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AI Practitioner
International Journal of Appreciative Inquiry

Vision 2030: How a South African Provocative Proposition is Igniting Active Citizenship and Collaboration

Leadership in the Appreciative Paradigm

Edited by
Dan Saint and Joep C. de Jong

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Welcome to August 2016 issue of *AI Practitioner*

Today is Friday, June 24th 2016 and, upon waking up this morning, I heard that the majority of the British people had voted "No", which means that the United Kingdom will be no longer part of the European Union.

I was born in 1962, in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, a town that only a couple of decades before had been reduced to ashes during the early days of World War II. My generation has been incredibly blessed: we have been living all our lives in peace, security, and unprecendented health and wealth. Thanks to Europe. And now Europe doesn't seem to be "good enough" anymore for a lot of people.

We are faced with complexity, and we don't know what lies ahead of us. There seems to be a call for "strong leaders", like Erdogan, Putin, Trump, Johnson, Wilders, Le Pen: reincarnations of John Wayne, saddling up, riding into town to settle things on their own. Shoot first, ask questions later.

This issue of *AI Practitoner* is about a different kind of leadership, the kind of leadership which asks questions first, so we don't have to shoot at all. This issue is about relational and appreciative leadership. It is about curiosity, about bridging differences between people, about collaboration and bringing out the best in people.

This issue is also about the effects of a leadership which acknowledges people: in a pharmaceutical company, in a city administration, working with homeless people, stories that unfold in South Africa, South-East Asia, The Netherlands, the USA and elsewhere.

Since the late 1930s, the affirmative topic in our field of appreciative interventionism has been: "How can we create more knowledge about the constructive forces in groups and in our societies?" (Kurt Lewin) This question is gaining importance again. It is my dream for AI Practitioner to be a platform for stories that will provide us with hope and perspective. I would like to invite you all to share stories about events from which we can learn how we can enhance the constructive forces in our communities, stories about curiosity and social innovation.

I want to thank Dan Saint and Joep de Jong for their wonderful work: bringing together all the stories in this issue. Shelagh Aitken, as always, has been the editor, and, as always, has done a great job.

Wick van der Vaart
Editor-in-Chief
AI Practitioner

Inside this issue

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AI Practitioner

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Joep C. de Jong

Joep C. de Jong is Founder of JLS International (JLS), associate of the TAOS Institute and member of the council of Instituto IDEIA. He uses AI in day-to-day business and has developed a special interest in what he calls 'The Soul of the Appreciative Leader, A Social Construct?', also the potential title of his Ph.D. thesis.
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Leadership in the Appreciative Paradigm

Together over the years, Dan and Joep have spent many hours sharing stories of applying AI and other social constructionist practices as leaders and action researchers in several organizations. Now, as guest editors of this issue of AI Practitioner, they have had the opportunity to invite others from across the globe into that dialogue. And, as you will experience, what a dialogue!

What a joy this work has been! You are in store for an abundance of thinking – some evocative, some provocative – from a broad spectrum of exceptional leaders and theorists. The contributors are a mix of practitioners, scholar–practitioners and scholars representing a global diversity of ideas. We are thrilled to present perspectives from several outstanding first-time contributors to *AI Practitioner* and equally honored to be able to share work from some who have made significant contributions that have shaped our community over the long-term.

The soul of the appreciative leader

In his Ph.D. dissertation research (*In Search of the Soul of the Appreciative Leader*), Joep is interviewing and filming a broad range of people cited by others as appreciative leaders. They span multiple walks of life, numerous types of organizations and several continents. What has emerged as figural for him is that while many of them may not even have heard of the concept of appreciative leadership, all had a natural awareness of what it meant to lead appreciatively. His film style seems to reach into the souls of those he interviews. (See the Resources column for a link to some of the films.) South African CEO Miles Crisp of Tarsus shared the idea of care and growth. Renowned ballet and tango dancer Charlotte Baines described the dance as only existing in the moment, yet in the moment the dance partners are sharing, inspiring and moving as one. General John Le Moyne, an infantry leader of elite military operations units, was the only participant that, when asked his hope for the future, emotionally responded: "world peace."

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The idea of the individual dancer is an illusion in tango.

As we trekked along our guest editor journey, we found ourselves stretching to expand our conversation beyond the initial topic of appreciative leadership. Our first chat with leadership sage Sunil Maheshwari from India was pivotal in developing the theme for this issue.

Tango and leading in an appreciative paragidm

Joep shared a story with Sunil and Dan about his recent experience of becoming a leader… in tango dancing. The story perfectly illuminated what we meant by leading in an appreciative paradigm. In tango, the dance of leading and following begins at the moment of the invitation and proceeds with the leader and follower engaged in embrace. The expression of the tango – the outcome – flows from relationship, mutual values and a shared vision. The dance is an act of connecting and trusting. It requires both to listen – to pay real attention to the other – and to pay attention to the rhythm, even before the first step is taken.

Here is the creation of the appreciative space in which a successful dance, including missteps, can unfold. Regardless of which partner is designated as the lead and which is the follow, the tango equally requires both roles. Neither follower nor leader can exist as a dancer without the other. The idea of the individual dancer is an illusion in tango – the dancers, and the dance, only exist in the moment of relationship. So, the story for the dance clarified our direction. We shifted from a focus on appreciative leaders per se toward leading in an appreciative paradigm. Here, there was an acknowledgment that all participants are important and have meaningful influence over organizational results. And, an appreciative paradigm offered a more generative topical area.

Supporting transformative leadership in a university

In our dialogic dance, Dan connected the ideas of invitation, listening and shared vision to other appreciative leaders. He has been working with a humble, transformational leader, Melody Biancetto, vice president for Finance at the University of Virginia. Recently, she invited about 220 people into a dance of setting the organization's strategic direction using Appreciative Inquiry (AI). From December of 2015 through March of this year, her team enthusiastically developed a core mission statement, an aspirational shared vision and a set of core values that has set the momentum to carry them into the future.

Melody calmly took these concerns in her stride, continuously communicating and extending the invitation to work relationally.

Resistance to participating in the process was initially expressed by some team members, who challenged the organizers, saying that it was the job of the leader to develop strategy. Melody calmly took these concerns in her stride, continuously communicating and extending the invitation to work relationally. In fact, in her initial communication to her organization and stakeholders, she mentioned three goals for the strategic planning process: the first was to deepen

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The promise of social construction is that it provides an awareness that we, as humans in relationship through language, have created our current reality.

the relationships within in the organization. That was a particularly insightful and courageous goal for a CFO to espouse.

The result of this dance so far is that multiple, highly-effective teams are actively working to transform the organization and have taken the lead in improving collaboration, service excellence and employee engagement (networking, professional development, group events – and fun). With a highly communicative style, her listening skills and her empathy, Melody exhibits wisdom few leaders attain. She shows that no matter how brilliant or energetic one leader may be, a leader who can engage the collective wisdom and energy of her team increases potential positive outcomes exponentially.

Social construction: transforming the model

In conclusion, the challenge is how can we continue and even advance our progression in leveraging the underlying components of this appreciative paradigm. This requires a transformation, a major shift in how we deal with our organizations and with each other. The promise of social construction is that it provides an awareness that we, as humans in relationship through language, have created our current reality. (And that we then forget we created it.) Having that knowledge provides us the awareness and courage to boldly work toward a more desired model of a desired future.

To meet that challenge, we are going to start by reading all the wonderful articles to gain insight from appreciative, relational and other perspectives. From that insight, we will reflect on our learning, our past successes, our positive images of the future and then lead by example. We will dare to learn and actively experiment and not fear mistakes. And, we will continue to employ AI in innovative ways, as this is an active and effective application of social constructionist theory. What if leaders began to embrace the notion of leading from an appreciative paradigm? Could this hold great promise for the twenty-first century?

Now, for the exciting part, where we introduce the articles.

In "Vision 2030 – How a South African Provocative Proposition is Igniting Active Citizenship and Collaboration", Louise van Rhyn tells the story of how South Africa's future vision is fuelling active citizenship across the country. The article describes the creation of a co-action and co-learning program between business leaders and school principals that is firmly rooted in AI and has already touched 415 schools. Joep had the pleasure of meeting Louise at last year's WWAIC in Johannesburg during the leadership forum and was impressed by her initiatives, bringing education and business together to realize a better society for all.

To read more about collaboration between business leaders and school principals in South Africa,read Louise van Rhyn's article starting on page 9

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To read more about leading appreciative in a challenging urban ministry, read Barbara Thomas' article on page 15

In "Appreciative Inquiry: A Method for Daily Leadership in an Urban Ministry," Barbara Thomas offers a practitioner's very inspirational story of using AI in several ways as a director of services for the Urban Ministry Center of Charlotte, North Carolina, which serves over 400 homeless people daily. Her team is using AI in multiple ways to guide their work and lead change but, most movingly, to guide conversations with their clients. Dan has to disclose the deep gratitude and respect he has for Barbara, who is a former student in the MSOD program at the McColl School at Queens University in Charlotte, NC.

"He's Doing Less and He's Proud of It": A Conversation with Mirko Opdam and his colleagues about Appreciative Leadership. Mirko Opdams' fellow-team leaders in Amsterdam's administration often say: "In your team, it's easy to be a team leader: the people in your team are open to change and they take responsibility." Only two years before, this had not been the case at all. What did Mirko, being a relational leader applying AI, actually do to transform his team from an inward-looking, isolated group into a healthy, resilient and resourceful team?

In "Toward Relational Leading", Ken Gergen brings brilliant insight into traditional perspectives of leadership as-command-and control and, as always, offers a liberating alternative. He chronicles the imperative for a relational perspective in leading and then outlines major dimensions and some relevant practices in relational leading. Dan also has to express deep gratitude to Ken as one of the most influential teachers in his life.

"Relational Leading – Appreciating Letting Go, and Not Knowing Where You Are Going" by Mette Vinther Larsen is a beautiful submission offering a similarly liberating perspective into relational leading. She provides an insightful, compassionate observation: "…and how this – even for leaders – can be understood as a liberating endeavor." In our rush to criticize leaders operating from a command-and-control stance, we forget that it is not only followers, but leaders as well who suffer the consequences of our rigidly hierarchical constructions of management systems.

In "A Reflection on Leadership – from an Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner's Perspective", Pui Yin (Dorothy) Tsui has contributed an inspiring article around leadership as an AI practitioner from Asia. She reflects on her consulting practice and life journey in AI and connects the inspiration she has received from appreciative leadership. In a pragmatic culture and being a pragmatist herself, her clients' questions and concerns have strengthened her emphasis of the practicability of AI and appreciative leadership.

Jen Megules, in "Relationally Responsive Moments That Enable Positive Change", offers another article grounded in a social constructionist, relational

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To read Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom's article on appreciative leadership, go to page 61

perspective. Hers is another authentic example of the work of practitioners. She tells a interesting story from Novartis that highlights relational leadership in action and provides insight not only into the high points and rewards from working as an Organization Development professional, but also offers a real-life glimpse into some of the messiness and challenges of working with humans.

In "Appreciative Leaders: Is *Then* the Same as *Now*?", Marge Schiller and Jacqueline Stavros foreshadow their upcoming new edition of Appreciative Leaders (first published in 2001). The article is refreshing and insightful. Marge and Jackie are exemplars of what operating in an appreciative paradigm means. Without Jackie's support and help as a dissertation committee member, Dan would not have completed his.

In "Appreciative Leadership: Responding Relationally to the Questions of Our Time", Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom, two prolific scholars and consultants in the field of AI and appreciative leadership, provide a useful, succinct and practical guide to the field. It is a wonderful summary of some of the key thoughts from their ground-breaking book Appreciative Leadership.

We would like to use this space to thank those who contributed to the issue of *AI Practitioner* that is in front of you. And our thanks goes also to those whose articles, for a variety of reasons, did not materialize. Nevertheless they were an important part of our journey. Being new to the "guest editor profession" it has been a pleasure for us to work with you all; your dedication, meeting deadlines etc. has been appreciated beyond words. And a special word of thanks goes to Carolyn Saint who assisted us in the editing process, her passion for quality and using the right wording helped us immensely.

Daniel K. Saint and Joep C. de Jong
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AI Practitioner

Louise van Rhyn

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Vision 2030: How a South African Provocative Proposition is Igniting Active Citizenship and Collaboration

In this article, Louise van Rhyn tells the story of how South Africa's future vision is fuelling active citizenship across the country. The article describes the creation of a co-action and co-learning programme between business leaders and school principals that is firmly rooted in Appreciative Enquiry and that has already touched 437 schools.

Now in 2030 we live in a country we have remade. We have created a home where everybody feels free yet bounded to others; where everyone embraces their full potential. We are proud to be a community that cares.

So reads a portion of South Africa's Vision 2030, beautifully crafted by two prominent South African poets after considering the contributions of thousands of South African citizens.

The Vision 2030 document has been described as an ambitious document for its highly positive description of a possible future for South Africa. In the practice of Appreciative Inquiry, this type of description would be called a provocative proposition, a statement that "bridges the best of 'what is' with your own speculation or intuition of 'what might be'" .

A provocative proposition stretches the status quo while suggesting real possibilities. And that is why I view the Vision 2030 description of South Africa as a provocative proposition for the country – it is a description of the potential that lies within the country, just waiting to be tapped. South Africa's Vision 2030 is a description of a flourishing South Africa, a country that works for all.

The ideals espoused by Vision 2030 are provocative, precisely because of the disparity between what is and what could be. In the realm of education, certainly, the disparity is huge. In spite of high spending on education and

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The ideals espoused by Vision 2030 are provocative, precisely because of the disparity between what is and what could be.

the implementation of some good policies, there are many clear indicators – including functional literacy and numeracy, pass rate and global ranking of the quality of education – that the public education system in South Africa is in crisis.

The education challenge in South Africa

By some estimates, over 80%, or close to 20 000, schools in South Africa's network of 25,000 public schools are dysfunctional. Stated differently, the system is failing the majority of the 12 million children who are at school.

Failing most of our children has a clear humanitarian impact and the economic impact is equally dire. Economic growth is nearly stagnant and unemployment remains very high, at over 25%. The negative impact of poor schooling is reflected in the OECD's Global School Ranking Report (2015), which estimates that South Africa's GDP would grow by 2,624% over their lifetimes if all students achieved a basic level of education to just the age of 15.

In attempting to address this problem, the South African government every year spends more money from its national budget on education than on anything else. In the 2016/17 national budget, the department of finance allocated R218.8 billion (US$ 141.5) of a budget of R1 463 billion (US$946 billion) to basic education.

Focusing on what works

I am a "homecomer". This means that I left South Africa for a period of time and returned home because I wanted my children to grow up in this beautiful country. It is also a country with many challenges, so coming home was also a choice to make a contribution – to use the knowledge and skills that I acquired in the UK and US to help create a Flourishing South Africa, the country described in our Vision 2030 statement.

I have been privileged enough to be taught about the value of focusing on what works rather than focusing on negativity and despair. So when I felt called to get actively involved in our education system, I realised that there are essentially two "systems" of education in South Africa: we have 5,000 schools that work well and 20,000 that are failing. I became intrigued by the question, what if we were to study the 5,000 that work rather than focusing on the 20,000 that are not delivering the education outcomes we need?

The South African government every year spends more money from its national budget on education than on anything else.

This question opened up a new world to me and a group of fellow South Africans. When studying the success of the 5,000 high-performing schools, we found that, without fail, these schools have a principal who is well-equipped for his or her task and an active and engaged community that is involved in the school and supports it well. We noticed that these two things are rarely present in the other schools.

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Anthony Naidoo (Nedbank business leader) with learners from Masakhane-Tswelopele Primary School

I discussed these insights with Peter Block and John McKnight (founder of Asset Based Community Development). In these conversations I realised that we do have a rich national asset in South Africa: we have thousands of business leaders who have the knowledge and skills needed for leading and managing organisations. Corporate South Africa invests heavily in maintaining and expanding this capacity.

Tapping into an existing asset base

I started to play with the idea that we could somehow tap into this asset base of well-trained business leaders to support school principals.

The idea was piloted with a school principal in Cape Town. His name is Ridwan Samodien and he is the principal of Kannemeyer Primary School in Grassy Park. I will forever be grateful for Ridwan's willingness to say YES to an untested and unproven idea.

Ridwan and I started to work together in April 2010 and we are still in a partnership. During the last five years, I have learned more about leadership from Ridwan and my involvement in Kannemeyer Primary School than I learned from doing an MBA or doctorate.

Partners for Possibility

The discovery that this could be a mutually-beneficial relationship gave birth to Partners for Possibility (PfP) – a co-action, co-learning, reciprocal partnership between business leaders and school principals where they develop their leadership skills in partnership and focus on the school and school community as the beneficiary of their collaborative effort.

Once they have joined PfP, the school principal and business leader together set about applying their insights to the school, to identify and address the challenges that it faces. In the process, the business leader often brings his or her own professional network to bear, while the principal finds strength and energy in having a thinking partner who is genuinely in awe of their resilience and resourcefulness.

During the last five years, 437 business leaders from more than 300 organisations have partnered with 437 principals. All of us who have been involved with PfP have been positively surprised by what we have found at the so-called dysfunctional schools. We have been so focused on the crisis-narrative that we have ignored the wellspring of hope and resilience at these schools. We found, almost without exception, that principals at these schools are coping against

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all odds in very difficult situations and are truly committed to make a positive contribution to the lives of the children they teach and the community they serve.

