

**Paths Forward (PF)**  
If I'm mistaken, and someone else is correct and willing to tell me, how can they correct me? Is there a good mechanism available?

This diagram doesn't explain everything. For more details, see <https://fallibleideas.com/paths-forward> and its links.

by Elliot Temple, 2019

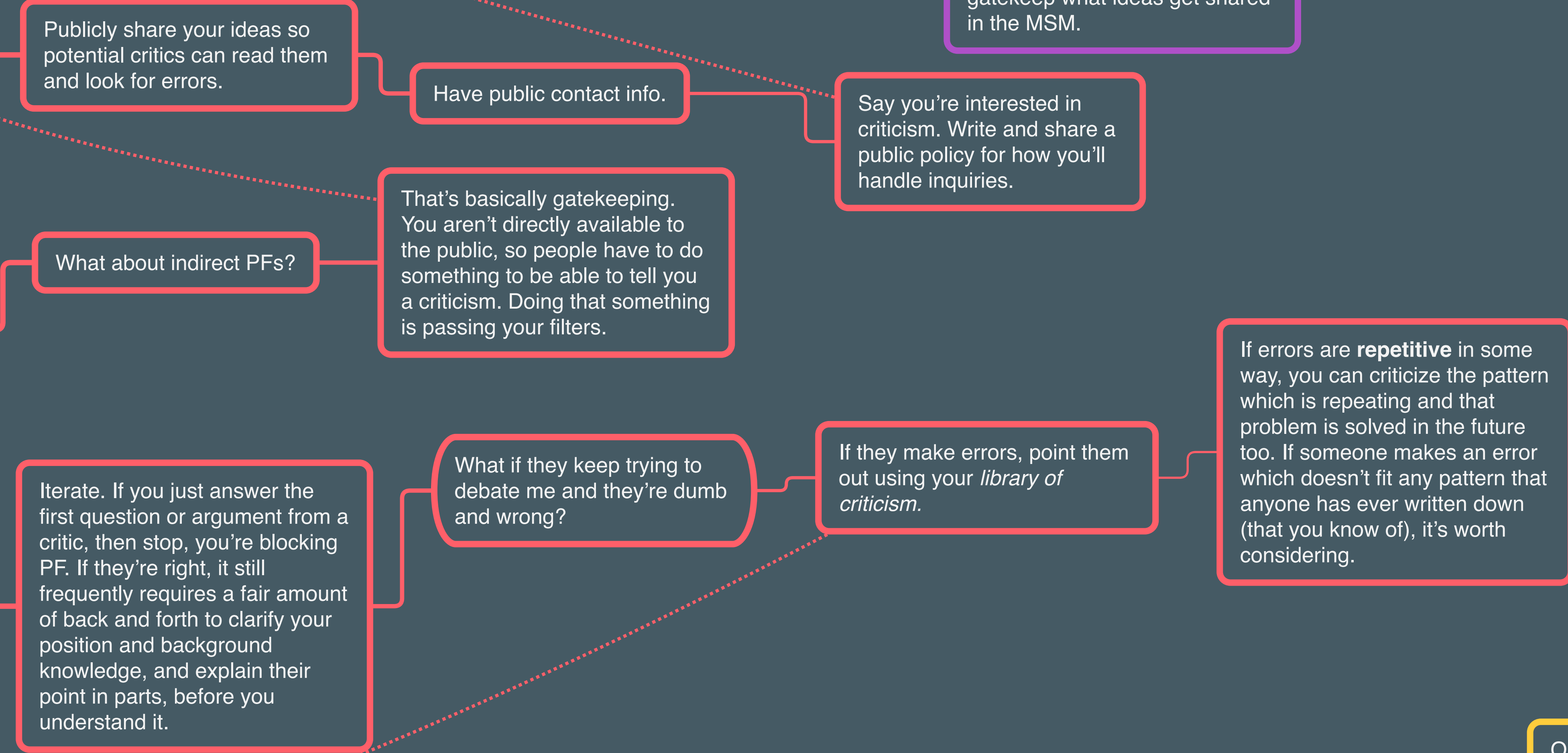
PF for *everything* or just for uncertain stuff?

PF has a dual purpose. Maybe you're mistaken. Maybe your critic is mistaken. Either way, someone gets to learn. If you don't do PF, people can't learn why you're right. They need answers to their doubts, questions, objections and criticisms to be persuaded to agree with you.

