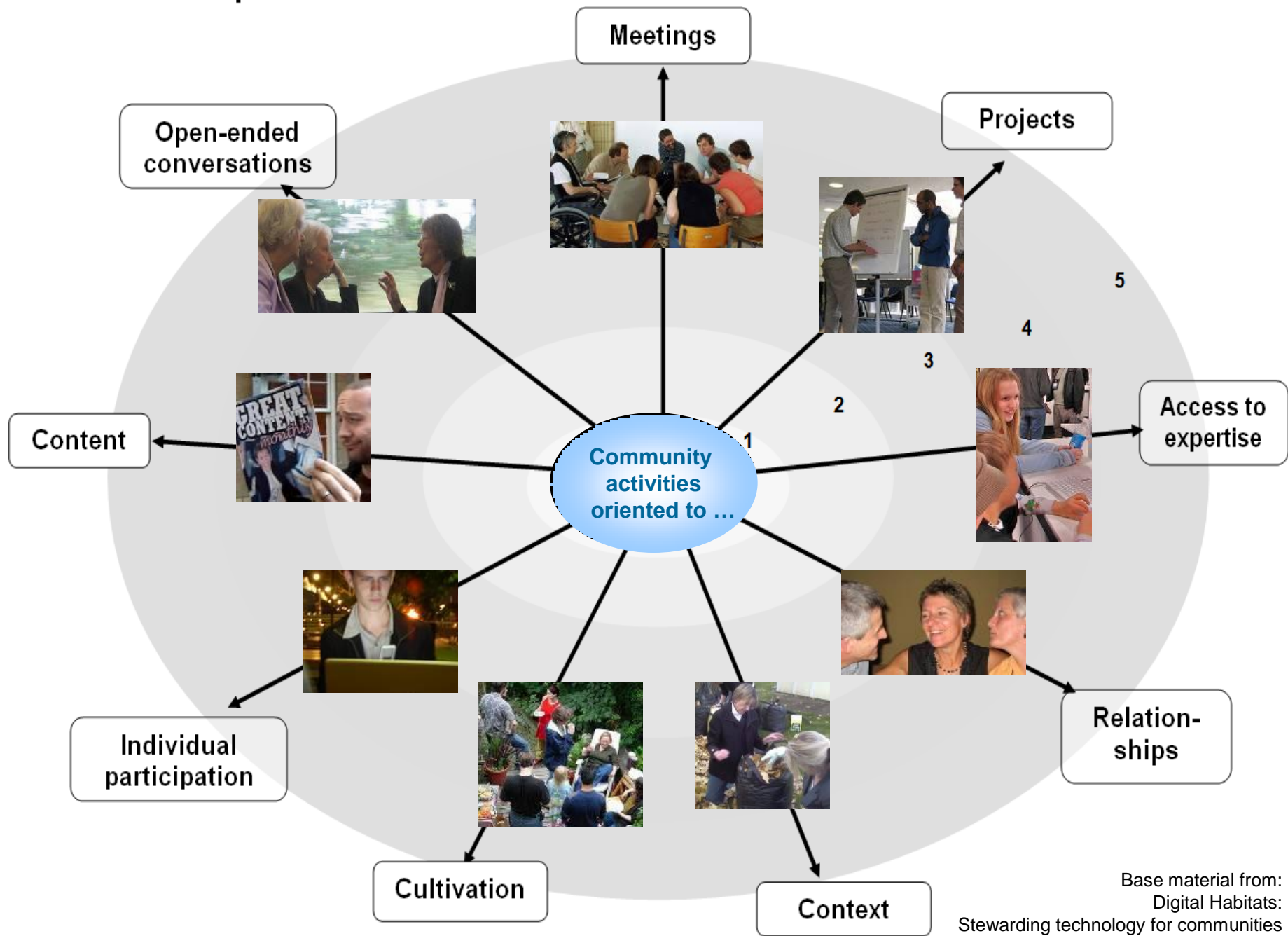# Digital Habitats Orientation Spidergram Activity

From: Digital Habitats: stewarding technology for communities
Etienne Wenger, Nancy White & John. D. Smith, 2009
http://www.technologyforcommunities.com

Meetings

Projects

Open-ended conversations

Access to expertise

Content

Community activities oriented to …

1 2 3 4 5

Relation-ships

Individual participation

Cultivation

Context

Base material from:
Digital Habitats:
Stewarding technology for communities
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Orientations
What do they mean?
(And you may have different orientations!)

- **Meetings** – in person or online gatherings with an agenda (i.e. monthly topic calls); webinars
- **Projects** – interrelated tasks with specific outcomes or products (i.e. Identifying a new practice and refining it.) Time delimited.
- **Access to expertise** – learning from experienced practitioners (i.e. access to subject matter experts)
- **Relationship** – getting to know each other (i.e. the annual potluck dinner! Profiles.)
- **Context** – private, internally-focused or serving an organization, or the wider world (i.e. what is kept within the community, what is shared with the wider world) Towards the center is inward…