We also found that a school is the largest unit of change in the education system and that leadership offers the most powerful leverage for the improvement of the school. While each partnership addresses the challenges at "their" school, the community becomes more engaged and their narrative starts changing from one of deficiency to one of gifts and contributions.

Lastly, because of the cutting-edge learning methodology, we were also able to get this accredited as a short course at the University of the Western Cape, which means it is deemed to be a "legitimate" leadership development process.

Results – Hope and possibility in 700 schools by the end of 2016

At the time of writing, we have identified a further 200 schools in existing and new regions that we want to help this year through these powerful partnerships, bringing the total number of schools in the Partners for Possibility network to approximately 700.

While results vary, it is heartening to see the specific challenges faced by each school being addressed in a spirit of positivity and possibility. As an example, Kannemeyer Primary, the nexus-school, changed their narrative from "parents are not interested in us and even the teachers place their children in other schools" to "we have a community of committed parents and a strong partnership between the community and educators".

This new outlook is amplified and entrenched in the community through stories, the use of electronic media and positive media coverage. Every positive action is celebrated and highlighted. Kannemeyer Primary has since been identified as a high-performance school in the region.

The programme is also powerful on an individual level. For principals, the programme often represents the first time that they have received any form of leadership training and they entrench their new-found skills in regular conversation with their business partner, who fulfils the role of thinking partner and sounding board.

For principals, the programme often represents the first time that they have received any form of leadership training

For business leaders, their engagement in this new environment, where they have no direct control or positional power, develops their leadership skills and sharpens, or establishes, a cultural sensitivity that was often lacking but is very necessary in a country scarred by many years of institutionalised segregation under apartheid policies.

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For business leaders, their engagement in this new environment ... develops their leadership skills and sharpens, or establishes, a cultural sensitivity

In one recent example, a business leader who has been active in the programme for three years reported the significant improvements in business when she replaced traditional performance evaluation programmes with appreciation and thinking partnerships, calling appreciation "the biggest gift I have ever received or given".

Re-imagining leadership and how to develop leaders' capacity to lead

I have been very interested in leadership development – as a practitioner at Ashridge Consulting, I had the privilege of being part of the team that developed and facilitated the leadership development process for large organisations such as the BBC, Marks & Spencer and London Underground. We designed experiences to help leaders develop their capacity to deal with complexity, ambiguity and "not knowing," and marvelled at the value of these experiences.

The Partners for Possibility process enabled us to take this thinking to a new level. Leaders are invited to be in a close relationship with someone from a world different to their own. The process invites all participants to cross boundaries and be confronted with their own "stuff". The "action learning" component of the process isn't "just" a project. Leaders are challenged to facilitate meaningful change in a school community – change that could potentially change the trajectory of thousands of lives in an under-resourced school.

Business leaders report that they found this very challenging. They realised that they knew very little about life in an under-resourced community. They were shocked and upset when confronted with the realities that so many of their colleagues and staff members grapple with on a daily basis. They realised that they so often get stuff done in their own organisations because of their positional power, and that it is far more difficult to mobilise people to take action when you have no positional power.

Possibility in action

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Johanna (principal) and Rosie (business partner) at Siphetu Primary School

I have often used Peter Block's words in training courses when I said that "the delivery vehicle of our expertise is our humanity", but it was through being an active participant in the PfP process that I realised what this actually means. When I go to Kannemeyer Primary School, no one is interested in how many degrees I have, what my job title is or what kind of car I drive. The Kannemeyer Primary School community want to know that I will treat them with respect, that I will listen and pay attention, that I will keep my promises and do what I said I will do. If I do this I will be invited back with open arms. If I don't, I should not be surprised when people don't respond to my emails and calls.

Through my involvement in PfP, I have learned about "invitational leadership" – that sustainable change happens when people say "yes" to an invitation to participate. It does not happen when people feel forced to do something. I now see "invitation" as the most powerful leadership action. Most people want to make a contribution, they just need someone to invite them.

I now see 'invitation' as the most powerful leadership action.

A final note on making contributions: I recently had the opportunity to help a mayoral candidate for a big city develop his campaign. Instead of standing on podiums telling people how great a candidate he is, he decided to invite the citizens of the city to bring their gifts and contributions to co-create the city they want. His entire campaign was to do the work of bringing citizens together in working groups to do the work they yearn to do while they experience him as a leader who facilitates citizen engagement and co-creation. On reflecting on my conversation with him I realised with much gratitude how much I have learned from leading Partners for Possibility.

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AI Practitioner

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Appreciative Inquiry: A Method for Daily Leadership in an Urban Ministry

Appreciative Inquiry is not only a method of intervention for organizational change but is also a useful and inspiring philosophy for effective leadership and staff management. This article describes how AI and an appreciative approach are used by the director of services at a non-profit homeless service agency as a foundational way of operating in a challenging environment.

Appreciative Inquiry is not only a method for guiding organizational change, but also a philosophy of leadership that resonates with the style I have developed after years of working in faith-based, non-profit settings. I experience daily how affirmation changes the dynamic of most situations. When the focus of a staff is on imagining what "our best" looks like, the entire organization is driven to excellence. Cooperrider (2005) states that AI embodies both a philosophy and a methodology of change and Jane Magruder Watkins recognizes that AI is a "mind-set, and a way of defining the world…" (Watkins et.al, 2011, p.33). Fully embracing those assertions opens me to applying AI and its principles daily to drive positive change in the life and work of staff and clients. As director of services, I have experimented in asking appreciative questions and designing appreciative interventions to guide the tasks of serving over 400 homeless people daily. AI has become my leadership model and philosophy, resulting in a highly effective and cohesive team. I also believe that the homeless population of Charlotte NC is better served because of it.

The organization

The Urban Ministry Center is an interfaith organization dedicated to bringing the community together to end homelessness one life at a time. The first step in this journey for many who are in the streets, camps and shelters of Charlotte NC is a connection to staff and volunteers at Urban Ministry Center. Basic services like hot meals, showers, bathrooms, mail, phones, counseling and emergency winter shelter are a lifeline to the more than 400 people served daily. These services are so basic that they are taken for granted by most of us. For the staff, this is a demanding environment where needs are high. We intend to serve each

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The challenge is to meet people where they are, in order to walk with them to where they aspire to be.

person with kindness, compassion and dignity, offering a listening ear, a name remembered, an advocate on their journey. Inherent in all we do is an affirmation of individual worth as we provide services with respect and acceptance.

The challenge is to meet people where they are, in order to walk with them to where they aspire to be. This is very difficult work, as most of our clients have reached their lowest point: 35% suffer from severe mental illness; most grew up in poverty; 50 % struggle with addiction; 38% report a physical disability (2015 UMC Survey) and all have experienced lifelong trauma and abuse. It is easy to be overwhelmed by these desperate and tragic circumstances. For those who are identified by what they lack – home-less – it is important that we as a staff remain hopeful and affirm strengths wherever experienced. Infusing all that we do with elements of Appreciative Inquiry allows us to stay open and positive.

Using Appreciative Inquiry to guide our work

Orienting a new program director

The director of the Room in the Inn emergency winter shelter program was hired three months prior to the first day of the season. The complicated process of registering, assigning and providing for over 18,000 bed nights provided by area churches and organizations are the director's responsibility. As he began, we engaged his staff in a two hour Appreciative Inquiry workshop.

The workshop

- *Introduction*: Those attending introduced themselves, their role, and shared a peak experience with the program. The responses generated enthusiasm and re-affirmed the commitment of the group by highlighting shared moments of service and connection.
- *Description of the outstanding director*: The second question was "If the new director turned out to be so fabulous that he exceeded all expectations, what would have happened?" The responses allowed for a clear discussion of expectations and provided a job description for the new director. Energy remained high as all embraced their role in setting program expectations.
- *The program at its best*: The third questions was: "When the program is running at it's very best, what is happening?" Here the new director was introduced to the operational needs of the program. He also heard specific needs of each attendee, and all were empowered to create the best program operation.
- *Conclusion*: The new director shared his dream and commitment to the program and staff. Overwhelmingly, participants expressed gratitude and excitement for the process.

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The responses to the three questions... remained posted on the office wall of the new director throughout the program and served as a guide to gauge progress and prioritize activities.

Outcomes

The responses to the three questions, recorded on flip charts, remained posted on the office wall of the new director throughout the program and served as a guide to gauge progress and prioritize activities. When confusion arose, we went back to the flip charts to review expectations. The team reported a sense of connection and the new director experienced success and affirmation for his responsiveness. Over 1400 homeless individuals and families successfully received hospitality and winter shelter.

Supervision

Weekly supervision meetings with a team social worker allow time to review work with clients and with the students being supervised. In a traditional supervision model, the supervisee brings difficult cases to the supervisor who then becomes the "fixer" or the teacher. (In my early professional experience, clinical supervision involved a high degree of shaming and criticism.) Through the use of an appreciative approach, the confidence and abilities of the supervisee become the focus, and so we collaborate to discover the meaning of best practice.

Issue

Supervision of students was a new role for the social worker. Early on she reported that interactions with students felt "awful" and non-productive. I adhere to the principle that what you pay attention to, you get more of. So, instead of focusing on "awful" and on what did not work, we used appreciative questions as a guide.

- Tell me about your best experience being supervised. Describe all aspects of you and the supervisor.
- How can you use that experience in your current role as supervisor?
- When you are working at your best what is happening? Describe.
- What could change that would enable the current supervision sessions to come closer to the imagined ideal?

Results

What emerged was a framework that led to a clear understanding of needs and process.

The responses to these questions created a focus on the best atmosphere and relationships. What emerged was a framework that led to a clear understanding of needs and process. The social worker was empowered to find resources within her own experience and the trust in our relationship deepened. She was affirmed; seeing herself as a good supervisor. I continue to learn from her and am not burdened with the role of "problem-solver" or critic.

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To insure a positive focus, we begin with celebrations.

Weekly team meetings

I seek to ensure that weekly team meetings make the best use of our time, providing an opportunity to connect, resolve issues, share information and work together so that services are offered in the best way possible. Staff meetings in any organization can engender a sense of dread; however, using an appreciative style can create positive energy. Our meetings are productive in addressing client and service issues, with the added benefit of re-enforcing our team identity. To insure a positive focus, we begin with celebrations. Everyone is encouraged to share an accomplishment in their work or personal life. We then receive a brief reflection – something inspiring or meaningful brought by members on a rotating basis – setting the tone for the meeting.

As leader, I do not assume that I have the "answer"; I only assume the responsibility for leading a positive, outcome-driven process where all voices contribute to the best way of providing services. Every team member has the opportunity to bring an issue to the meeting which is addressed by all.

Issue

One concern brought to the team was the length of time clients spend lining up for services and the concomitant challenge for staff to respond with compassion and kindness in the midst of the large lines. To address these issues we posed the following questions:

- If access to services were happening in the best way possible what would the client experience? What would volunteers and staff experience?
- What do we value most about how services are offered?
- What positive changes can we make?

Results

The responses to these questions led to a mission statement: "to connect clients to appropriate services in a timely, efficient, compassionate manner", and also led to a change in service delivery with multiple signup locations. Now, lines are shorter with an opportunity for each client to receive individual attention.

On-boarding new team members

I am a firm believer in "every voice in the room", which requires trust. To promote participation, when on-boarding a new team member we do a brief appreciative exercise. I have used the following questions to be explored in pairs:

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Chatting with homeless neighbors at lunch

- Describe to a colleague a peak experience in your life where you felt most alive and joyful.
- Describe to a colleague in detail a peak experience with a team.
- Describe a moment in your work that stands out and that you were grateful to be a part of. What did you bring to that experience?

We then complete the AI dialogue and divide into groups of four to capture themes. It is affirming that there are basic themes of service, caring, gratitude, relationship that we all share.

Outcomes

By the end of the meeting new alliances are forged. One initial complaint is that these "activities" take away from our work. What becomes clear is that "getting work done" happens more effectively when there is a foundation of trust. New members easily become full participants.

Client conversations

Think of a time in the future when you are living your best life. What does that look like? These questions open amazing insights and lead to the beginning of a plan. For people who have been ignored, abused and hopeless for so much of their lives, asking a question that is positive is itself an act of affirmation. This path of inquiry communicates my belief in their future in a way that no direct statement could, and also begins to change the client's self-perception, creating a tentative seedling of hope.

Outcome

While it was difficult for one young woman to risk sharing her dreams, the result of our conversation was a commitment to needed mental health medication. For her, this was a huge step in valuing her own well-being. More importantly, the decision emerged from her dream, not from my suggestion. Now it is possible for her to begin pursuing education, housing and other steps that could create her best future life.

Organizational change

To assess the effectiveness of our volunteer counseling program, we entered into a classic Appreciative Inquiry process involving interviews of volunteer counselors staff and clients (Discovery). We began by asking:

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Meeting with a client in a counseling room

- What was the best counseling experience you have had?
- Why did you choose that experience? Describe all the elements.
- What did you bring? What did the client bring? Who was the client? What were the issues?

With that information we were able to imagine (Dream) what it would look like if our counseling program matched these peak experiences. With a detailed picture, we began to outline a way to organize (Design) our service so that it matched our ideal. This resulted in a new process of service delivery and the hire of a clinically trained counseling director (Destiny).

However, it did not end there. As new issues arise, we continuously assess if we are matching our dream design. The triage process (how we welcome and assess client needs) was changed after experimentation and discussion. We continue to ask how we can use our peak experiences to inform our current practice. As needs and circumstances change, we re-imagine what the best service looks like.

Conclusion

While I have described several examples within the organization where an appreciative approach has enhanced service to our homeless clients, these are just examples of our daily practice. Each day brings more opportunities to ask positive questions and affirm the strengths of staff and clients. Using an appreciative leadership philosophy creates energy, cohesiveness and satisfaction for staff which positively influences our interactions with our homeless neighbors. For that I am grateful.

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AI Practitioner

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'He's Doing Less and He's Proud of It': A Conversation with Mirko Opdam and his Colleagues About Appreciative Leadership

Mirko Opdam's fellow team leaders in the city administration of Amsterdam often say: 'In your team, it's easy to be a team leader: the people in your team are open to change and they take responsibility.' Only two years ago, this was not the case. What did Mirko do, being a relational leader applying Appreciative Inquiry, to transform his team from an inward-looking, isolated group into a healthy, resilient and resourceful team? I asked him and three of his team members for their reflections.

Amsterdam is not a very big city, with a population of just under 800,000; 80,000 people live in the old, historic city centre, where hurried cyclists try to avoid tourists as much as they can. In 2014, 17 million visitors came to the centre of Amsterdam. Over 250 hotels, more than 2,000 shops, hundreds and hundreds of bars and restaurants make this part of Amsterdam a lively and crowded place to live, work and have fun.

Mirko Opdam is the team leader of a team of nearly 50 professionals who are responsible for the authorisations for bars, hotels, restaurants, shops – and citizens. Whenever people want to make changes to a building, to businesses or houses in the center of Amsterdam, they have to go to Mirko's department for a licence.

To regulate the cohabitation of thousands of citizens and millions of tourists is obviously a demanding task; Mirko's team is highly qualified and experienced. Before 2012, however, several time and energy consuming control measurements existed in the department. The workload at that time was overseen by two "heads of department", five teamleaders (each supervising the work of between seven and ten professionals). As well, around five coworkers performed administrative tasks. Despite these measures, the reputation of the department among political leaders and top-management was poor. This was partly due to high numbers of adverse incidents, complaints of citizens about handling times and not being called back, and so on. Mirko himself has been working for the Amsterdam administration since 1999; he became team leader in 2012. In the following years

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Other team leaders now ask Mirko and his team for help

he took a couple of workshops on Appreciative Inquiry and started applying what he had learned right away.

In the last year his team has done remarkably well. Some of the results include:

- Absenteeism in this team went down from 4.6 to 2.8 percent;
- The completion time for the licensing process is almost 15% shorter now than it was a year ago;
- Productivity is high; last year the number of applications processed rose about 10%, with no extra staff hired;
- Other team leaders now ask Mirko and his team for help;
- And Mirko's personal favourite: his team, which had a reputation for being isolated and inward-looking, is now collaborating with colleagues in other teams.

Micro-practices and their results

I was curious to know what he exactly does to achieve these results. What are the "micro-practices" of an appreciative team leader? And what are the effects, not only in terms of results, but also when it comes to reactions of team members? I asked Mirko whether I could interview him, and if he would like to invite three people from his team.

Mirko's team: Tjarda, Jauaad, Hans and Mirko

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When asked what Mirko actually does, Tjarda, Jauaad and Hans really have to think hard

Recently, the five us sat down at the city hall in Amsterdam to conduct an appreciative inquiry on the building blocks of appreciative leadership: actions, reactions and interactions: Tjarda Bos, Jauaad Akelei, Hans Winter, Mirko Opdam and myself. Tjarda, Jauaad and Hans have been working in this team for about eight years.

When asked what Mirko actually does, Tjarda, Jauaad and Hans really have to think hard.

Tjarda finally says: He always says that he's doing less. And he's proud of that!

Hans adds: Yes, and he's getting better at doing less too.

Jauaad: Yes, I'm doing more and more myself. People come to see us and we are solving most of every day's issues, because Mirko is always busy anyway. Our role, being senior professionals, is getting clearer and more important.

