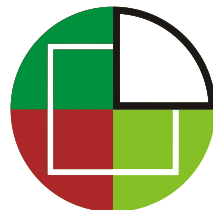# RETROSPECTIVE DECAY

*"Never forget where you came from and
never take your eyes off where you want to go."*

Frank Saucier, Executive and Agile Coach
FrankS@FreeStandingAgility.com
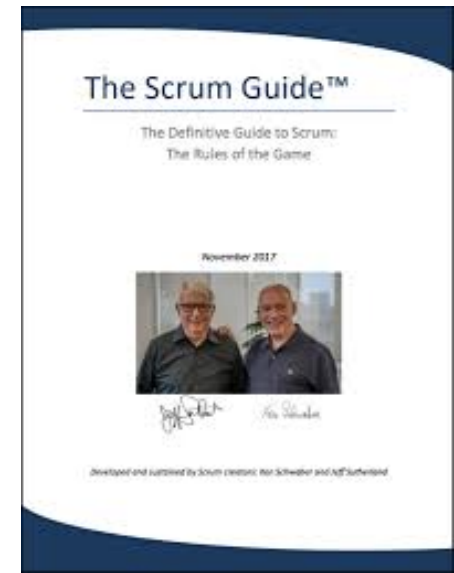
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Show of Hands

Sprint Retrospective

"An opportunity for the Scrum Team to inspect itself and create a plan for improvements to be enacted during the next Sprint."
(The Scrum Guide, page 14)

Let's Check In On Our Retrospectives

Go to the board and answer the following questions.

1. How long are your sprints?
2. How often do you hold Retros?
3. How long are your Retros?

When done, head back to your seat.

Does your team get value out of your Retros?

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Retrospective Decay

The decline of value in Sprint Retrospectives.

If the Retro is a consistently low value event, there is a high probability of it decaying to not being held at all.

Has anyone stopped holding their Retros?

What I've Seen Impact Retro Value

- Senior leader beliefs and behaviors
- Functional manager beliefs and behaviors
- Team training, launching, and coaching
- Previous Retro experiences
- Scrum Master toolbox
- Scrum Master courage

What have you seen impact Retro value?

Are Leaders Signaling for Help?

"They don't need a Retro, Their manager will help them get better."

"We fix things all the time. We don't need a meeting to do that."

"They can do that when the project is over."

"I was in the Retros and they never said there was anything wrong."

What have you heard from leaders?

Are Teams Signaling for Help?

"Do we need to hold the Retro every Sprint?"

"Can we cut it down to half the time?"

"We have a lot of meetings. Can we make it optional?"

