Dr. Christopher DiCarlo

### BOOK DETAILS

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## News tie-ins & core messages

- Make America Civilly Disagree again
- Post-truth politics: How conspiracy theories are used to further agendas
- Structuring your argument for discourse with anti-vaxxers, climate change deniers, and flat Earthers
- Be aware when someone is attempting to make their claim impervious to scrutiny and criticism
- Understanding our biological vs. cultural biases
- Finding common ground with others when you have extreme polar views

## About the Author

**Dr. Christopher DiCarlo** is a philosopher, educator and author. He has been an invited speaker at numerous conferences worldwide, and has published scholarly papers on topics ranging from bioethics to cognitive evolution. Dr. DiCarlo is a past Visiting Research Scholar at Harvard University in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. He is the recipient of several awards including Canadian Humanist of the Year and TV Ontario's "Big Ideas" Best Lecturer in Ontario Award. He holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Waterloo, and his M.A. and B.A. in philosophy from the University of Guelph.

Dr. DiCarlo is also the Principal of Critical Thinking Solutions, an educational consulting business for individuals, corporations and not-for-profits in both the private and public sectors. Dr. DiCarlo is the executive director of The Critical Thinking Project, an international education program that teaches students and teachers critical thinking skills. His program has been adopted in schools in Canada, Guatemala, Rwanda, Uganda and Ghana. *Six Steps to Better Thinking* (FriesenPress, 2017) is his third book for the general public, following *How to Become a Really Good Pain in the Ass* (Prometheus Books, 2011) and *A Practical Guide to Thinking Critically* (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2007). Learn more at [www.sixstepstobetterthinking.com](http://www.sixstepstobetterthinking.com).

## Praise for the book

"Thinking better, disagreeing while getting along: Now more than ever, the world needs to enhance these virtues, and Christopher DiCarlo's book is a superb place to start.

—Steven Pinker, Johnstone Professor of Psychology, Harvard University, and author of *How the Mind Works* and *The Better Angels of Our Nature*

"This is a great read, as thoughtful as it is important. It will be incredibly helpful for professionals and laypeople in organizing and clarifying their thinking. My prayer is that a copy is sent to every politician."

—Michael Ruse, Lucyle T. Werkmeister Professor and Director of the History and Philosophy of Science Program at Florida State University

**Media Contact:** Elena Meredith, 512-481-7096, [elena@prbythebook.com](mailto:elena@prbythebook.com)



Author Dr. Christopher DiCarlo

[www.sixstepstobetterthinking.com](http://www.sixstepstobetterthinking.com)

"Christopher DiCarlo has come up with an easy-to-read and very helpful guide to good reasoning. It's packed with interesting and important examples, as well as useful tips about what makes a good—and a bad—argument. A lot of people can benefit from *Six Steps to Better Thinking*."

—Jan Narveson, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Department of Philosophy, University of Waterloo

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