Tjarda: We are doing things that were done by our teamleader previously, like coordinating the holiday schedule. But for some other things we still need him.

Jauaad: Yes, in case of problems with another team that we cannot solve ourselves. Mirko then has a word with his colleague. Or in situations where we are really too busy and we need some extra hands. Mirko has the final decision in hiring people.

Hans: Sometimes I ask him for advice, especially in situations that are new to me, concerning other people. I can disagree with a colleague and then ask Mirko what I can do. His first answer always is: "Go talk to him".

Tjarda: And sometimes it's practical to be able to say that I've had a conversation with Mirko, in case things are getting fuzzy.

Mirko: What I see is that you are asking my opinion about different issues, this last year. *You're* solving most of the everyday problems. A good example is hiring a new colleague. You almost forgot to inform me and I thought that was great. You handled this situation better and faster than I would have done. Your response to the people who applied was quick and respectful, and I'm sure that your choice was better than mine would have been.

Tjarda: And this really strengthens the relationships within our team, because we are taking full responsibility. We don't wait for you to tell us what to do. We are taking action as a team.

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'To have a shared frame of reference is very important, but there'll always be individualists in our team.'
Hans

Hans: This is not easy for some people, taking responsibility for the whole team. Some of our colleagues just concentrate on their own files, which is okay. They can still do good work.

Jauaad: I've created an overview of all the work that will be coming our way this year. This used to be one of the tasks of our team leader. I'm trying to divide our work as transparently and honestly as possible.

Mirko: Some time ago some people were not very happy with the way the tasks were divided and with my leadership. Tjarda yelled: "If you don't divide the tasks, we'll have to do it. Jesus!" Relieved, I shouted, "Yes!" And I thought, perhaps a bit naively, we should discuss this in public. This turned out to be a bit too challenging for people, openly discussing who was doing what. This made me cautious for a while.

A shared frame of reference

A dialogue unfolds about the division of labour, targets, gratifications, responsibilities, "reservoirs of applications", formulas to divide work, etc., etc., and I ask them whether Mirko influences his team by means of rewarding and punishing and/or by means of creating a shared frame of reference.

Hans: To have a shared frame of reference is very important, but there'll always be individualists in our team.

Jauaad: It's always a team effort.

Tjarda: Yes, but you'll still have to check on people.

Hans: Yes, 30% of our colleagues aren't doing enough. When someone doesn't take responsibility, that's still a private conversation, now. It should be a team conversation. The numbers are kept secret now.

Mirko: Am I being too cautious in this respect?

Tjarda and Hans: Yes!

Hans: Some people seem to think that others will solve their problems for them. Most of our colleagues are aiming for excellence, some are happy to be doing okay.

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'This really strengthens the relationships within our team, because we are taking full responsibility. We don't wait for you to tell us what to do. We are taking action as a team.'
Tjarda

Mirko's leadership style examined

During the conversation, Mirko seems to be very much at ease with anything his team members tell him. But what exactly have they noticed about his leadership style? Do they experience him as an "appreciative" leader?

Hans: Yes, I have this idea that he uses some tricks.

Jauaad: I was talking all the time during our last assessment interview. That's fine with me, because I love to talk anyway. I think he asked open-ended questions.

Tjarda: He asks things like: "How did this come about?"

Hans: And the next moment you walk out the door with a new task. He says: "I see in you…"

Jauaad: What I like is that he has a way of guiding me to seeing my own possibilities. It's like you've come up with your own answers. And he enjoys it when you come up with something else.

Tjarda: Mirko really doesn't know!

Mirko: Well, I might have an idea, occasionally, but the three of you are very good at being specific. After my first day in a workshop in Appreciative Inquiry, I started asking questions like: "What gift haven't you used so far, in our team?" And I got some amazing reactions. One team member, who came late most of the days, said that he loved to calculate. He now is our expert in calculating construction costs. He loves to do this, comes in early and I don't have to hire an external consultant to do that job anymore.

At that time, there was a big problem because people felt uncertain about calculating construction costs. Most of the time, they simply used the estimates made by applicants, without being able to check them, while department earnings were largely based on the estimated costs of applications for building permits. A report was written by an internal consultant recommending that "as there is no adequate expertise in the team, nor anyone interested in learning about calculating costs, dedicated personnel or an external consultant should be hired". At present, this team member helps other colleagues calculate the costs. A recent sample showed 100% of calculations of team members was within the acceptable range.

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'Did you achieve what you wanted? How did you do that?'
Tjarda

Tjarda: A typical question Mirko asks, is: "Did you achieve what you wanted? How did you do that?"

Jauaad: He has organised 360-degree feedback, which is rather unusual in our organisation.

Mirko: And everybody asked for feedback. In my conversations with the team members I ask for the compliments they've received, whether they've asked for additional feedback, when somebody complimented them. People normally ask for additional feedback when they are criticized, not when they've received appreciative feedback.

Tjarda: We had an event the other day, because one of our colleagues left our team. This man expected Mirko to say something to him. Mirko asked me: "Do I have to do this?" And I said: "Yes, of course, this is what people expect of you, being our team leader. You have responsibilities too."

What's my added value?

Mirko: I am a bit insensitive to these things. Ideally all these things are done by team members, in my view. I am really curious to know what my added value is.

Tjarda: Bringing us coffee and being available to answer questions.

Jauaad: Keeping in contact with people who are ill. Telling our team's story to the city administration.

So what has changed over the last couple of years?

Mirko: This team really had a bad reputation.

Jauaad: We always had a lot of unfinished work, we were always behind schedule. Mirko gave us the freedom to do things our own way and that really helped. And we've improved our processes. I hope that Mirko will continue like this. Not because I like having more responsibility as such but because we all feel more responsible and get more work done.

Tjarda: People feel more committed.

Mirko: I think it's a good sign that you cannot really tell what I do differently. This gives me a feeling that it's not artificial. I sense a different dynamic, though: people come up with ideas, we have different and constructive conversations. When I came back after a holiday, the meetings were going more smoothly.

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'I would like to be the same kind of leader Mirko is.'
Jauaad

Jauaad: If we compare this with a couple of years ago, this is much better. Our organisation was far more hierarchical, while we are all highly educated professionals. I would like to be the same kind of leader Mirko is.

Mirko: One of your colleagues came up to me and said: "Whenever I've just had a epileptic seizure, I can always go to Jauaad, because he will never give me the feeling that I'm a burden to him. And that's why I really trust Jauaad."

Asking questions, providing appreciative feedback, building trust

I think this last exchange sums up what Mirko really does in his team. During our conversation he was constantly asking questions, providing the others with appreciative feedback and, by doing so, building trust.

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AI Practitioner

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Toward Relational Leading

Traditional practices of leadership are lodged in a vision of the organization as a machine, with the leader fundamentally in charge of its functioning. In the contemporary world of rapid change this form of leadership is ineffective. If we understand the organization as a matrix of meaning making, the effective leader is one who works collaboratively with others. This article outlines significant dimensions of such leadership.

As many commentators agree, traditional conceptions of the leader as an individual who commands and controls the actions of organizational participants cease to be functional. A search for alternative conceptions is in evidence everywhere. Interestingly, many of these alternatives place a strong emphasis on social process. Conceptions of distributed leadership, servant leadership, collaborative leadership, co-active leadership and team leadership are illustrative. Perhaps the most radical of these is represented in explorations into relational leading (Uhl-Bien and Ospina, 2012; Hersted and Gergen 2013). The concept of "relational leading" draws primary attention to processes of relationship essential to organizing, sustaining, creating and developing the activities of people working together.

Set against the assumption that leadership inheres in the traits or activities of single individuals, we propose that traits or skills are only significant within a process of coordinated action. And it is out of coordinated action that organizational participants create meaning – including their understandings of the organization, their participation and the value to be placed on various outcomes. As we find, when relational process is given priority, we open new vistas for understanding and practising decision-making, dialogue, innovation, conflict reduction, personnel evaluation, collaboration and relating the organization to its environments. In what follows, I will first touch on the importance of relational leading in the contemporary world, and then sketch some of its major dimensions and relevant practices.

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Command-and-control organizations ... are poorly designed for the emerging world.

Relational leading: Why now?

Today we are immersed in a massive, global-wide movement of ideas, information, people, inventions, opportunities and values, largely owing to the emergence of such technologies as television, jet transportation, the internet and cell phones. We are deluged in prospects, potentials and plausibilities. There are now well over a billion users of the internet world wide. In the US, over 70% of the population now relies on internet services, and by the time it takes to read this paragraph over five million email messages will have moved through cyberspace. It is estimated that today there are more than 500 million websites, with the amount of information accumulating each year equaling 30 feet of books per person for the entirety of the world's population. The average internet user in the US now spends approximately 100 hours a month on-line. And in the case of social media, on Facebook alone there are almost 650 million visitors on any given month, twice the size of the US population. The extensity and pace of such global communication is ever accelerating.

The impact of such massive movement on organizational life cannot be underestimated. The twentieth century conception of the organization was based on the image of a solid structure, a structure approximating a machine. As it was believed, one could logically design organizations to fulfill various functions (e.g. the production of goods, the creation of a fighting force, education of students). Like a machine, the organization would be composed of mechanisms (e.g. operations, marketing, human resources), with each mechanism composed of the parts that made it up. The parts were essentially individual workers. When all the mechanisms functioned as designed, the organization would succeed. And, like a machine, the organization required managers (or leaders) to direct the functioning from on high. These "command-and-control organizations," as we call them, remain dominant. But in the contemporary world of rapid change, they are dying. They are poorly designed for the emerging world in which, for example:

- Diversity in race, gender, religion and ethnicity of the workforce increase the differences in motives and values to which the organization must adapt.
- An ever-increasing amount of information makes it impossible to converge on a rational decision.
- Plans must be changed or abandoned at any moment as world conditions change.
- The quicksilver development of products or services can threaten to replace whatever the organization produces.

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Organizations everywhere are beginning to experiment with new and more adaptable, resilient and innovative forms of action.

- The increasing invitation for global expansion continuously challenges the organizational structure.
- The new opportunities for creating useful or profitable alliances undermine existing practices.
- The rapid development of grass-roots movements may at any time protest the organization's activities.

With such challenges ever-mounting in intensity, organizations everywhere are beginning to experiment with new and more adaptable, resilient and innovative forms of action. Most importantly, one can also surmise within such developments the emergence of a successor to the machine metaphor of organizing.

Organization as conversation

The most inviting metaphor now in play is that of the organization as conversation. Drawing from scholarship in organizational culture and social construction, we recognize the critical place of social negotiation in determining the meaning we give to the world (Grant et al. 2004; Gergen 2015, Suchman, 2011). It is out of the relational process that, for example, our interests are drawn in this or that direction, that we derive joy and sorrow from events, that our actions become reasonable or not, and that we see ourselves as strong or fragile. From this perspective, all meaning is co-created – largely through dialogue.

Thus, as organizational participants speak together, they generate understandings of the organization, their jobs, the value of work, the definition of just compensation and their trust of each other. This means that "commands from on high" are not commands and managers are not managers unless employees grant them this significance. Essentially, then, relational process is pivotal in organizing, sustaining, creating and developing the activities of people working together. The traditional view of the organization as a rationally based system or machine gives way to understanding the organization as a vital sea of relational activity.

If we understand the organization in terms of the co-active flow of conversation, the challenge of leadership is not that of mastery from an exterior position, but actively participating in the flow. An entirely new image of the leader is now invited, one in which relational process stands prior to the individual as a focus of concern. The emphasis shifts from individual traits to processes of collaboration, empowerment, dialogue, horizontal decision-making, sharing, distribution, networking, continuous learning and connectivity. In effect, there is a deep and pervasive concern with communal process. While leadership denotes the characteristics of an individual, relational leading refers to the

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We now see that leadership is not the task of a specific individual.

ability of people in relationship to move with engagement and efficacy into the future. It is not the single individual who is prized, but the process that animates relations and mobilizes people to action. We now see that leadership is not the task of a specific individual. Rather, it emerges from the way people carry out relationships – from the ordinary ways in which we treat each other to developing organizational policies and practices.

Dimensions of relational leading

There is no single theory or definitive account of relational leading. Rather, it is more appropriate to view relational leading as a dialogue among many participants – both theorists and practitioners – who have shifted their focus from the individual leader to the processes of creating meaning within the organization. (See Drath 2001; Barrett 2012; Raelin, 2016.) This dialogue may also be viewed not as terminating when the answer is located, but as continuously stimulated by ongoing transformations in global context. However, a fuller understanding of relational leading today, and its invitations for practice, can be realized by comparing its features to the traditional machine-like organizations of the past. Here it is useful to divide such contrasts into three areas: general orientation to leadership, the way leaders approach group work, and action in face-to-face relationships.

Table 1: General orientation to leadership

General orientation	
Traditional leading	*Relational leading*
Individual is primary	Relationships are primary
Generate structure	To process
Adapt	Innovate

It follows from the preceding that relational process takes the place of individuals as the center of concern. Here relational leading will first of all emphasize group work over individuals working alone. The traditional vision of the Lone Ranger leader, sitting in a private office and coming up with dazzling ideas is dangerous. This doesn't mean that no attention is paid to individuals. But rather, in attending to individuals, the question is how does his or her activity fit into the broader process of participation? In hiring, for example, how does this person fit into the process; how would he or she likely affect it? If it is necessary to let someone go, how will the general morale be affected; what working relations might suffer? Attending to relationships also means generating conditions in which relations can flourish. For example, without occasional face-to-face contact, on-line relations will typically suffer.

Relational leaders will also be more concerned with the ongoing process of the organization than with setting up structures. This could mean de-emphasizing

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When employees are simply following the rules, they will become insensitive to the process of relationship.

rules and regulations, strict lines of authority and the like. When employees are simply following the rules, they will become insensitive to the process of relationship. Others may be noticed only if they step out of line. The emphasis turns instead to ongoing process; for example, to the way information is shared, to establishing working groups or to ensuring channels of communication.

Working with groups

A more focused appreciation of relational leading emerges when we turn to ways of working in groups. In the traditional command-and-control organization, the leader establishes what is to be done and who will be responsible for what. In relational leading, the concern shifts to setting the conditions for people to work together successfully. The group negotiates the goals; the task of the leader is to provide the necessary support (material, information, encouragement etc).

Table 2: Working with groups

Working with groups	
Traditional leading	*Relational leading*
Set the task	Set the conditions
Direct	Enlist
Maintain surveillance	Maintain mutual rapport

Closely related to this, the relational leader avoids directing people, impersonally treating them as cogs in the machine. Rather, the leader seeks ways of enlisting people for various tasks; for example, engaging others to identify opportunities, creating a dialogue to assess the value of any given task and helping others identify and lever their strengths. For the traditional leader, who has set the task and given directions, there is little to do at that point but to make sure the employees are doing one's bidding. Thus, the leader will need heavy-handed ways of checking up: reviewing performance, requiring regular reporting of progress. Alienation and distrust soon follow. In contrast, for the relational leader, it is most important to maintain mutual rapport, respect and care. Conversations, guidance and on-time feedback replace surveillance.

Face-to-face relations

Finally, let's consider leadership in face-to-face relations. There is much to be said here, as we are dealing with skills in moving well in the subtle dynamics of ongoing relations. To give a rough sense of what relational leading might mean in action, consider first the way the traditional organization emphasizes positions in the hierarchy. Top authorities may have more spacious and better-located offices, washrooms and other privileges unavailable to others. Those in leadership positions should act appropriately for their rank. Keep your distance; ensure the other understands your seniority.

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Table 3: Relating face-to-face

Relating face-to-face	
Traditional leading	*Relational leading*
Define rank	Model good relating
Dictate	Listen
Correct	Appreciate

In relational leading, by contrast, these distancing efforts reduce the flow of communication. Here the emphasis is placed on treating others with respect and curiosity. The leader models the kind of behavior that nourishes the relational process.

In the traditional organization, where decisions are made in the upper echelons, leaders will typically dictate to the organization: "These are the plans, and this is how they are to be carried out."

In relational leading, listening takes precedence. Plans and policies should ideally reflect the opinions and values of the participants. The more one listens, the more sophisticated and effective the resulting decisions. In the traditional command-and-control organization, perfect functioning of the machine is simply taken for granted. The manager is thus most sensitive to correcting deviations. In relational leading, appreciation is one of the best ways to vitalize morale and good working relations. Relational leading and Appreciative Inquiry are closely allied.

Relational leading in the context of chaos

The conception of relational leading emerged from the challenge of a global context increasingly dominated by rapid and unpredictable fluctuation. Offered as a replacement for the increasingly dysfunctional ideal of the organization as a rationally controlled structure, it was a vision of organizing as conversation. This is to say, that effective organizing is brought into being through a relational process of constructing meaning and value together. Leadership, in this account, must be viewed not as governing the conversation, but participating within it. We have touched on a number of dimensions and practices suggested by this orientation. It remains now to explore how such an orientation effectively responds to the context of chaos.

The leader models the kind of behavior that nourishes the relational process.

We return, then, to some of the emerging challenges to the command-and-control structures of the traditional organization, and touch on the answers to these challenges from the standpoint of relational leading:

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In relational leading, the orientation is to learn from criticism, as opposed to erecting defences against it.