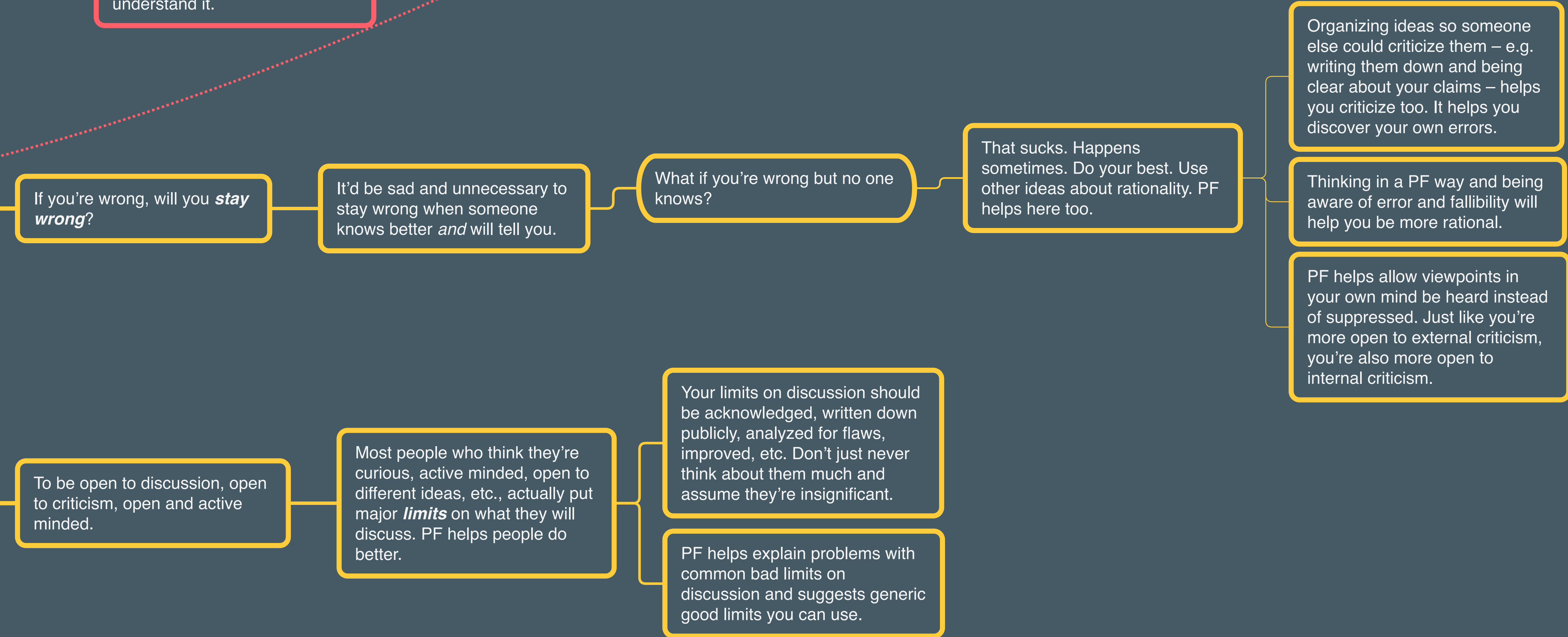
What makes a good PF mechanism?



How to PF?



Why PF?



Dumb people will try to correct me with wrong ideas.

Share the results of all PF discussions *publicly*. This lets anyone learn from them, see how clever you are, or find and point out a mistake on either side of the discussion.

You could be wrong about *anything*. If no one can think of an error with an idea, like 2+2, then you won't get criticism of it. Have PF for everything just in case. Big upside if you get a correction on an idea you were really sure of. No downside to be open to corrections on ideas you never get any criticism of.

And what about *unimportant* issues?

What if I get stupid criticisms of 2+2=4 from crackpots?

And you can make an important error about an unimportant issue. Lots of errors are important even though the topic isn't important. That's because you make the same error on many topics, so it has a big effect.

You can be mistaken about how important issues are. It's common, when mistaken about an issue, also to be mistaken about that issue is. There's something about the issue you don't understand, hence the mistake.

You need a *library of criticism*. That's like an advanced FAQ.