"We keep doing the Retro the same way each time. It's boring.
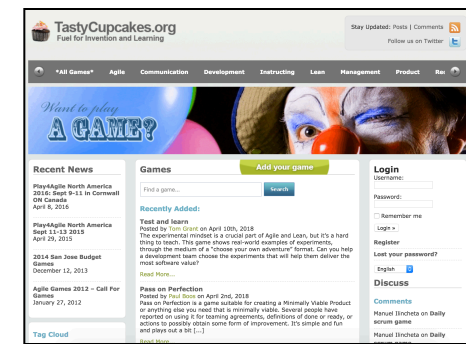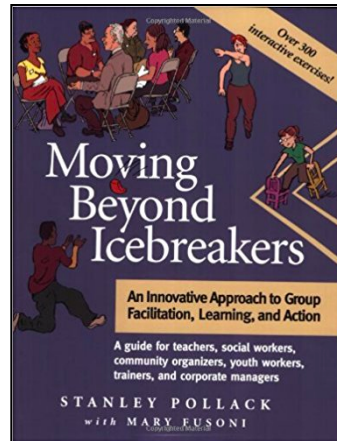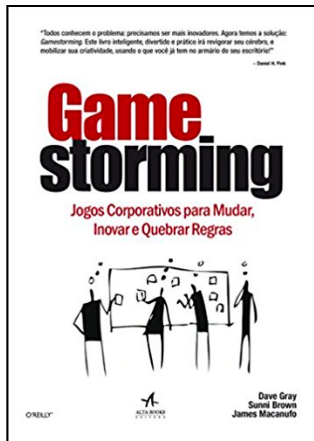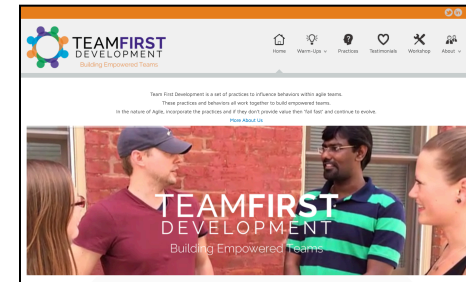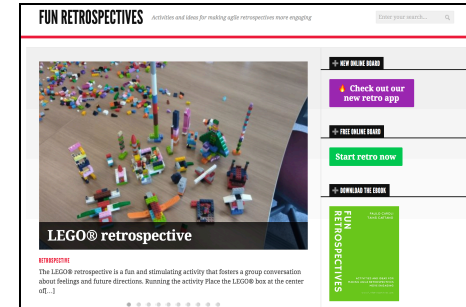
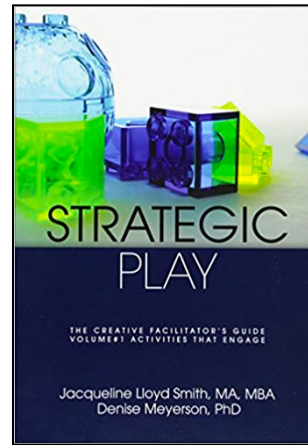## What have you heard from teams?

Does Scrum Induce a Limiting Belief?

"The purpose of the Sprint Retrospective is to inspect how the last Sprint went with regards to people, relationships, process, and tools."
(The Scrum Guide, page 14)

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Is There a Shortage of Retro Techniques?
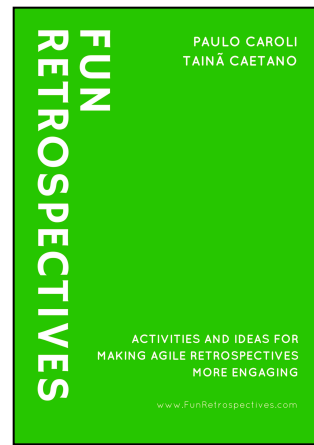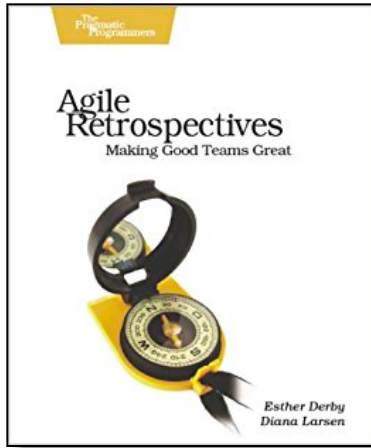
What Can We Do to Increase Value?

Sprint

+

Sprint Retrospective: An opportunity for the Scrum Team to inspect itself and create a plan for improvements to be enacted during the next Sprint.

Compass: An instrument used for navigation that shows your direction relative to four primary directions.