- Diversity in the workforce increases the range of differences in motives and values of the workforce. When relational leading facilitates generative dialogue among diverse groups in the organization, there is an increase in understanding and appreciation across groups, and mutual absorption of each others' standpoints. Diverse needs are more easily accommodated in the everyday practices of the organization.
- An ever-increasing amount of information makes it impossible to converge on a rational decision. In relational leading there is no single, rational solution; there are multiple rationalities, which may point in many different directions. Any solution gains in potential by exposure and accommodation to the multiplicity. In facilitating relational flows, the leader maximizes this potential.
- Plans must be changed or abandoned at any moment as world conditions change. As the relational leader facilitates open communication, the organization will be more alert to changing conditions, and understand and appreciate the need for change. This also means that an organization can more rapidly and robustly respond to quicksilver development of threats to its survival and the need for expansion. As well, because there is no fixed structure, new alliances can be more easily accommodated.
- The rapid development of grass-roots movements may at any time protest against the organization's activities. In relational leading, the orientation is to learn from criticism, as opposed to erecting defences against it. Thus, in relational leading the attempt would be to invite oppositional groups into mutual inquiry.

In sum, the potential for relational leading to move productively in the context of rapid and complex change is substantial. To be sure, the understanding and practice of relational leading are continuously under development. But, using the logic inhering in the movement, its potentials will be incrementally enriched through expanding the dialogue.

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AI Practitioner

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Relational Leading – Appreciating Letting Go, and Not Knowing Where You Are Going

In this article we meet Steven, the manager of a Danish regional regional medical supply organization. With him, we explore how – even for leaders – it can feel liberating to let go of existing knowledge and understanding and embark on a journey with others with the certainty that no one knows where they will end up.

You have probably come across the concept relational leading, especially within the last five to ten years. Many influential researchers and practitioners have in various ways presented how relational leading can be understood and practised (Cunliffe, 2011; Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011; Hersted & Gergen, 2013; Hosking et al., 1995; Larsen & Rasmussen, 2015; Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012).

The purpose of this article is not to give a comprehensive presentation of relational leading, but rather to illustrate how relational leading revolves around appreciating the letting go of existing knowledge and understanding you take for granted, as well as embarking on a journey with others with the certainty that no one knows where they will end up, and how this – even for leaders – can be understood as a liberating endeavour.

This endeavour transforms how we look at organizational life and generates more sustainable solutions within organizations (Cooperrider & Godwin, 2015; Weickel, 2015). This is a process that Steven, the manager of one of the three Danish regional medical supply organizations, went through during a regional group management seminar where he learned that the management of the Danish Regions was looking into the possibility of merging the country's three existing and independently lead regional supply functions into one.

To find out whether this was a sustainable solution, the management of the Danish regions asked Steven and two other regional leaders to make a proposal for the possible merger and present it to them some months later. Initially, Steven was very sceptical about the merger as his experiences, knowledge

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Everyday organizational practices are often poles away from neat organizational charts.

assumptions about such mergers told him that such processes were often characterized by what he referred to as "competition between the regions", "deals" and "distrust". In this article I will illustrate how a relational perspective on leading can invite leaders like Steven to become what Cunliffe (2002) refers to as "reflexive" about their leading and make room for other meanings and possible ways to deal with organizational tasks to be co-constructed.

Organizational life – it's a meshwork

The perspective on relational leading presented in this article is in many ways related to how Whitney and Frederickson (2015) work with Appreciative Inquiry where they emphasize the need for enabling "… value-based conversations that support the co-creation of a desired future" (p. 19). We are relational beings, as Gergen stated in his book of the same name (2009) and the way we communicate as we try to understand a given organizational challenge plays a tremendous part in how we either spontaneously or more reflexively co-construct meaning and initiate actions that enable us to deal with the given organizational challenge in ways that hopefully will solve it.

As anyone who has been in an organization for five minutes is well aware, they are melting pots for polyphonic meaning constructions taking place simultaneously, with thousands of activities being initiated, altered or closed down all at the same time.

Everyday organizational practices are often poles away from neat organizational charts and well-formulated strategic action plans. Tasks are more often accomplished by going around the strict job descriptions and pre-defined divisions of responsibilities. Fortunately! And acknowledging this raises curiosity about how, in ways other than the formally acknowledged organization charts and structures, we can make sense of and illustrate organizational life.

With regard to that process, I find Ingold's (e.g. 2015 and 2008) work with the concept of "meshwork" inspiring. Try to picture how it would look if multiple balls of yarn were continually thrown towards, across, against, under and over one another. Some threads would cross, become entangled and create knots before they continue rolling on, whereas other threads would never come even close to each other. That is a meshwork; I have attempted to illustrate it on page 38.

An organization comes into being based on the multiple, diverse and sometimes contradictory ways

Threads of joint action

Try then to think of each thread as joint actions and here-and-now relational construction of meaning taking place within an organizational context. Perceiving organizational life as meshworks signifies how an organization comes into being based on the multiple, diverse and sometimes contradictory ways its

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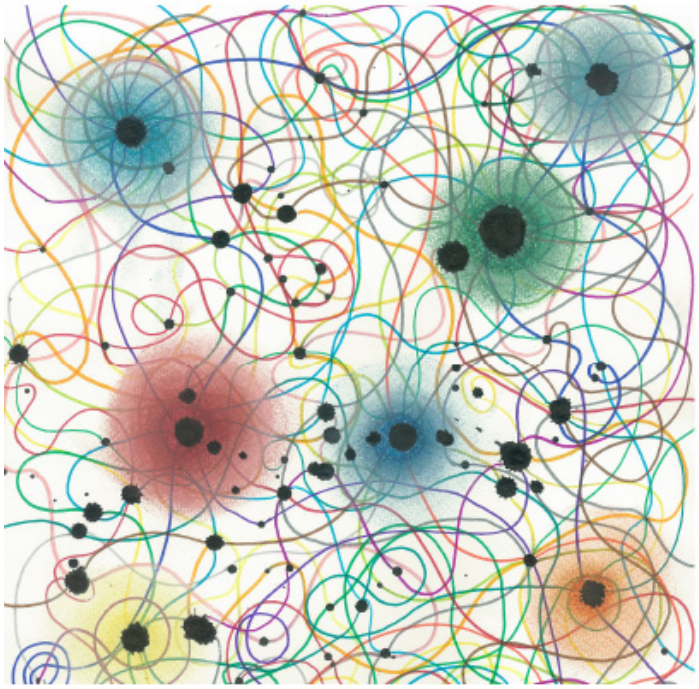

employees and leaders co-construct meaning and initiate actions as they solve one task after another.

What the perception of organizations as meshworks emphasizes is how generative and dynamic organizational life is. Like the movement of each ball of yarn is dependent upon and is shaped by how it meshes with other yarns, the way organizational challenges are handled depends upon how organizational members, such as Steven and his two cooperating leaders, incrementally co-construct meaning and initiate actions in their unique here-and-now interactions. And, as a thread may continue its movement in multiple ways, leaders and employees can construct various meanings and initiate numerous different actions in every encounter, depending on how they co-construct meaning and act here-and-now.

We're always entangled in knots, how can we untangle ourselves?

What do we do as leaders when we encounter an organizational challenge that leaves us with a feeling of despair and frustration?

Often we, in our here-and-now encounters, tend intuitively to be selectively attentive towards certain understandings and actions. We act based on experience, knowledge, what we take for granted and what we anticipate to be a sensible way to move forward. This allows us to co-construct meaning rather quickly and continue with our work efficiently. But what do we then do as leaders when we encounter an organizational challenge that leaves us with a feeling of despair and frustration, like Steven experienced? We know, like Steven, that we have to deal with it in the near future, but our experience and existing knowledge – what we take for granted and find meaningful – makes us anticipate that this organizational challenge is going to turn into power struggles and battles about

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'I can't really see where the tipping point was, but at some point I found myself thinking that if I want to be a part of this group...'
Steven

winning organizational territories. Frankly, this is not the way we want to deal with the organizational challenge. So what can we do?

This was Steven's dilemma. I met him while I was an observer-researcher on a year-long cross-regional top leader competence development programme. During that year, and since, I have had individual and group-based quarterly meetings or conversations with Steven and five other leaders who also participated in the programme. During the programme, they formed a learning group that still is active where they jointly discuss and explore the challenges they encounter in their leading practice. It was during one of the learning group meetings that Steven told us about this dilemma.

Steps to untanglment

Steven told us how he initially reacted during the first meetings with the two other regional leaders, according to his expectations that this merger-proposal would be competitive and revolve around being able to make the best deals. However, during one of the meetings, Steve experienced what he referred to as a "... movement inside me... there was a development... I can't really see where the tipping point was, but at some point I found myself thinking that if I want to be a part of this group and come up with this proposal I need to leave my opportunistic behaviour aside."

This movement made him become reflexive about the way he engaged in meaning construction with the other leaders. Based on that, he came up with a table, which he presented to us during the learning group meeting (See page 40).

Steven found himself –metaphorically speaking – meshed in organizational knots, where the meaning he constructed spontaneously with others in his organization, and the actions he intuitively resorted to during the meetings with the two regional leaders, supported generating an organizational life he didn't find sustainable. It gave him a possible space for action during the merger meetings, which he found unconstructive because they supported constructing a future that – based on his experiences, existing knowledge and what he took for granted – he might have anticipated, but didn't find very sustainable or constructive.

Steven and the other two regional leaders engaged in reflexive conversations and began to develop other kinds of joint actions that would enable them to construct different meaning and generate other potential assumptions about the possible merger.

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Table 1. Steven's original table - condensed

Ordinary Leadership[1]	*Extraordinary Leadership*
• Uncertainty about what is going on – are we being run down? • Frustrated – why are they "disturbing" us right now? • Why are they turning a national problem into a regional one, and ours? • We're still struggling with the last restructuring, we don't have the resources to face another one right now. • They don't understand the magnitude of such a restructuring. • They challenge our "territory". • Will I lose power? • We're doing fine on our own, leave us be. • It's the other's fault, not ours. • There is lack of acknowledgement of our results. • How much can we settle for? • What will our customers think? • Our space for action is too undefined to succeed.	• Curious to learn what we can gain from this cooperation • Open to the possible synergies this will create • Can we construct space for more exciting tasks this way? • Can this restructuring put the medical supply function higher on the political agenda? • Can we support strategic change this way? • I feel like embarking on this journey and not know where we will end. • If I am to lead this restructuring, I have to believe in it otherwise none of my employees will. • We have to be careful not to put old wine in new bottles – we need to think out of the box. • There are new perspective on the other regions: they are no longer our competitors. • Move away from thinking that home done is well done • Being able to trust that our success depends on other's success • Work toward supporting co-creation if this is to succeed

[1]Ordinary and extraordinary leading were terms that were being used during the cross-regional top leader competence-development programme that Steven and the other leaders followed for a year.

How a relational perspective on leading can support untanglement

Looking at this from a relational perspective on leading, Hosking's (2010) words comes to mind: "In the context of this relational approach, it no longer makes sense to ask which narrative of leadership is correct … Instead we are invited to direct our attention to the ways in which relational processes open up or close down possibilities … including the space for others and to be other" (p. 8). Steven engages in a process where he comes to realize that a response

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'We have been allowed to explore and be reflexive.'
Steven

based on his existing knowledge, experiences and what he takes for granted and finds meaningful is only one out of multiple possible ways he can engage in co-constructing meaning and initiating sensible actions. And maybe it is time to be open to some of the other possible ways even though, in his own words, he does not; "… know where we [he and the other two regional leaders] will end up."

This movement is not something that Steven goes through individually. To use the words of Cunliffe (2011) "we are always selves in-relation-to-others…" (p. 657). Steven also expresses the relational aspects during the meeting, as he refers to how important the support from the other five leaders in the learning group have been "… I ascribe this to the programme and what we have been through; we have been allowed to explore and be reflexive." Steven also mentions how important the conversations were with the two regional leaders "… one has some very explorative ideas…" and "… with the other, it's been very easy to work on the right side [of the table]; he doesn't feel like there's anything at stake…".

A journey to create new meanings

For Steven to take on this "not-knowing" position (Anderson & Goolishian, 1992) was to – metaphorically speaking – work with untangling existing knots and meshing together differently and in new and unknown ways. This became a relational process where Steven reworked existing knowledge, experiences and what he and the cooperating leaders took for granted, because hanging on to them made the leaders anticipate a future they didn't find sustainable in the process of developing a proposal for merging the three regional medical supply functions. This movement meant that Steven and the other two leaders did not know where they would end up for periods of time but it was a journey that they actively embarked on to make room for new meanings to be created.

Steven said that how he experienced that this way of leading revolved around "daring to let go and throw oneself out there." For Steven this was a process of constantly being what McNamee (2015) refers to as "radically present", and continually being attentive to the surroundings and to the different ways meaning can be constructed here-and-now. It was also being reflexive about whether or not the way we communicate and construct meaning supports generating what the three regional leaders believed was a sustainable way of leading and organizing. Steven knew that not all colleagues – and especially within his region – would support his way of leading during this process. Some would probably, as he said "accuse him of selling off the family silver" and he also stated that "he was unsure whether he had a mandate for this [because] we're moving beyond the procurement agreements." Despite all of this Steven still found this more relational way of leading as "far more liberating."

This way of leading revolved around 'daring to let go and throw oneself out there.'
Steven

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AI Practitioner

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A Reflection on Leadership – From an Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner's Perspective

An AI practitioner from Asia reflects on her consulting practice and life journey in AI and connects the inspirations she has taken from appreciative leadership. In a pragmatic culture, and being a pragmatist herself, her clients' questions and concerns have strengthened her emphasis of the practicability of AI and Appreciative Leadership.

Practising Appreciative Inquiry (AI) has been a life-changing journey for me. Embedding AI principles in my life and consulting practice has brought me to another level of self-awareness. In this article, I share some of my reflections on leadership in an appreciative paradigm based on my professional and personal practice of AI.

Practising AI: A humble journey, for both practitioners and leaders.

How to sell AI to senior leaders and organizations – that has been one of the frequently asked questions from AI practitioners.

Thanks to my two mentors, Dr. Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom, the co-authors of *Appreciative Leadership, the Power of Appreciative Inquiry* and many other publications on AI, one thing I learnt at the beginning of my AI journey was not to sell AI.

Playing the role of a consultant is sometimes similar to a that of being a leader. People place high hopes on us, expecting us to be the most intelligent subject matter experts in the room and have all the answers and solutions. We are also expected to have full confidence in what we put forward and mean to achieve.

That reminds me of a dialogue with a client who once said to me: "Senior executives expect consultants to be highly intelligent, or otherwise they would not buy in." My response was, "It should not be the matter of how smart I am as a consultant, but whether I can extract the wisdom and intelligence of your people to support your organization's continuous growth."

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One step in co-creating a collective future that truly belongs to people

I trust the same applies to leaders in an appreciative paradigm – extracting the wisdom from people to co-create a collective future that truly belongs to them.

Evolving from 'I know it all' to 'letting people shine'

Recently I had a chance to revisit the book Appreciative Leadership before delivering the program designed by Diana and Amanda. I highlighted the program's aim by sharing their definition of Appreciative Leadership with the participants:

Appreciative Leadership is the relational capacity to mobilize creative potential and turn it into positive power – to set in motion positive ripples of confidence, energy, enthusiasm, and performance – to make a positive difference in the world.

I was struck by the notion of "relational capacity" when I first read the definition. It is not about skills or competencies – it is about growing our capacity, which allows us to embrace anything that enables us to practice appreciative leadership.

Unlike other conventional leadership approaches that emphasize leaders having the power and being the source to empower their people, what appreciative leaders do is to transform people's creative potential into positive power. This is not about how skillful leaders can use their power to influence people to fulfill some pre-set purposes. In this case leaders become more like catalysts for letting people shine on their own.

A story about introducing Appreciative Leadership – what does leadership mean to our culture and organizations?

Introducing AI to organizations has become a major part of my consulting business. I am from Hong Kong, and my work mainly targets the Greater China and South East Asia regions.

Since my background is strongly tied to organizational learning and people development, my contacts are mostly HRs and in-house learning professionals who constantly look for new solutions to develop their executives and leaders.

What appreciative leaders do is to transform people's creative potential into positive power.

The response has been encouraging – they love the idea of AI and Appreciative Leadership, and when it comes to the program's title – interestingly enough, they would rather not call the program "Appreciative Leadership".
Their considerations were the same – AI was new to their people. When we used the word leadership in the program name, people would have certain expectations which could be very different from what AI offers…

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A model is created in an Appreciative Leadership workshop to showcase an organization's ideal leader.

My first assumption was about cultural differences. We are in a high-power distance culture. The co-creative and relational practices in Appreciative Leadership may lead to feelings of being in less control, especially for senior executives.

Lately I have seen that it is more than a different cultural perspective. The organizations I have been in touch with are major ones that are willing to invest massively in people development, including employing renowned global brands of leadership development programs.

The leadership practice that supports AI takes a great deal of courage, in letting go of the long-established image of strong leadership, to allow people to unleash their full potential.

Use the language that people feel connected to

Another frequently asked question about applying AI in organizations is whether people can answer the Appreciative Interview questions.

During a recent AI sharing event, a young gentleman from a hotel group's learning and development team asked me about promoting a caring culture in their hotels. He tried to ask their staff to share their caring experiences, only to find that some participants were not able to blend in, particularly those who were experienced.