- **Community cultivation** – Recruiting, orienting and supporting members, growing the community (i.e. who made sure you're the new person was invited in and met others?)
- **Individual participation** – enabling members to craft their own experience of the community (i.e. access material when and how you want it. Tool choices.)
- **Content** – a focus on capturing and publishing what the community learns and knows (i.e. a newsletter, publishing an article, etc.)
- **Open ended conversation** – conversations that continue to rise and fall over time without a specific goal (i.e. listserv or web forum, Twitter, etc.)
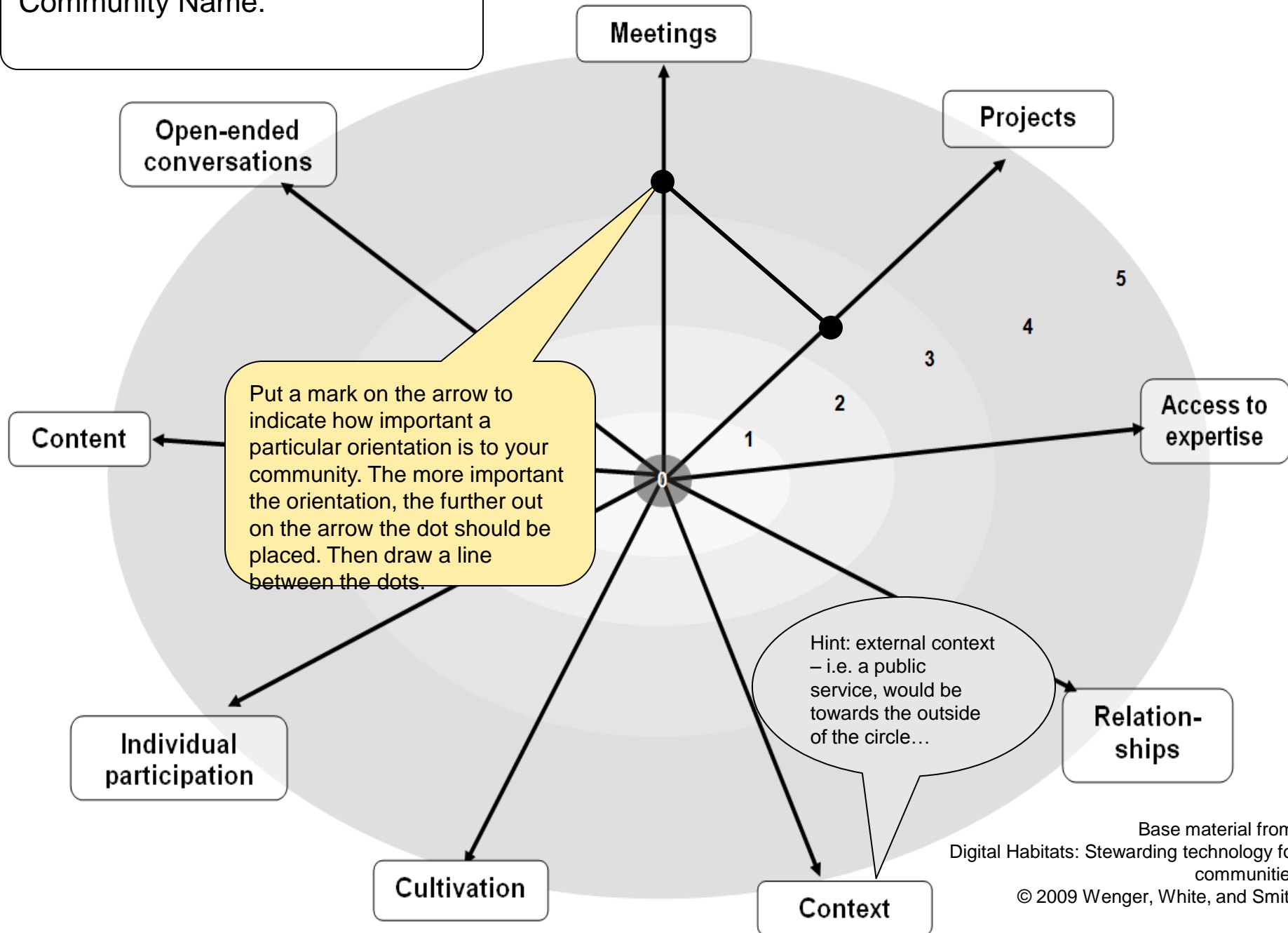
Orientations
What **tools**? How?

- **Meetings** – Web meeting tools for online, shared calendars and wikis for planning, wikis, blogs, images/audio/video to capture and share during and after.
- **Projects** – Email lists/forums to coordinate, shared calendars, project management trackers, blogs to journal/report.
- **Access to expertise** – Online profiles, social networking sites, "yellow pages," discussion forums, blogs.
- **Relationship** – Twitter/IM to share small frequent messages, member directories, Skype/VoIp for conversation. Profile directories.
- **Context** – Public, open websites for outward facing. Password protected for inward facing groups.

- **Community cultivation** – Outward facing web sites to attract members, Twitter/IM to feel connected, Skype for voice.
- **Individual participation** – RSS/aggregators, tagging, so people can craft what content they get, customizable settings on web tools, using synch and asynch
- **Content** – content management systems, blogs, wikis, podcasts, social bookmarking, tags, video/audio, images, mindmapping.
- **Open ended conversation** – email lists, forums, Twitter, chat.

What can you do with this?

- Focus on what activities best support your community purpose. Don't try and do everything…
- Assess where your community/group/team is now in terms of design, facilitation and technology stewardship.
  - Refocus activities to increase engagement
  - Identify tools and processes to support current activities
- Identify where your group wants to go as a planning tool.
- Look backwards and forwards as a reflection tool.

Community Name:

Meetings

Projects

Open-ended conversations

5

4

3

2

1

Access to expertise

Content

Put a mark on the arrow to indicate how important a particular orientation is to your community. The more important the orientation, the further out on the arrow the dot should be placed. Then draw a line between the dots.

Hint: external context – i.e. a public service, would be towards the outside of the circle…

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