Introducing the Retrospective Compass

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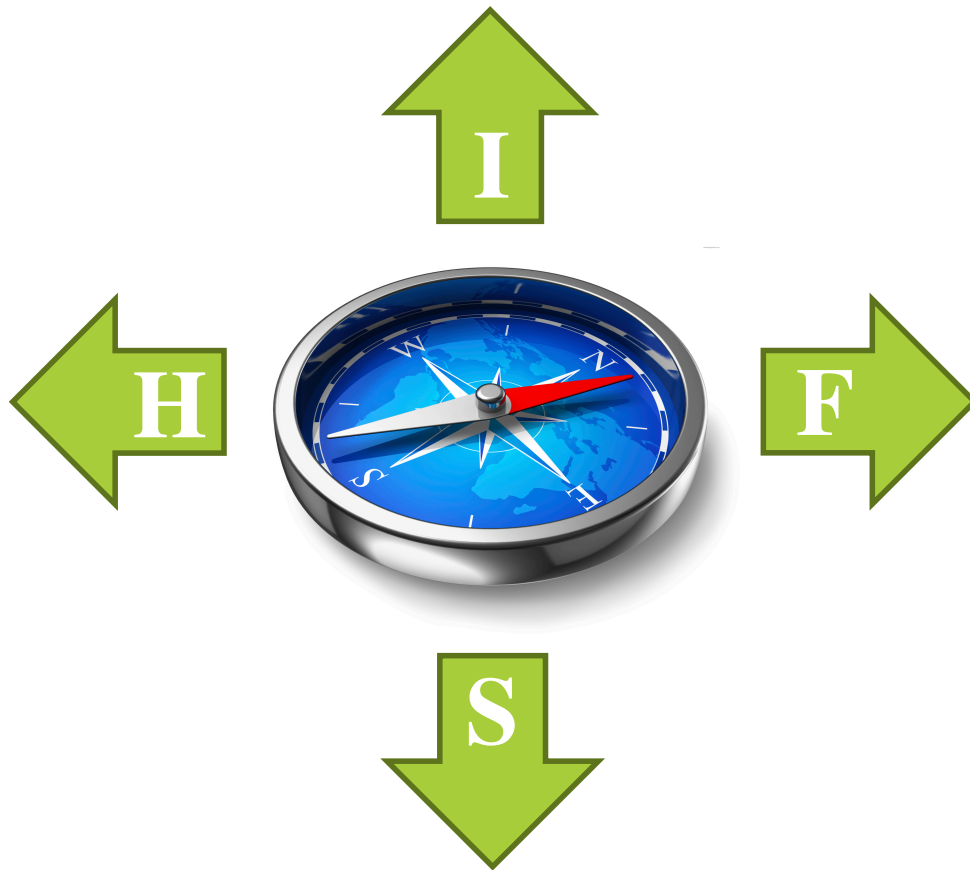
An opportunity for the Scrum Team to increase the value of their Retros by leveraging the event to enact improvements relative to four primary improvement directions.

The Historical Perspective

What are some things that happened in your latest sprint?

Historical ← **H** [compass image]

Traditional Retrospective
(Inspect and Adapt)

Compass Suggestions:
- Plug into the Retro resources and try new techniques.
- Hold the Retro in a different location (outside, cafeteria, coffee shop).
- Rotate who runs the Retro (team members, SM from other team).

The Future Perspective

What are some things that your team needs to get ready for?

Possibility based
(Look Ahead and Prepare)

F → **Future**

Compass Suggestions:
- Look ahead to what's coming in next 3-6 months and use Retro to prepare.
- Invite experts to the Retro to teach the team what they need to learn.
- Define learning stories and work on them as a team in the Retro.

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The Invest Perspective

Invest

I

Need based
(Select and Do)

What are some things that your team never makes time for?

Compass Suggestions:
- Work on the team's top 5 Knowledge Transfer goals in the Retro.
- Work on the product's top 5 Technical Debt items in the Retro.
- Spend time in the Retro doing what the team needs (fun time, down time).

The Solve Perspective

Compass Suggestions:
- Hold cross-team problem solving sessions in your Retro.
- Hold cross-team share out sessions in your Retro.
- Hold root cause analysis sessions in your Retro.

Problem based
(Focus and Problem Solve)

S

Solve

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What are some problems that your team needs to solve?

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Retro as Continuous Improvement Event

Invest

I

Keep Retros fresh by changing formats and perspectives.

Spend time doing things that are valuable to the team.

Historical

H

F

Future

Solve bigger problems than what happened in the last sprint.

Help the team prepare for things that are headed their way.

S

Solve

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Parting Tips on Growing Retro Value

- **Consider the Retrospective compass** when planning and running Retros.

- **Grow your toolbox** of Retro techniques.

- **Use your Scrum Master community as a lab** for trying new Retro techniques and building courage.

- **Ask your team** what would make their Retro time more valuable.

Wrap it Up

How will you use tonight's info to make your Retrospectives more valuable?