It sounded familiar to me. I came from a tough corporate background and was used to strict business language – result, performance, goals, targets... Caring for people does sound good, but business IS business. There is no mercy if a business does not make profit and sustain itself.

In some social or organizational cultures, words like caring, love, even high-point experience may sound too sentimental and make people feel uneasy. My recommendation is to choose words that sound more business-like and rational, such as to understand or to be understood.

In a co-creative process, everybody is a part of the meaning making. Using languages that allows people to feel connected helps build a common foundation and move forward.

What is amazing about languages is that they can be appreciated in multiple layers and meanings. In a co-creative process, everybody is a part of the meaning making. Using languages that allows people to feel connected helps build a common foundation and move forward.

Is being positive the key?

Another interesting question was raised at the same event – so would positive people work better when they practice AI?

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The impact should not be caused by a person with unique qualities, but by the process and practice.

From a business and marketing viewpoint, packaging AI as a positive approach helps draw attention and attract the growing number of organizations eager to seek positive solutions to engage their people.

In my experience, positive emotions and relationships are by-products created naturally during the AI process. The aim is to unite people to construct what they want collectively based on their strengths and on best practice. It may sound too pragmatic to the strong believers in positivity, but to me AI is more about focus of energy and resources to achieve what we really want.

My response to that question was that positive people could make a certain impact on the group dynamics. I was not a born optimist, but I could still use the same process to generate the positive impact. The impact should not be caused by a person with unique qualities, but by the process and practice. If you were trained in the same process, you should be able to do it and create the same impact. Personally I would rather trust a process that works than relying on a person's charisma.

Imagine that same effect applies to leadership – what would happen if we could remove all the charismatic quality of a leader, and still generate the same positive impact in our organizations and communities?

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AI Practitioner

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Relationally Responsive Moments That Enable Positive Change

Social construction can be considered a highly relational way of being in the world and with others. How can we then look at practices like Appreciative Inquiry through this lens? What would we notice? This article looks at relational leading and responsive moments between people that helped enable relating and shared meaning making which created positive change within a community of research scientists.

What can happen when we focus on change as an inquisitive relational process that helps us continually move towards "what is to become?" (Gergen, 2014).

Many change efforts offer methods and tools to get to a predetermined end-state. But if we focus on creating together, rather than trying to discover a meaning that already exists outside of ourselves, we can gain a different level of understanding of relational questions that may enable us to go on in new and enriched ways. This view of research is relationally engaged and different from other understandings of the research process (McNamee, 2000). It focuses on an emergent "interplay of relations, shaped movements and connections, occurring in our responsive interactions" (Cunliffe, 2002 pg. 130). It supports Wittgenstein's notion of dialogue and conversations as the space where our articulating creates relationships with our surroundings, and as we exchange in dialogue and meaning making we also re-create ourselves, others and our possibilities for action (Wittgenstein, 1953). This article will offer a view on the practice of relational leading in an organizational change effort using Appreciative Inquiry (AI).

Starting conversations

Local reality or social order contributes to, and emerges from, ongoing processes of dialogue or "multiloguing" (Dachler & Hosking, 1995 pg.4).

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We realized that scientific leadership and useful impacts of leading meant something different to everyone, even though we were part of the same community.

An organizational development colleague and I were approached by a group of scientific project leaders at the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, a drug discovery research engine for Novartis, because they wanted to revisit the way they were leading teams. To begin this conversation, each person was asked to share their perception of what it meant to be a team leader. Through our multiloguing we realized that scientific leadership and useful impacts of leading meant something different to everyone, even though we were part of the same community. As we started to inquire into the topic our curiosity and research together began.

Seeing others: Inviting intentions and perspectives

We opened a dialogue on why they wanted to revisit team leadership. We wanted to get a sense of who would care about this question as well as answer "why now", and so as we talked we created a network relationship map of the scientific project team and worked to "perceive the network relations" (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006 pg. 419) that were connected to this topic. This was done not with an intention to manage those on the list, but to engage them so that we could reflect together on our current ways of relating.

We held a conversation with this network community and the group decided they were seeking change because the way they were practicing science was changing. Their community was responsible for finding compounds that would help treat disease. This used to be a linear and set process that was becoming more dynamic and iterative. The changing context was prompting them to revisit the way they were leading, where the project team leader was no longer the expert of all the science, experiments and data interpretation. It was now a shared responsibility.

Co-creating in our research: Diverge to converge

"The power of conversationally constructed realities lies in people speaking and listening as (responsible) creators, rather than as reporters" (Ford, 1999 pg.493).

We used wide-reaching surveys and feedback to determine what our leadership inquiry and change should focus on, and sense-checked our interpretations with those who volunteered to do so. When we reviewed various change approaches there was a unified reaction against options like training programs, and strong resonance to our words when we talked about creating a shared exploration. The conversations gave us ideas for how to frame an AI summit. We converged on a metaphor of leadership as exceptionally interconnected, and helpful networks and how leadership could be applied to practices of knowledge-generation and sharing, decision making and project coordination.

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In a relational view, we can look at knowing less from an individual lens to more of a meaning-making process between individuals.

To determine who would attend the summit we wrote down approaches with pros and cons, ultimately deciding to include the project team leaders, project managers and senior sponsors. We were not able to invite team members due to logistics and timing constraints, and chose not to include a subset so as not to privilege anyone in that group. To increase comfort with our choice, we promised ourselves to make efforts to include them in the process soon after the AI session.

Designing as a collaborative process

Hosking wrote that "when a person is understood as a knowing individual s/he is being viewed as a subject, distinguishable from the objects of nature" (Dachler & Hosking, 1995 pg. 3).

In a relational view, we can look at knowing less from an individual lens to more of a meaning-making process between individuals. To blend the traditional roles of participants and facilitators, we spent several hours with a participant design team reviewing the 4D AI cycle and how we might create a compelling exploration. The design team helped to fine tune interview questions and shaped language to be relatable for the community. The team also expressed a wish to learn from what has been working well and to expand their thinking around new ways of leading. This prompted us to propose research papers and TedTalk-style videos which could support their exploration during the AI session. We also asked the community to give us their ideas and used a voting process to select final choices. In these dialogues, the research process continued.

The AI summit

During Day One of the summit, we broke into three subgroups to watch the videos or read the selected articles on new ways of leading. Subgroups shared back to the whole group what they thought were inspiring key messages, and the group had time to ask clarifying questions and share what they liked about what they were hearing. Lastly, we all expressed our hopes for the future and its impact by using pictures and words. Many in the group said using continual inquiry and sharing back what we thought we heard and liked was important to building our shared understanding.

When we returned to themes we had captured the day before, confusion around a few of them surfaced.

An event at the beginning of the second day reminded me of Dachler and Hosking's words, where they said meanings are open and have no ultimate origin or ultimate truth (1995). When we returned to themes we had captured the day before, confusion around a few of them surfaced. We unpacked what we thought we had meant the day before, and made new sense again of the stories to ensure we could create as much shared understanding as possible. This, for me, was an example of how intentions and meaning unfold moment to moment, and we should be careful in assuming one conversation is the end of meaning creation.

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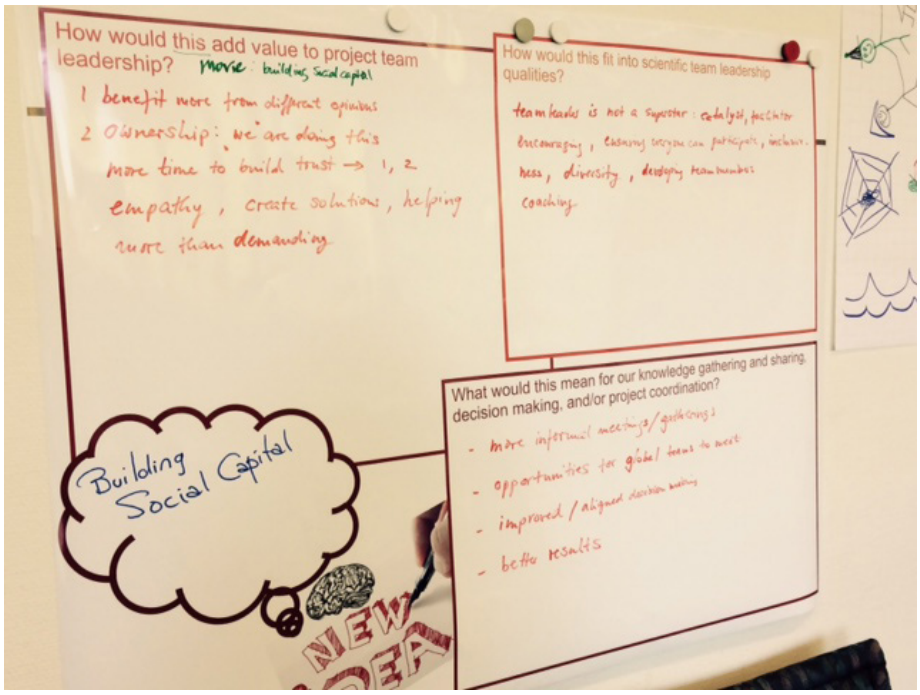

After the AI summit

On the last day of the summit, the group formed co-leads around their project ideas. A few weeks later progress slowed, and we were asked by them to help regain momentum. What happened next will address how we as practitioners can support the evolution of change in complex organizational life through relational process. When it comes to emergence in the social constructionist view, we are invited to consider a change that is unpredictable, since what is created stems from the shared inquiry of individuals and a meaning that surfaces from the group in the moment rather than something planned. Patricia Shaw describes her role as a consultant in a conversational approach to sense making and states she acts as someone who helps to leave "open the space of sense making" longer than it would have been without her there. She refers to this as attending to the process of relating (Shaw, 2002 pg.33) and shares that, by opening this space during a change process, we can better allow for different voices along the way. She also points out that this is not always a harmonious evolution.

If we open the space of sense-making we can better allow for different voices along the way. This is not always a harmonious evolution.

When the co-leads met after the AI session to fine tune the summit project scopes, they were confused about the purpose of one of them and expressed concern that one or two dominant voices had shaped it. They also felt they had received a message from their sponsors to focus on other priorities and interpreted that to mean they should put these projects on hold. Hearing their frustrations, we asked if they would support us in helping explore the project in question and to speak to their sponsors. They agreed.

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Change can happen by changing who is in conversations with whom.
Bushe and Marshak

We hosted a conversation with the project team leader community and sponsors around the three project scopes. There was still energy for two and the confusion over the third surfaced quickly. After the group tried without success to make meaning through sharing statements about what it meant, the frustration mounted. We then asked the room to tell personal stories which exemplified the project purpose for them. After several minutes, the group realized they were already doing what the project set out to do and agreed to share more stories in the future. The individuals who had pushed for the project were happy and felt heard by the community and sponsors. Their frustration seemed to melt in that conversation and the room's tension lifted, enabling us to move forward.

Next we spoke to the leaders, where we learned they had been exploring one project themselves. The team had heard this and was disheartened by the exclusion. We also shared the fact that their teams felt these projects were not priorities; the leaders recalled the words they had said to give this impression. The sponsors wanted to change the perception and unite efforts, so we agreed to meet together with the co-leads to define the scope together for the year. These were bridging conversations, where we were able to connect in order to converge again.

Closing reflections

It can serve us to realize that "intentions are forming all the time, not as fully completed plans but as movements in the way things seem to be shaping up" (Shaw, 2002 pg. 35). As relational leaders, we can focus on relational process and moments of tension and/or divergence as opportunities to shape change efforts. Frank Barrett talks about improvisations in jazz as something that borders on chaos and incoherence since it is "widely open to transformation, redirection, and unprecedented turns". He relates it to a "continual process of negotiation" or continual dialogue (Barrett, 2012 pg. 32).

Thinking about emergent change as something that occurs in each moment in our day-to-day conversations opens the door for it to be viewed as an everyday practice or research. We can attend to divergence and tensions by attempting to slow down the space between feeling and judging/acting, and chose to fill it with inquiry, reflexivity and relational research.

As relational leaders, we can focus on relational process and moments of tension as opportunities to shape change.

Disruptions pull the attention of the group to the present moment in a pronounced way, where members become acutely aware of and attentive to each other in order to be able to respond to each other and re-establish a "mutual orientation" (Barrett, 2012 pg. 33). Barret goes on the say that this is a highly relational emergence that results in a performance where members are "able to perform beyond their capacity" (Barrett, 2012 pg. 34) and play together in new ways they could not have anticipated.

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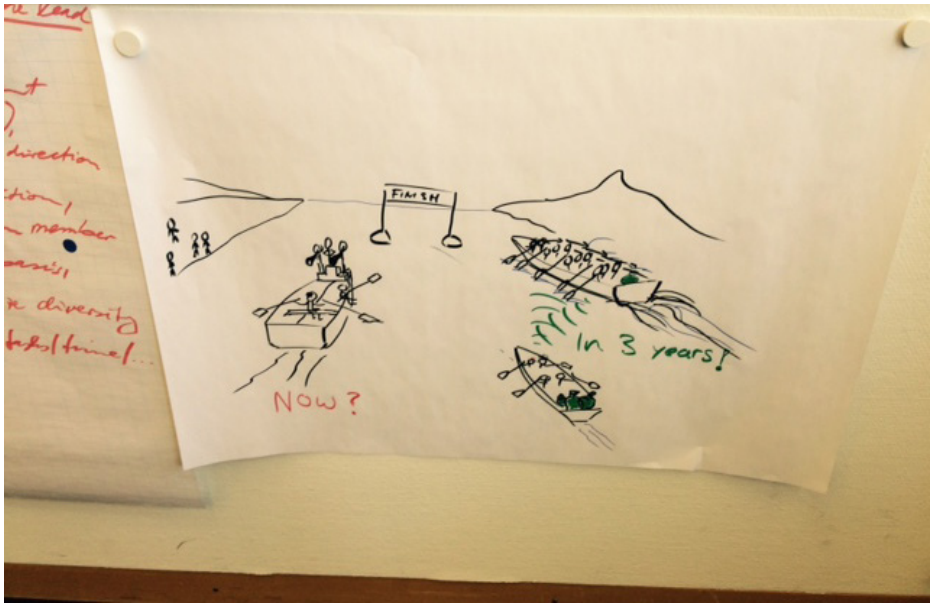
Attending to these moments and framing them as opportunities to build new understanding and connection to one another is important.

Bushe and Marshak state that change can happen by changing who is in conversations with whom and by increasing the diversity in content through the inclusion of marginalized voices. Therefore, they also state that how conversations take place is important for shared meaning making and creation. They offer practices like asking what is being created from the content and process of the current conversation. They encourage us to think of the principles of participatory inquiry and enable stakeholders to voice their unique perspectives, concerns and aspirations, without privileging anyone before seeking new convergences and coherences.

As the group now reconnects, they are re-negotiating what their intention is as a larger community. This can be a learning point for how different efforts can enter the same dialogue again and potentially coordinate in new ways. As relational

Image of the future



leaders and facilitators, helping people see and engage in instances of conflict and/or tension becomes critically important in these moments (Lichtenstein, 2014). Shaw describes these as times where our bodies as well as our minds are engaged. For example, we tap into the feelings where we may notice a "change in our body responses" like a quickened heart rate (Shaw, 2002 pg. 32). As relational leaders, attending to these moments and framing them as opportunities to build new understanding and connection to one another is important. Benyamin Lichtenstein sums this up in a succinct way where he describes "emergence as the creation of order" which gives rise to something "new and unexpected" not just in what we do, but how we relate to each other and go on together along the way (Lichtenstein, 2014 pg. 1).

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AI Practitioner

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Appreciative Leaders: Is *Then* the Same as *Now*?

This article highlights the findings of *Appreciative Leaders* (2001) the first book published by Taos Institute Focus Book Series based on interviews with 28 appreciative leaders. Then, we share why there was a decision to do a second study which includes 50 appreciative leaders and initial findings, and how our own thinking has evolved around the topic of appreciative leaders.

"The task of a leader is to create an alignment of strengths and make people's weaknesses irrelevant." Peter Drucker

In a 2015 survey of McKinsey's top read articles, seven of ten articles were on leadership, leadership styles or leadership development. Leadership is an ageless topic with over 35,000 books to choose from Amazon.com alone and, with a quick Google search, hundreds of thousands of articles to read. In writing this article, we learned from dictionary.com that the origins of "leader" go back to 1250 and "leadership" to 1815. At its core, a leader is one who guides, motivates and inspires another or a group to move in a direction. And, leadership is the ability to lead.

Warner Burke (2008) stated (as we agree wholeheartedly) that there are as many diverse definitions of leadership as there are of love. He further explained that "leadership [was] the act of making something happened that would not otherwise occurred," (p. 228). We challenge the aspect that leaders cannot directly make things happen. We believe a leader can rally a group around a shared mission (purpose) to embrace a shared vision (direction), and display a set of values that inspire others to make things happen. We define an effective leader the way a participant did in an Appreciative Inquiry seminar many years ago. He said, "Everyone is a leader because we all lead our own lives." The question we are addressing in this article is "What is an appreciative leader?

We want to share with you our insights into appreciative leaders based on the seminal study of 28 appreciative leaders in 2001 (then), why there is a new

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'Everyone is a leader because we all lead our own lives.'
AI seminar participant

emerging study of 50 appreciative leaders (now), and how our own thinking has evolved around the topic of appreciative leaders.

