



# Insights Pack

**"Escaping the echo chamber; the power of thinking differently"**

Diversity Coffee Connect Series  
29th August 2024



# How to use this pack

- ▶ Use this pack as part of your reflective practice, relating to your leadership development.
- ▶ Reflect on the session theme; using the **Our Focus** page to:
  - ▶ Ask yourself the **questions offered for consideration**
  - ▶ Choose one or more **blogs or resources** offered to help you reflect on the questions
- ▶ Read the **Enablers and Opportunities word-cloud** and **Call to Action** page to explore the themes, ideas, comments and take away points from the participants who attended the live event

## Finally ask yourself:

- ▶ What have I learned from this experience, in the moment and now?
- ▶ What one thing will I do differently going forward?
- ▶ How can I commit to the actions I identified?

## About Diversity Coffee Connect

Watch our 2 min animation on the aim and purpose of this programme

**Have you heard  
about our  
Diversity Coffee  
Connect  
programme?**



- ▶ Watch the video [here](#).

# Our focus

In this session, we were inspired by Matthew Syed's book "Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking" to discuss the power of 'cognitive diversity' – the ability to think differently about the world around us.

Syed's book explores how to harness our unique perspective, become more creative and collaborate in a world becoming more interconnected. He suggests that broadening our perspectives is a way to escape our "echo chambers" - and that by broadening our definition of diversity, we can unlock new ways to solve problems collectively.

## Reflective questions

- Can you think of a time you were in a meeting where everyone thought the same? What was the outcome?
- Can you think of a time where disagreement felt uncomfortable at the time but ended up with a better outcome?
- What can we do to welcome more cognitive diversity in our decision-making?
- What does inclusive leadership look like? What enables you to bring your own rebel ideas to the table?

## Resources offered for consideration



5-min audio summary of "Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking" by Matthew Syed – [Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking - Matthew Syed](#)



6-minute watch - [Pursuing Cognitive Diversity with Matthew Syed - YouTube](#)



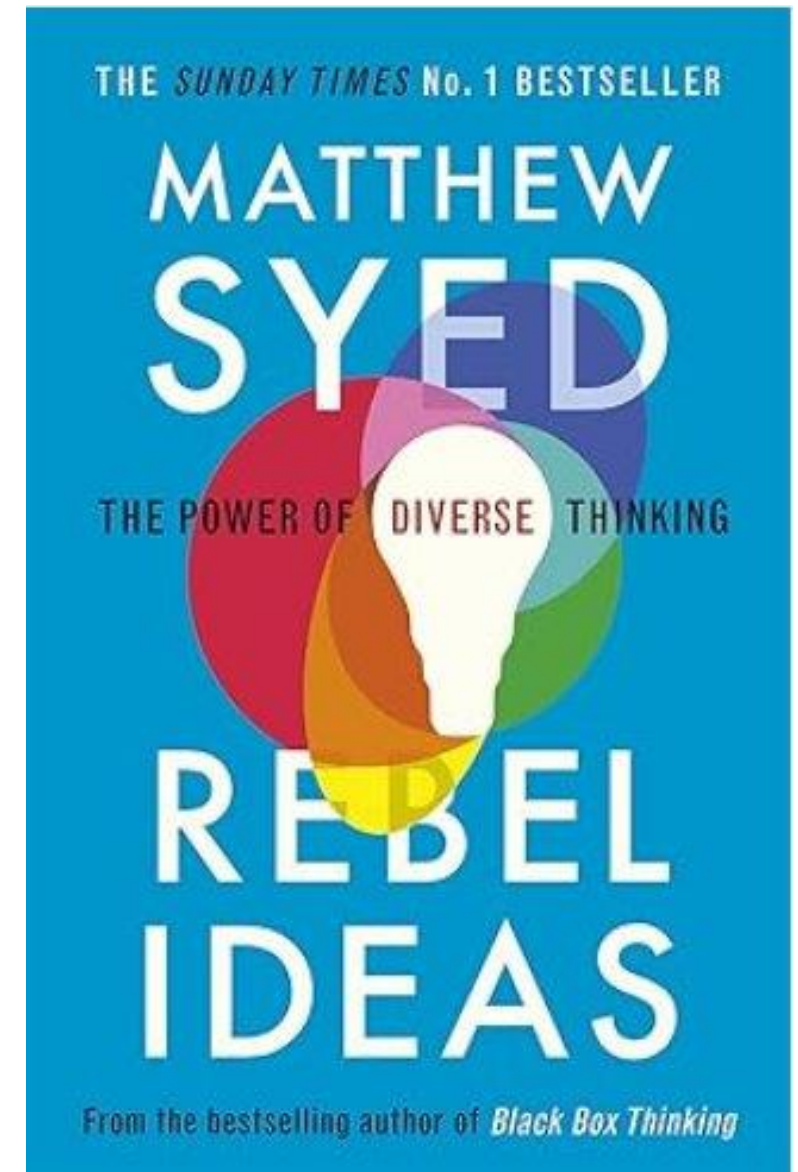
1-min watch - [Groupthink | Ethics Defined - YouTube](#)



