

Theory without practice becomes abstraction. Practice without theory becomes reaction.
Democratic progress requires both.

FOUR TRADITIONS, ONE METHOD

PHILOSOPHY

What is true - and what should be?

Clarifies concepts, values, assumptions, and ends.

SCIENCE

What does the evidence show?

Tests claims through observation, comparison, and revision.

DEMOCRACY

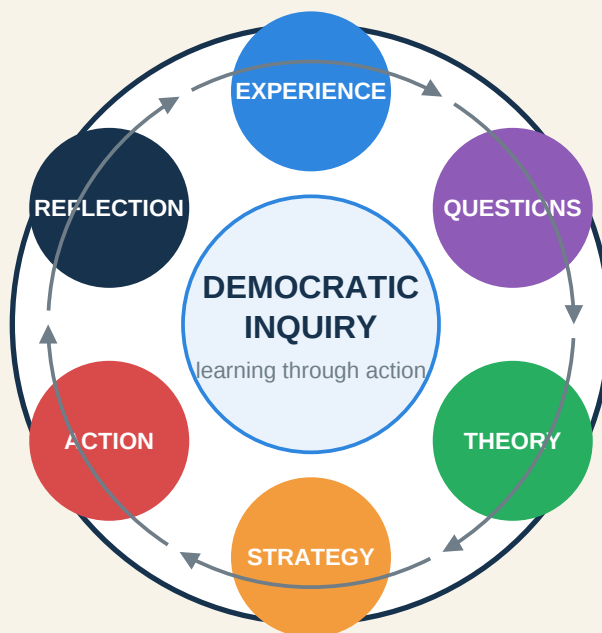
What should we decide together?

Turns inquiry into public judgment, dialogue, and collective choice.

SOCIAL CHANGE

How do ideas become history?

Connects analysis to organization, power, and transformative action.



A LONG HISTORICAL THREAD

- **ARISTOTLE**
Knowledge joins reflection to practical judgment.
- **MARX**
Interpretation matters when it informs transformation.
- **DEWEY**
Ideas are tools tested in experience and public problem-solving.
- **GRAMSCI**
Political action requires an understanding of power and common sense.
- **FREIRE**
Reflection and action together form praxis - the practice of freedom.
- **CRITICAL THEORY**
Inquiry asks not only what exists, but what blocks emancipation.

WHEN THEORY BREAKS FREE OF PRACTICE

It hardens into jargon, detachment, and explanations that cannot guide action.

WHEN PRACTICE BREAKS FREE OF THEORY

It becomes reactive, repetitive, and vulnerable to the assumptions of the status quo.

THE DSF GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Begin with experience. Ask better questions. Build explanations. Act collectively. Learn from results. Revise.