Background

It has been 15 years since the publication of *Appreciative Leaders: In the Eye of the Beholder*, the first book published by the Taos Institute in its Focus Book Series. The Taos Institute is a non-profit community of scholars and practitioners working to explore and extend the proposition that, through human relationships, we construct our realities. The Taos Institute series was chosen because of the power of the Social Constructionist principle that "we live in our worlds that our questions create and, precisely because of this, humility is a strong quality of leaders … appreciative leaders have an infectious curiosity and lead with a spirit of inquiry", as stated by David Cooperrider (Schiller, Holland and Riley, 2001, p. xii). The book was written to describe and understand a new style of leadership – that of appreciative leadership. The intent was to share practices of these appreciative leaders in the eye of the beholders who both identified and interviewed their leader.

Several years before the conception of the book, Marge Schiller taught a course called Appreciative Leadership at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) in Charlottesville, Virginia. FEI is the premier training facility for senior US Federal Government officials. The course was a challenge because it is difficult to articulate or provide a clear explanation of what an appreciative leader is. What does an appreciative leader walk like, talk like – and lead like?

This curiosity provided the opportunity to start an anthropological adventure – the editors invited seasoned Appreciative Inquiry (AI) practitioners to find an appreciative leader and to conduct appreciative interviews. The topics to discover the positive core of an appreciative leader were:

1. The task of bringing out the best in human beings and organizations
2. Appreciative relationships
3. Positive image and positive actions
4. The spirit of inquiry
5. The role of positive affect in bringing out the best in others

These 28 appreciative leadership interviews provided a lot of rich-thick description to begin to understand what an appreciative leader is, and a model was derived to best articulate their combined characteristics:

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As the Appreciative Leadership model shows, appreciative leaders have three main competencies: world view, appreciative practices and values. *Worldview* is made up by the attributes of visioning, inspiring and being holistic. The appreciative leader embodies six *appreciative practices*: challenges, encourages, enables, coaches, inquires and dialogues. Appreciative leaders lead by *values* that display genuineness, credibility and respect. What connects the three

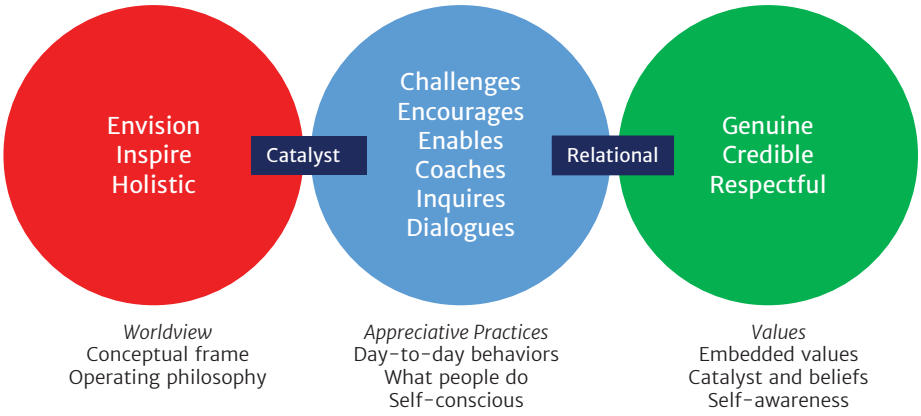

Figure 1. Model of Appreciative Leadership
Source: Schiller, Holland and Riley (2001). *Appreciative Leaders: In the Eye of the Beholder,* p. 159, Chagrin Fall, OH: Taos Institute of Publishing

competencies are that these leaders are catalyst and relational in nature (Schiller, et al., 2001). The five major themes that emerged from the interviews were (p. 162):

1. Appreciative leaders are belief-based with an explicit spiritual orientation and practice
2. Leadership lives in the group and not in any one person
3. Multiple truths exist in ways of thinking, doing and being
4. Appreciative leaders have an unwavering commitment to bring out the best in themselves and others
5. Appreciative leaders find generative forces in their many circumstances and multiple systems

In 2012, Jackie Stavros and Anne Kohnke teamed up with Marge Schiller to do a new set of interviews to see how appreciative leaders have evolved. In the last few years, 50 interviews have been completed, and the data are being analyzed to consider appreciative leaders then and now.

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Values were found to be foundational to appreciative leaders.

From then to now: How the thinking on appreciative leaders is evolving

The original study of appreciative leaders had one overarching research question: What is an appreciative leader? This new study adds two more questions:

Q. What are the practices of an appreciative leader?
Q. How do appreciative leaders create generative connections with others?

This new study continued with the anthropological approach to describe and articulate stories of positive, revolutionary leaders who are transforming their organizations and industries, and the world, through appreciative modalities of knowing, interrelating and the active social construction of reality.

The appreciative interview guide added a new topic on values. Why? Values were found to be foundational to appreciative leaders. Therefore, we wanted to learn what are the three to five core values that define and govern these appreciative leaders' behaviors? We also wanted to know what these leaders value about themselves and those they lead. At its core, alignment with values defines who you are, your actions, how you make decisions and how you treat others.

The 15 interview questions of the first survey rose to 21 questions for the second because of the two additional value questions, plus the fact that we also wanted to explore more deeply the topic of inquiry as a "strategic inquiry with an appreciative intent". How do these leaders understand their strengths and leverage the strengths, opportunities and aspirations of their followers to create meaningful results.

We decided to start the appreciative interview with two opening questions:

Q. Can you please share a great experience (peak moment) in your life as a leader?
Q. How do you define leadership?

Today's new leaders have a variety of technological tools such as social media, instant messaging, crowdsourcing and smartphones that require distinct skills to effectively navigate communications and relationships. It is easy to get information overload and in the rush to respond and keep current, communication can be compromised and relationships strained. Appreciative leaders manage to transcend the technological advancements and use them wisely to stay connected, informed and lead effectively. The final question added was: *Knowing that rate of change and technological advancements continue to accelerate a warp speeds, how do you stay on top of change that allows you to be current yet still feel in control of your life*?

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In the final phase, ideally, there is also an embodyment of AI as a way of appreciatively feeling, thinking, saying and doing.

Right now, we are in the process of coding the interview data using a constant comparative method which includes a recurrent cycle of interviewing, assessing, coding, interpreting, and even doing additional interviewing during the analysis stage to shape the findings. Our goal is to see what can be learned *now* and compared to what we learned *then*.

Reflective thoughts

As we analyze the interview data, we like to share some reflective thoughts that have occurred through our correspondence and meetings during this second study. First, we had a conversation of the topic added to the interview protocol: values because we noticed the theme of "embodyment". Yes, the spellcheck function in MS Word wants to correct it to "embodiment", but we chose to spell it with a "y" because we see *embodyment* as coming from within. At the core of these last 50 interviews, these leaders really embody the five core AI principles. In bringing this to the practice of the AI 4D cycle of Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny, it occurred to us that the fourth D, Destiny, has gone through multiple iterations: Delivery, Destiny and recently we heard it referred to as Deployment.

The original labeling of the fourth D as delivery sounds rather linear and suggests finality. It sounds like saying "Hey, I'm done!" The fourth D most often used is Destiny. This suggests inevitability and even a presumption of serendipity. The new interviews with appreciative leaders suggest that when going through Discover, Dream, Design and Destiny, in the final phase, ideally, there is also an embodyment of AI as a way of appreciatively feeling, thinking, saying and doing.

We have noticed that, since the publication of *Appreciative Leadership*, several appreciative-related leadership styles have emerged, including mindful, positive, humble, resonant and relational leadership styles. There are also the traditional styles of leadership, such as transformational and strategic leadership that, like appreciative leadership, have characteristics of values, vision, mission and how to enact leadership from the appreciative stance of seeing the whole system, understanding purpose and practices, and leading both oneself and the members of a system based on a core set of shared values. These leadership styles complement appreciative leadership, yet have distinctive elements.

A third is that appreciative leaders have more than one style or set of behaviors. When the Appreciative Leaders book was written, a clear contrast was made between leadership styles. Command-and-control leadership style was contrasted with appreciative leadership. The subtext was that command-and-control leadership style was bad, and appreciative leadership style was good. Command-and-control leadership refers to a traditional top-down leadership style, suggesting people need to be directed regarding their roles, and what they must do to perform efficiently and effectively (Mintzberg, 1975). In the

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The best leaders are seen as the ones who 'walk like they talk'.

21st century of style of leadership, leaders can shape an organization and how people perform. As we look to leadership styles, we see it is leader-centric and situation-dependent. Leadership styles can be a "both/and". A leader may have a natural leadership style and also an adaptive leadership style that a situation may call for. Ken Blanchard's (1999) work on situational leadership would say that there are times when both styles are just right. It depends on the situation.

What's next?

As practitioner researchers and writers, our perspectives are shaped by our life ages. Professor Morris Massey suggest "You are what you were when," in his classic 1976 video series. Intergenerational collaboration is at the heart of work together, and it is exciting for us and will be for appreciative leaders.

In our combined 70 years of working (Marge, 45 years and Jackie, 25 years), there have been two constant themes we wish to share. First, the best leaders are seen as the ones who "walk like they talk" – they lead by example. These appreciative leaders' behaviors are in alignment with their core value set, and they have a personal vision (direction) and mission (purpose) that is aligned with the organization's values, vision and mission. Second, appreciative leaders are an embodyment of their values and principles. Values encompass beliefs and ideals while principles are accepted ways of behaving. Their values and principles are articulated and demonstrated in their interactions with others.

As our understanding of appreciative leaders continues to evolve, we are discerning that human systems (i.e. leadership) are governed by the merits of looking at the world from a generative perspective. By generative, we mean a way of understanding and seeing the world that has the power to generate new ways of leading and being in relationships with one another. Gervase Bushe (2013) best describes generativity, as "the creation of new images, metaphors, physical representations that have two qualities: they change how people think so that new options for decisions and/or actions become available to them, and they are compelling images that people act on" (p. 89). As we continue to mine the data, reflect on how then and now are simultaneously similar and different, we look forward to sharing our generative findings with each other and the AI community.

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AI Practitioner

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Appreciative Leadership: Responding Relationally to the Questions of Our Time

The world has changed, the questions challenging leadership have changed, and hence the nature of leadership must change. This article introduces Appreciative Leadership, a repertoire of life-affirming, relational strategies and practices to address the challenges of the 21st century.

Our bookshelves are full of leadership books written to answer questions similar to those put forth by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner in their bestselling book, The Leadership Challenge (1987): "How do you get other people to want to follow you? How do you get other people, by free will and free choice, to move forward together on a common purpose? Just how do you get others to want to do things?" (p. 1) For decades these questions have set the stage and prescribed what it means to be a leader and what is expected of leaders. They clearly advance the idea that leadership is about individual leaders being able to make other people do things!

While these questions may have been of use when they were written, it is not hard to see that today the world is asking those who would be leaders a very different set of questions. Do you hear us? What do we need to do to be included and heard? Do you understand that we are one humanity with many different beliefs, preferences and practices that are all okay? How do we Africans, Middle Easterners, Asians, Americans, Latinos and Europeans, who are very different from each other, work and live well together? How do we all have a life that is healthy, affordable, safe and sustainable?

These questions are not so much about how leaders influence people to act, but rather about how leaders hear and respond to the voices of people in organizations and communities around the world. The old model of leadership command-and-control has given way to leadership processes that enable people,

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We define Appreciative Leadership as the relational capacity to mobilize creative potential and turn it into positive power.

in the words of Steve Haeckel, to "sense and respond" (1993). For us, these questions are an invitation to Appreciative Leadership.

What follows is a brief overview of the ideas in our book *Appreciative Leadership*. These notions emerged first from our informal everyday research as consultants (Whitney, Trosten-Bloom and Rader, 2010, pp. xvii-xx) and were later derived from hundreds of interviews and focus-group narratives about leadership that we gathered and synthesized (Whitney, Trosten-Bloom and Rader, 2010, pp. xx-xxii). They are the foundation for our leadership development program , leadership team building and leadership coaching activities. We hope they will stretch your thinking and give you practical ways to work with leadership from an appreciative paradigm.

Appreciative Leadership defined

We define Appreciative Leadership as the relational capacity to mobilize creative potential and turn it into positive power – to set in motion ripples of confidence, energy, enthusiasm and performance – to make a positive difference in the world (Whitney, Trosten-Bloom and Rader, 2010, p. 3). Embedded in this definition are four formative ideas about Appreciative Leadership:

1. *Appreciative Leadership practices are relational*. All work, indeed all life, occurs in relationship. Ken Gergen offers the most substantive understanding of relational capacities in his book, Relational Being (2009). "None of the qualities attributed to good leaders stands alone. Alone one cannot be inspiring, visionary, humble or flexible. These qualities are the achievements of a coactive process in which others' affirmation is essential." For Gergen, "Leadership resides in the confluence" (p. 331). Relational capacity means that we accept relationships as always present, as surrounding us and infusing us with their presence, as the context for all that we do and are. The Appreciative Leadership task is then to become relationally aware, to tune into patterns of relationship – to see, hear, sense and affirm what is already happening in order to join in and perform with it.
2. *Appreciative Leadership practices are positive and life affirming*. The processes and practices of Appreciative Leadership grow from a positive worldview, a set of beliefs and a way of seeing people and situations that is uniquely and by choice positive and life affirming. It is a worldview that seeks to hold each and every person in positive regard. The Appreciative Leadership task is to understand that everyone has unique gifts and creative potential that come forth when invited through affirmation, inquiry and dialogue.

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'It is precisely through inquiry that appreciative leaders realize and unleash not their own but other peoples' genius.'
David Cooperrider

3. *Appreciative Leadership turns potential into positive power (results)*. At the heart of Appreciative Leadership are processes and practices for sensing potential and working with others to turn it into positive power – that is, into life-affirming results. With the support of Appreciative Leadership, people can outgrow the limits of their realities and move into a larger, more appreciative world. As David Cooperrider suggests, "The appreciative leader enlarges everyone's knowledge and vision of the world … not by having solid answers but with expansive questions. It is precisely through inquiry that appreciative leaders realize and unleash not their own but other peoples' genius" (Schiller, Holland and Riley, p. xi). With Appreciative Leadership, powerful, sustainable results come from unleashing peoples' creative energy and enthusiasm.

4. *Appreciative Leadership sets ripples of change in motion*. Our words, deeds and relationships influence those whom we touch and, subsequently, those with whom they related. Indeed, it might be said that we are all like pebbles cast into life's pond. Our influence ripples outward, affecting people, organizations and communities well beyond our immediate reach. Appreciative Leadership processes set things in motion. By activating vibrant conversations and collaborative relationships, they unleash peoples' creative potential, encouraging those people to do the same for others. In short, Appreciative Leadership sends waves of positive change rippling from one relationship to another – and to the world at large.

Five Appreciative Leadership strategies

Five Appreciative Leadership Strategies
Whitney, Trosten-Bloom and Rader, *Appreciative Leadership* , p. 1
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The stories we collected during interviews and focus groups yielded a long list of appreciative practices at individual, one-to-one, team and organizational levels of engagement. We grouped the list of practices into five clusters resulting in what we now call the Five Core Strategies of Appreciative Leadership: Inquiry, Illumination, Inclusion, Inspiration and Integrity (p.23). Each strategy encompasses a wide range of practices that enable coordinated action and foster high performance.

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Appreciative questions are a source of positive power.

The wisdom of inquiry: Asking positively powerful questions

Appreciative questions are a source of positive power. They can be used to weave relationships among people, departments and organizations to unleash a wealth of information, ideas and best practices, and to stimulate collaborative learning, innovation and high performance.

A simple inquiry benefited the distribution department of a major retailer when a surge in sales left its warehouse with an unexpected three-fold increase in deliveries. Rather than announcing a plan, the manager gathered people together and asked, "What creative ideas do you have for how we might handle this situation?" Responses were wide-ranging and surprising. "I'll work all seven days next week." "We could all work on Sunday and then have dinner together." "We could hire a moving company." "Some of our teenage sons and daughters might want to help out for the week!" None were solutions the manager had thought of and, most likely, none would have been acceptable had they been mandated.

This example illustrates how inquiry sets the stage for sincere collaboration. Asking people to share their stories of success and their ideas for the future while actively listening to what they have to say sends a message: "I value you and your thinking." This, in turn, fosters creativity and commitment.

The art of illumination: Bringing out the best of people and situations

Appreciative leadership practices encourage inquiry and dialogue about strengths, high performance patterns and the root causes of success. They place attention on what works and why, rather than what does not work. Individual and collective strengths are a well of potential waiting to be discovered.

For example, when a major health care system invited patients to talk about their local hospital at its best, patients shared stories about the kitchen staff member who drew happy pictures and put them on food trays; the hospital housekeeper who ran a bath for a mother who had learned her son had cancer; and the physician who bought lobster and had the kitchen prepare a candlelit last dinner for a dying patient and his wife. The stories opened team members' minds and hearts, helping them understand and deliver what patients valued most.

Through the practices of illumination, people learn about their strengths and the strengths of others.

Illumination helps people understand specifically how they can best contribute. Through the practices of illumination, people learn about their strengths and the strengths of others. They gain confidence to express themselves, take risks and support others in working from their strengths.

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In order for decisions and plans for the future to satisfy and serve diverse groups of people, everyone connected to them must be invited into relationship and included in dialogue and decision-making.