26-minute listen – [Diverse Thinking and Rebel Ideas with Matthew Syed | Amazing If](#)

# Matthew Syed: Rebel Ideas

- Examines the power of 'cognitive diversity' – the ability to think differently about the world around us. Explores how to harness our unique perspectives, pool our collective intelligence and tackle the greatest challenges of our age.
- We tend to underestimate the extent to which we can learn from people with different perspectives and points of view.
- Argues that *“Diversity is often regarded as a politically correct distraction, an issue of morality and social justice but not of performance or innovation. It is often debated in vague terms, people talking past each other. Our conception of diversity is not just incomplete but radically defective.”*



# Our insights from the book

Click on the image to watch the recording (11 minutes)



LEADING TO CHANGE  
**DIVERSITY COFFEE CONNECT**

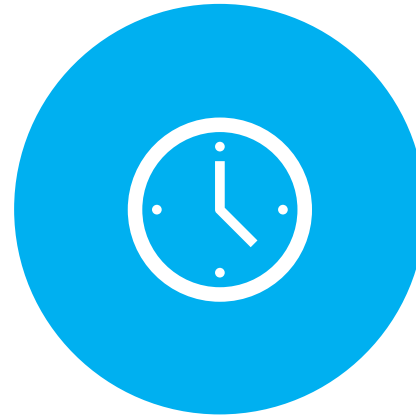
VIRTUAL EVENT

# Group discussions

We invited our community to explore what this means for us, and what practical learning we can take away using breakout groups to enable real conversations and connections.



5 BREAKOUT ROOMS



TIME IN BREAK OUT  
ROOM: 25 **MINUTES**



EVENT DURATION: **60  
MINUTES**

# What stands out for you? What would you like to explore further?



[View responses in plain text](#)

# Call to action (I)

We collectively identified over 35 actions and insights, relating to 'one thing we can do' following our session.

Use questions to invite in diverse thoughts

Welcome challenge!

Use recruitment practices to increase diversity

Importance of leadership

Be aware of our own assumptions

Ok to try & fail, reset & try again

Find the constructive ideas behind the emotions

Leader speaks last

Speak up, ask questions

Diversity in leadership need to be opened up to a broader understanding of who our leaders are.



# Call to action (II)

We collectively identified over 35 actions and insights, relating to *'one thing we can do'* following our session

Empowering others  
to embrace diverse  
perspectives

Difference is okay

The power of the  
first follower

It's easy to all agree when  
under pressure

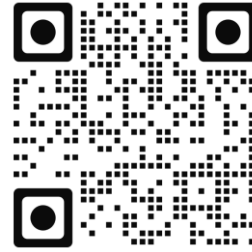
Role-  
modelling

Roles stay at  
the door!

Enable the environment to  
encourage openness

Be brave and be the  
person to be different &  
ask the questions

# Moving forward



Scan for  
events



## ▶ **Tell us more** [hello@leadingtochange.scot](mailto:hello@leadingtochange.scot)

- ▶ How did you use this Insights pack? What was useful or what would you like to see?
- ▶ We would love to hear your ideas for potential topics and contributors
- ▶ Do you have thoughts and learning to share? Would you like to write a blog or know someone who could? Our team can fully support you with this.

## ▶ **To find out more**, please explore

- ▶ [Our Equalities page](#) – links and resources in relation to our Diversity Coffee Connect Series, the Allyship Hub, Leadership blogs and more.
  - ▶ [Our many leadership, sector and programme resources](#) available to read, watch and engage with from internal and external sources
- ▶ We hope to see you again soon at one of our [next events](#) – scan the QR code above to find out more



# Wellbeing support

We recognise that this session may have raised some issues that you recognise in yourself or others.

- National Wellbeing Hub: <https://wellbeinghub.scot/>
- Other national services: <https://wellbeinghub.scot/national-services/>



# Thank You!