The genius of inclusion: Engaging with people to co-create the future

Consciously engaging with people to co-create is an indispensable practice for unleashing the positive power of today's multicultural, multigenerational and multitalented workforce. Realities are crafted in relationship through conversations and collaborations. In order for decisions and plans for the future to satisfy and serve diverse groups of people, everyone connected to them must be invited into relationship and included in dialogue and decision-making.

Acts of inclusion range from personal to global. An HR manager we know shared how she invited several employees to collaboratively design a new professional development program. The outcome – a unique, innovative and highly successfully program – reminded her that it is "easy it is to be creative when you include other people." An architect shared that LEED (leadership in energy and environmental design) processes are based on inclusion, requiring that members of all trades – engineers, contractors and architects – collaborate from the start. Large group processes such as World Café, Open Space, Future Search and Appreciative Inquiry Summits take inclusion to scale, engaging dozens, or even hundreds, of stakeholders in strategic visioning, community development and organization transformation.

Inclusion creates an environment in which people are invited to contribute. As a result, they feel they are essential, that they matter and that they are safe to express their ideas. When people feel part of something, they care about it and for it. The genius of inclusion is that people commit to what they help create.

The courage of inspiration: Awakening the creative spirit

Inspiration embodies a courageous invitation to transcend the status quo. It breathes life into new possibilities, offering hope in the midst of crisis and giving people a reason and a way to go forward. It prompts innovation and actions not previously thought possible. Even when resources are abundant, nothing changes and nothing of merit happens without inspiration from a lively vision and path forward.

When low customer satisfaction scores threatened an insurance company's Medicare reimbursement, they chose to positively engage employees and customers in interviews, focus groups and summits focused on "service excellence." Rapidly and collaboratively, people envisioned new ways of working and organized for action. Within eight months, ratings increased to above-average levels of customer satisfaction.

Appreciative Leadership practices support people to collectively envision a new or renewed future while creating hope that, together, they can bring their vision to life. In the words of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather

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To be on the path of integrity is to be growing and evolving toward wholeness and helping others to do the same.

teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." The people we talked with do not yearn to be micromanaged, they yearn to be appreciated and engaged in meaningful, uplifting, enlivening work that serves the greater good.

The path of integrity: Making choices for the good of the whole

Appreciative leadership practices support people to consider and balance the whole organization, community or family in their decision-making. They invite people to attend to their connections to the whole, to give their best for the greater good and to trust others will do the same. To be on the path of integrity is to be growing and evolving toward wholeness and helping others to do the same. It is a path of health and healing, personally, relationally and globally.

For example, recognizing that layoffs were inevitable, a leadership team sought ways to foster health and wholeness for all involved. Beginning with immediate, open and transparent communication, they offered people a range of choices for how they might go forward. They sought volunteers to job share and/or work part-time. They hosted "town hall" meetings for people to talk about the situation and consider their options. They provided onsite career counseling, job fairs, and they opened their own networks to people seeking new jobs. And they provided opportunities for those who were left behind to meet and discuss "survivors'" guilt.

Because caring for the wellbeing of the employees and their families was a priority, the organization remained a valued community employer. News reporters following the process had only good news to share. The outplacement consultant that supported those departing commented that it was the most positive layoff he'd ever experienced.

Getting Results with AI
Whitney, Trosten-Bloom and Rader, Appreciative Leadership, p. 197
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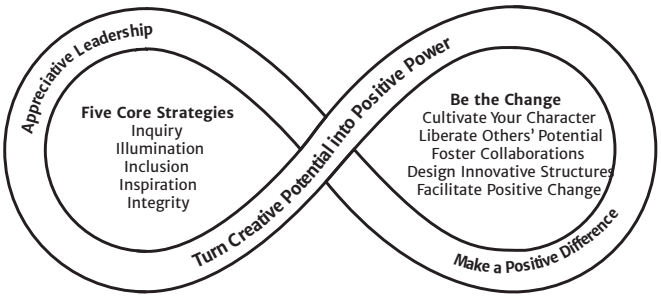
Getting Results with Appreciative Leadership



© *Appreciative Leadership: Focus on What Works to Drive Winning Performance and Build a Thriving Organization*
Whitney, Trosten-Bloom and Rader, 2010

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Appreciative leaders invite others to join them in seeking answers to the challenging questions of our time; questions that call us to first, to do no harm and then, to be a life affirming force for the greater good.

Attending to the whole may not be easy. It certainly is not business as usual, but it is what we need to create global prosperity, sustainability and peace.

Conclusion

The proposal put forth in this article is that the world has changed, the questions challenging leaders have changed, and hence the nature of leadership must change. Gone are the days when leaders of successful businesses and communities were driven by questions such as, "How do I get the most out of resources, financial and human?" "What do I do when people won't commit to defined goals or comply with established policies?" "How do I influence people to do more for less, for the good of the company?" While still resounding in the halls of leadership, these questions have lost their charm. They are not relevant in a world of continual disruption, highly nuanced and public diversity, globalized economics and ecologies in danger. The world has become too complex to go forward without collaboration.

Leaders of thriving organizations, businesses and communities today are people who respond successfully to a categorically different set of questions. They wonder about and invite others to join them in seeking answers to questions such as, "How can our innovations in science and technology benefit humanity as a whole?" "How can we create a world that works for everyone?" "How do we create safe spaces, peace zones and healing for everyone who needs them?" "What is enough – food, water, access to nature, education, money, art – and how can we ensure that everyone has enough?" "How do I help people fulfill their greatest potential in service to humanity?" These questions ask leaders and organizations to first do no harm and then to be a life-affirming force for the greater good.

The strategies and practices of Appreciative Leadership offer a way forward, a repertoire of practices useful to those seeking to respond positively to these questions and meet the challenges of our time. Yet they are not the only way. Like all creative calls, they are part of a larger movement: a paradigm shift in the field of leadership.

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AI Practitioner

Nourish to Flourish

Nourish to Flourish is a new section of AI Practitioner, which brings together existing elements of AI Practitioner with new ideas.

Voices from the Field

Keith Storace

Based in Melbourne Australia, Keith Storace, a registered psychologist, is driven by a deep interest in social inclusion. He has worked across the health and education sectors. Maintaining an active interest in the organisational benefits of AI, Keith is currently developing the Motivation and Capacity Framework (MaCF) for managers and leaders.

Heike Aiello

Since 2005, Heike Aiello has been working as process facilitator, organisational change consultant and AI trainer in the Netherlands. Heike specialises in the implementation of Appreciative Inquiry in everyday organisations. She designs and teaches team-development- and management(-trainee) programs based on AI.

Dr Laine Goldman

An award-winning writer, researcher, media practitioner, educator, and inquisitive social scientist developing targeted multicultural communication and media for business and education, Laine approaches organisational transformation appreciatively. Her voice echoes the 21st-century shift toward intergenerational creative work teams, innovative entrepreneurship and freelance practices. Associate Professor, National University, La Jolla, California, US.

Suzanne Quinney

Suzanne is an Organisational Development practitioner specialising in a strengths-based approaches to change. She is an experienced facilitator, using World Café and Open Space Technology to deliver training and master classes on AI, positive psychology and resilience. She spent seven years at the Findhorn Foundation, an international learning centre, and has co-authored several AI resources and articles.

Creative Practices

Arjan van Vembde

Arjan van Vembde works in the Netherlands as a trainer and consultant in Organisational Development. With a background as a magician, he loves to study why things go the way they go. In the last decade his attention has shifted from the secrets of card tricks, to the secrets of change and cooperation in organisations.

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Voices from the Field

Transformational leadership understands and supports what motivates individuals as it creates the conditions that promote healthy relationships. As emphasised by David L. Cooperrider, appreciative leadership is "…the capacity to see with an appreciative eye the true and the good, the better and the possible." Our voices from the field in this issue of AI Practitioner capture, with such an appreciative eye and focussed desire to cultivate the positive and the possible, the various ways Appreciative Inquiry enables ideas, sees solutions, and organises change. Heike Aiello, Dr Laine Goldman and Suzanne Quinney share their reflections on appreciative leadership along with insights that emerged along the way.

Keith Storace

My lessons learned as AI Facilitator

Heike Aiello

The theory of Appreciative Inquiry has been made very accessible in the past years; there are countless books, case studies, films and websites. The challenge lies in the translation of the ideas into practise. AI comes to life in conversation and interaction. A central figure in these relational processes is the AI facilitator, who is an omnipotent figure, really: radiating hope and trust, shining like a beacon, while non-judgmental and unobtrusive like a fly on the wall. Warm, welcoming, result-oriented and "AI-authentic" to the core. When conflicts arise, all eyes are on the AI-facilitator–how will she exhibit appreciation, when under pressure? Far from being a perfect AI facilitator myself, I would like to share five lessons I have embraced through the years:

1. Practise what you preach

AI facilitators are only credible when they live and act out appreciation not only to others, but also to themselves. People will not remember what you said, they will remember your energy, how you are, your choices under pressure. An appreciative mindset goes further than just using the AI-tools; it should have become a core-value that is reflected in personal habits and choices. Let AI sink into your personality. What do you appreciate about yourself as a facilitator? For what do you receive compliments?

People will not remember what you said, they will remember your energy, how you are, your choices under pressure.

Lesson 1: Keep developing an appreciative mindset in your professional and private life.

2. Affirmative topics need time

What is the question behind the question? I have learned to never underestimate this stage and always make sure to give it enough time. If the first stones of the foundation are not set properly, the entire building will not stand strong. What

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You want to facilitate a balanced process of inclusion

is the question the group really needs to answer? What is the essence of what they really desire? Often, such a clarification process is not straightforward. Discussions arise, frustration sets in. It is tempting to rush and cut this important phase short, as participants might "want to get going", or find what they have done so far "good enough". However, the satisfaction of a group that succeeds in crafting a truly relevant core-question is a great reward. In addition, the facilitator has led the group through their first mini-AI-process, which will pay off in the process that follows.

Lesson 2: Take enough time for the wording of the "question behind the question".

3. Balancing result and process

Regularly I hear from participants that "time flew by". Elements of AI, like generative questions and analysing successes, release energy. It is an art to create a feeling of space, a secure setting that allows emotions and a supportive atmosphere to foster creativity, on the one hand, while keeping an eye on the results and structure on the other hand. You want to facilitate a balanced process of inclusion, where the voice of each one is heard and where a concrete output is realised.

Lesson 3: Invest time to design and shape a balanced program that lets the AI principles come to life.

4. A space that reflects the nature of AI

A pleasant environment contributes to good conversations. This is also a sign of appreciation for the participants. Choose a space that helps them relax, with enough water, healthy snacks, air and light. Music can play a fine role in contributing to an atmosphere of comfort and inspiration. You want to create a day that stands out and feeds positive emotions.

Lesson 4: Pay attention to the facilities and space. This supports the wellbeing of the group.

5. Focus on contact before content

Before the actual AI process begins, it is important to enable the participants to get to know each other, the programme and the environment. Participants who feel at ease are more likely to engage in open conversations. I have created a repertoire of active, fun, interactive exercises to open a meeting.

You want to create a day that stands out and feeds positive emotions.

Lesson 5: Pay close attention to introduction and contact before engaging in content.

These are a few of my personal lessons. There are many more, maybe this article will trigger you to reflect on what AI has taught you.

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The Appreciative Reflection: Self-disclosive Storytelling

Dr Laine Goldman

There are many moments in conducting research that give us a chance to pause, rewind and consider another methodological tack. After transcribing hours of interviews with award-winning multimedia freelancers discussing their projects, I was getting depressed from hearing a familiar refrain, "You have to chase the work down, do the work and then chase down the money" (Goldman, 2013).

'What has allowed these folks to creatively persevere in this capacity for fifteen, or thirty years or more and succeed?'

Although grounded in social construction, it became apparent that I had to find a new way to assess the situation. I did not want to eliminate the barrage about clients not paying on time or reduced wages – but I needed a wide-angle lens, a more positive framework in which to operate. I interviewed eleven Guggenheim, Emmy and award-winning freelancers during the recession so it was understandable that financial issues dominated. After all, I was exploring the central question, "What is the lived experience of a media freelancer at the border of a changing work culture?" The larger "aha" moment appeared when I asked myself, "What has allowed these folks to creatively persevere in this capacity for fifteen, or thirty years or more and succeed?"

The Appreciative Reflection is a short six-to-ten -page interactive ethnographic takeaway, inspired by an interest in Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005), where the conversation shifts to what is working. These generative narratives countered the excessive grumbling by showcasing the participants' work and highlighting factors contributing to career longevity while allowing for a richer portrait to emerge of lessons learned.

For example, Jimi Izrael, a nationally recognized commentator on National Public Radio's The Barbershop, CNN, Nightline Faceoff, The Root blog, and author of The Denzel Principle: Why Black Women Can't Find Good Black Men – expressed agitation with magazine editors owing him money and was candid about seeing a 60-percent reduction in rates. While mentioning his frustration, I appreciatively explored Jimi's ability to get national airtime on radio, television and blogs because of his brash, bold style that courageously and with humor speaks "his" truth on challenging topics such as politics, race and identity. As a storyteller, he creates a vivid visual and emotional snapshot.

On CNN news, after receiving notoriety for his blog bashing Joe Jackson's self-promotion at the Black Entertainment Television tribute for his son Michael, Jimi declares, "I have friends who have lost parakeets, dogs, guinea pigs and wino uncles, and they've spent more time in mourning than Michael Jackson's father. I've been more distraught over bad sushi"[1]. He illustrates the importance

1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvNUBtgitDQ

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The Appreciative Reflection highlights the relational connection with participants

of creating a conversational space that moves away from abstract positions and is rooted in a story (McNamee and Shotter, p. 4). Jimi's commentary is straightforward, hard-hitting and rarely politically correct.

These self-disclosive storytelling moments mirror my academic attempt to create intimate, relatable writing and research rooted in AI. The Appreciative Reflection, a shared conversation, highlights the relational connection with participants and removes the pretence of observational distancing. AI has helped me to discover a new way of interpreting research.[2]

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My Appreciation of Appreciative Inquiry

Suzanne Quinney

The more I work from an AI perspective, the more apparent it becomes that the inner self and the outer self are both supported by the learning. We need to be appreciative and kind to our own self before we can do the same at work. My own journey is testament to this, having worked through major illness, learning how to be less tough on myself in the process. Asking myself "would I rather be right or happy?" was the kind of appreciation of my situation at the time that continued to reassure my confidence in AI. It provides for a broader perspective, a more helpful attitude, and the tools to move forward. This was one of the reasons we developed two appreciative journals,[3] and why participants get a

The inner self and the outer self are both supported by the learning

2 For complimentary access to these reflections in The Migrant Creative, visit the Wake Forest University Digital Press website http://wfu.tizrapublisher.com/the-migrant-creative-by-laine-goldman/.
3 *Food for Thought* and *How to Be More Awesome*. You can find a bit more detail about the benefits of appreciative journalling at www.appreciatingpeople.co.uk/the-power-of-appreciative-journaling/

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AI builds emotional intelligence, effective communication, relationships and understanding.

copy of one of our journals on all our training courses, with a request to use it to develop their appreciative muscle. We also refer to the power of journalling when we talk about both the enactment principle and the awareness principle.

It became clear to me that AI builds emotional intelligence, effective communication, relationships and understanding. As I emphasised in an article[4] I co-authored that focussed on my observations of the effectiveness of this process within homeless hostels, it was apparent that AI offered a unique advantage of being:

- an Organisational Development (OD) and team-building tool;
- a process that residents could use to rebuild their lives; and
- a way in which staff could communicate better with each other and residents.

I'm fortunate to work with a good team from a perspective that provides AI approaches for groups and organizations, as it allows me to see how talented and imaginative people truly are. AI brings out the best in individuals, teams and organisations. Over the last two years we have trained 140 people in an international charity so that they could use AI to develop and support "positive engagement" conversations. I found it particularly satisfying that many of them saw how they could then move forward and apply AI to many sections of their work – whether it was OD, youth education or working with refugees. Most recently, I worked with a group using AI to build personal resilience to help staff deal with redundancy. One participant in particular highlighted how it had helped her rebuild her sense of connection with others; be aware of her tendency to frame things in terms of deficits or problems; reinvigorate her capacity and appetite for taking the actions she needed to take in the next phase of her life; and remind her of tools, approaches and resources that can help her.

A "stand-out" feature I most enjoy about training people in AI is introducing them to the principles, particularly social constructionism. It is a way to encourage participants to explore the concept that our thoughts are not fixed - that things we thought were facts were actually more like habitual ways of seeing the world. It is possible to change the "unhelpful, habitual" way we sometimes think and, by paying attention to good things in our lives and connections with others, be more deeply appreciative – even, at times, actively delighted – as we go through our day. Regular journalling helps build this "appreciative muscle".

AI is, indeed, that inner and outer journey that gently challenges us to appreciate the inherent power of that journey in taking us to where we need to be!

4 Organisational development, Appreciative inquiry and the development of Psychologically Informed Environments (PIEs) Part I: A positive psychology approach www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/HCS-03-2014-0003.

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Creative Practices

The Intervention Clock

Arjan van Vembde

Many people ask me how the positive approach of Appreciative Inquiry deals with problems. These question inspired me to develop a four-phase model to respond in an appreciative way to negative issues in a coach-client setting.

How does AI deal with a problem?

The "intervention clock" is a model that facilitates the transformation of a negative to a positive concept of a situation. It appears that many people think that AI doesn't deal with problems, that because of its positive approach, the negative is sidelined. This may be a productive strategy but sometimes it doesn't deal with the whole or even the core of the situation. I think that it is also possible to address a negative situation in an appreciative and inquiring manner. In doing so we value the situation for its worth, and I have often seen a magical transformation take place of a negative to a positive view of a situation. The intervention clock helps facilitate such a transformation.

For example a client may be wrestling with a troubled relationship with a colleague, unhappy with their career or stressed because a child is difficult to handle. But this is a "problem perception", and only tells what is not wanted. What we are looking for instead is what the client wants more of. This is the start of an appreciative inquiry, the Define phase where the client defines what will be subject of inquiry, often called the affirmative topic.

To be specific about what we are looking for as an end result of this process, the affirmative topic is often formulated as:

- Describing what we do want, instead of what we don't want;
- Touching upon the core of what is important – it is an end in itself, not a means;
- Saying something about what you want to do or be, not about what others should do or be;
- Ensuring other stakeholders are okay with this mission;
- Speaking to the imagination and stimulates ambitions and aspirations.

Touch upon the core of what is important

Vital in the process of Appreciative Inquiry (as I learned from Robbert Masselink, Wick van der Vaart and others) is the concept of "ownership". The client is free

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As a coach, I just facilitate the inquiry by asking generative questions

to do as he pleases and is in the lead in his own inquiry. As a coach, I just facilitate the inquiry by asking generative questions that open up new perspectives. When dealing with negative issues this subtle intervention style remains the same. This means that the intervention clock comes into play only after the client makes clear that he wants to do something with his problem and wants to do that here, now – and with me as a coach.

A four-phase model

The intervention clock consists of four sections, each suggested as a quarter of an hour. The four quarters follow each other, with the intervention intensity increasing.

The first quarter is a minimal intervention: all you do is listen to the client's story. You acknowledge the issue for what it is and do not attempt in any way to change anything about it. It may appear as if you are doing nothing in this phase, but actually I think that listening is a double-edged intervention.

First this has an emotional effect: by listening you give your client the opportunity to become more emotionally balanced. Sometimes anger, frustration or insecurity are in play, and all those emotions prohibit clear thinking. Just giving him or her the opportunity to speak out makes room for a more rational approach.

Second, listening has an intellectual effect: you give your client the opportunity to sort out his or her own thoughts on the subject. Often the issue at hand is not recent and, in the previous months, many thoughts and much advice from friends has already been considered. Telling the story from beginning to end helps get an overview of the pros and cons, and to make resolutions and decisions. So by just listening, we facilitate emotional balance and clearer thinking.

It still surprises me how many times practising this first quarter is enough for the client to transform his negative concept into a more constructive perspective. When this happens, you can leave the intervention clock behind and continue the AI process with the Discovery, Dream and Design phases. But, although listening is a powerful intervention, some people can maintain their problematic perception of a situation for a long time, even years. So, when your client keeps talking dismissively about what he doesn't want, the time may come that we move on to the second quarter of the intervention clock.

Listening is a double-edged intervention

The second quarter of the intervention clock model increases the level of intervention and suggests a subtle positive questioning style. As a coach, you ask if your client also knows what he or she does want to happen and you respond to little signs of positivism. For example, your client may suggest that most of the

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time the relationship with a colleague is troubled. This might be an opportunity, for if the relation is troubled most of the time, it suggests that the relation is not troubled ALL of the time. Maybe we can inquire a little further into the moments when the relationship is not that bad, and see if we can learn from those situations in a more positive way what it is the client wants to create more of. In the same way, the client who is unhappy with a career may examine career highlights, and the client who is stressed with a child can examine the moments when the relationship with the child is more at ease.

If the subtle questions appear to have no transformative effect, the third quarter comes into play. In this third quarter, your role as a coach increases further as you start to introduce new perspectives for your client to analyze his situation. A classic question is to ask the client to imagine the situation a year from now and to imagine being successful. What does the situation look like: what does the client do, what is the effect and what made it possible? Another approach is to ask the client to view the situation from the perspective of other players in the field, for example what does the boss think about the situation, or how do other successful people deal with comparable situations. What you do here is to look at the subject, or verbalize the issue, in a way that sets things in a different perspective. Finding this new perspective often asks for creativity.

The approach is to not give advice

Note that suggesting other perspectives is what many people are quick to do when faced with negativism, often supplemented with advice on what to do. The approach here though is to not give advice, and to only start suggesting other perspectives after first listening to the story and limit responses to those that are positive. Leading, in this approach, is the notion of ownership. Of course there is a time when we need other people to help us break through restraining patterns, but intervention always risks an intrusion into ownership. Therefore suggesting new perspectives is not the first, but the third, level of intervention.

I only give an opinion on the process, not on the issue at hand.

When the client remains negative about the situation, it is good to double check whether the client feels ready to tackle this issue here, now and with you as a coach. If the answer remains positive, it might be time for another strategy. In the fourth quarter the intervention is direct feedback on the process and the stance of the client. I give the client the feedback that we have been talking about this issue for quite some time and that I don't see him or her getting closer to a solution. Note that I only share an observation about the process, and don't judge the issue. After delivering this feedback I check whether my client agrees with my observation. Sometimes this check introduces new issues or patterns of behaviour. This is also a moment for me to check whether I feel comfortable and willing to continue as a companion in the inquiry. At this point, we can choose to postpone the inquiry, or agree to continue and move the intervention clock back

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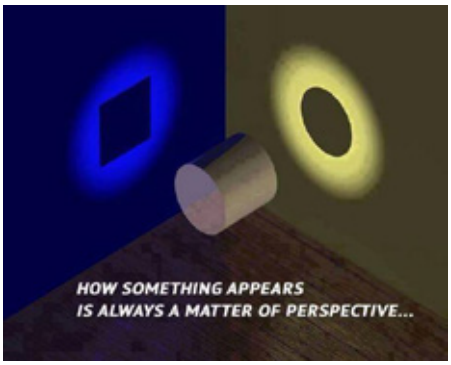

to the third quarter, to the point where we search for more helpful perspectives on the issue.

Conclusions

Although in practice the quarters are often mixed and take more or less than their allotted quarter, the suggestion of fifteen minutes for this model is a good rule of thumb. The intervention clock works as a reminder to respect the ownership of the client. Take the time to follow his or her lead and you will find yourself surprised at how fast clients find new perspectives on issues that seemed unmovable.

It is always a matter of perspective

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Feature Choice

Using Quantum Storytelling to Bridge Appreciative Inquiry to Socio-Economic Approach to Intervention Research

In this essay we will develop a process-bridge of Quantum Storytelling Ontology (QSO) between AI and SEAM. This bridge gives AI and SEAM compatibility by developing their storytelling capabilities: all three approaches place storytelling at the heart of their change intervention. The QSO-bridge establishes a better, more authentic attunement between humans and their Being-in-the-world.

The Quantum Age has seen a plethora of change, among which is the evolution of storytelling into what we call "Quantum Storytelling", which is "posthumanist, and it is not the old poetics-structuralist-formalist-linguist approach; rather, it is pragmatist in a sustainability that is not shallow, not human-ego-centric, not over-consumerist and not a waste of the planet's life" (Boje, 2014, p. 48). American pragmatists William James, John Dewey and George Herbert Mead epitomize the early phase of quantum storytelling. Dewey (1929) wanted to apply Werner Heisenberg's (1927) *principle of indeterminacy* and the *observer effect* to pragmatism. Mead (1932) linked pragmatism to Niels Bohr's quantum mechanics. In William James' (1907: 97) terms, "things tell as story," and storytelling is not just what humans do.

Here our purpose is to use Quantum Storytelling ontology (QSO) to establish a bridge between Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and the socio-economic approach to management (SEAM). QSO relies on a *spacetimemattering* (Boje and Henderson, 2014; Strand, 2012) that stipulates space, time and mattering as inseparable. Quantum storytelling is about the spatializing of space that is on the move, the temporalizing of time and the mattering of materiality. Spacetimemattering has swirling, branching, spiraling and zigzagging fractal patterns (Boje, 2015; Henderson and Boje, 2015). According to Boje (2016), Hegel's (1807/1977) treatment of dialectical movement is condignly characteristic of spacetimemattering. That is, where there is no synthesis, a dialectic between thesis and antithesis exists where a back-and-forth movement in their substantive content results in an attempt to work out the differences.

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One way to summarize QSO is to look at the eleven Ds and then relate them to both AI and SEAM (See Figure 1 and Table 1). We will first give a brief overview of both AI and SEAM before discussing them in more depth.

Figure 1. Eleven Ds of Quantum Storytelling (Drawing by Boje, used by permission)

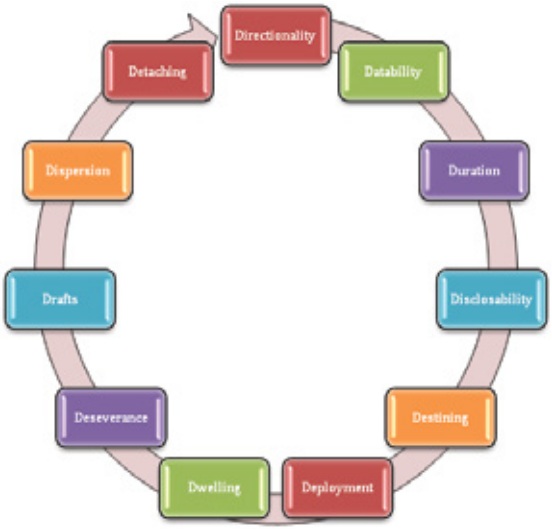

Table 1. Quantum Storytelling Ontology

D-Concepts	*Ontologic Questions Asked*
1. Directionality	What is the directionality of the processes; to what future are they headed?
2. Datability	What is the datability of the process developments?
3. Duration	What is the duration of various processes?
4. Disclosability	What is the disclosability of the future processes revealed to you?
5. Destining	What is the destining of the processes unfolding in ways you can foretell? Follow up: in fore-caring, fore-structuring, fore-having, fore-conceiving.
6. Deployment	What is the deployment of processes, in-order-to, for-the-sake-of?
7. Dwelling	What is the dwelling, in-place in the world?
8. Deseverance	What is the de-severance (de-distancing) of spacetimemattering?
9. Drafts	What are the drafts – updraft and downdraft – into tighter (down) orbits, or into more open, outer orbits (up) and the turning points from one draft to another?
10. Dispersion	What is the dispersion of processes?
11. Detaching	What is the authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole-Self?

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AI's positive core ... can capitalize on the transformation of hidden costs and untapped revenues – negative stories – by procuring the subsequent, positive stories.

Appreciative Inquiry

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003) extended the original 4 Ds (Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny) model of Appreciative Inquriy (AI) by adding one more D (Define):[1]

1. Define – What is the topic of the inquiry?
2. Discovery – What gives life?
3. Dream – What might be?
4. Design – What should be the ideal?
5. Delivery/Destiny – How to create what will be? How to empower, learn, adjust, improvise and do?

As Boje (2016) pointed out, AI's narrative exposition is that diagnosis means collecting many more positive than negative stories and forgetting past conflicts in order to develop positive futures. There is therefore a duality in AI's approach: positive stories are good, and negative, conflict-ridden, problem stories are bad. It becomes illegitimate for AI agents and clients to engage in any negative or problem storytelling about what SEAM calls the dysfunctions of working conditions, work organization, three Cs (Communication, Coordination and Cooperation), time management, integrated training and strategic implementation. However, AI's positive core, and the steps toward its attainment, can capitalize on the transformation of hidden costs and untapped revenues – negative stories – by procuring the subsequent, positive stories and synergistically adding them to AI's extant stockpile of positive stories in the aim to discover the best in people and in the organizations of which they are a part.

SEAM

SEAM (socio-economic approach to management) and AI are usually perceived as rivalrous. Proponents of AI often consider SEAM an example of the use of deficit discourse, with terms such as dysfunctions, productivity gaps, non-creation of potential and so on. However, here we will take a both-and, rather than an either-or, approach and see what can be gained by looking for points of complementarity.

SEAM actually has an affirmative side and is focused on "socially responsible capitalism." Henri Savall (2003) has developed SEAM over the past 40 years in the ISEOR consulting group, as well as in a series of scientific papers and books. It combines "intervener research" with "action research". An intervener-researcher spends weeks or even months doing a comprehensive diagnosis of the

1 See also Bushe (2011) for a snapshot of the progression of the original 4 D model to the "5D model."

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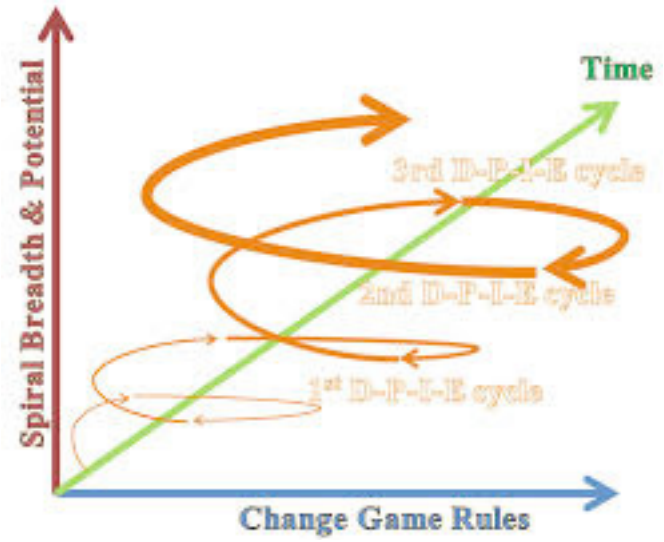
SEAM is definite about its focus on dysfunctions ... not just as negative, but also as positive, untapped, human, socioeconomic potential.

hidden costs and dysfunctions that are the structural and behavioral atrophies of enterprise. The dysfunctions (Savall, Zardet and Bonnet, 2008) include problematic working conditions, work organization issues, blocking of the three Cs (communication–cooperation–coordination), poor time management, inappropriate training and poor strategic implementation at both micro- and macro-levels.

A comprehensive look at what SEAM characterizes as hidden costs and untapped revenues reveals the potential for the accretion of what AI characterizes as "the positive core of storytelling". The idea is to develop a qualitative picture of the enterprise that will convince upper management to convert untapped revenue potential by implementing a series of projects in the D–P–I–E cycles (Diagnosis–Project–Implementation–Evaluation; see Figure 2), which will, in turn, perpetuate an upward spiral of care, over time, by changing both the "rules of the game" and simultaneously increasing the robust gains in value for the organization and its stakeholders.

Figure 2. D–P–I–E Cycles in Spiral of Implementation (Drawing by Boje, used by permission)



SEAM is definite about its focus on dysfunctions, beginning with a month or more of listening and observing to identify every dysfunction not just as negative, but also as positive, untapped, human, socioeconomic potential. In a manner of speaking, SEAM courts the stories of dysfunction in a valiant attempt at converting hidden costs into ways that fund intervention projects, thereby obtaining untapped human potential that turns socioeconomic consequences around (Boje, 2016). In examining the SEAM four leaf clover (see Figure 3), dysfunctions are identified and diagnosed; the nature of the negative is to hold out the possibility that negatives can be transformed into positive results in terms of developing untapped human potential, increasing the value-added by preventing and managing dysfunctions and using freed-up time and material resources to pursue value-added strategies such as corporate social responsibility (Boje, Svane, Henderson and Strevel, in press).

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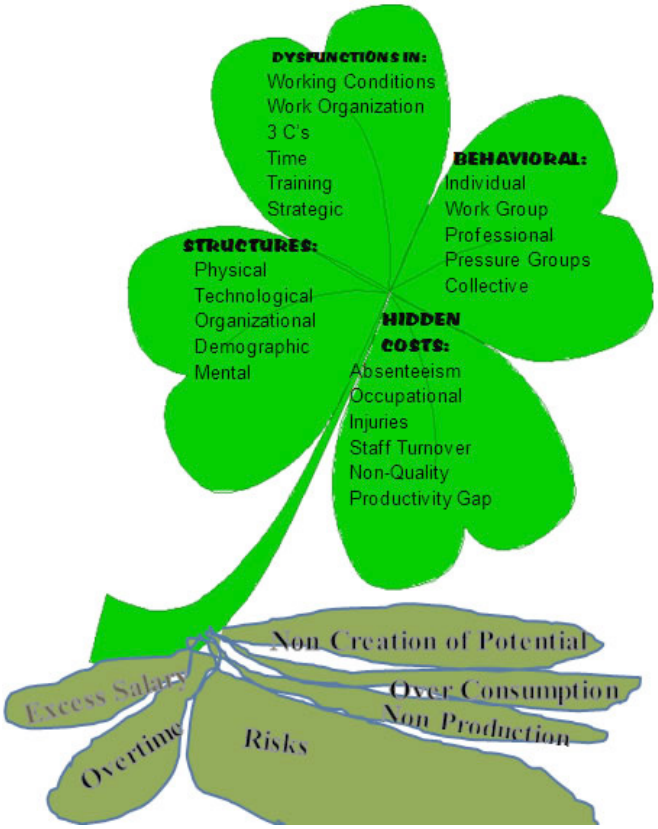
Figure 3. SEAM Four Leaf Clover Model
(Drawing by Boje, used by permission)



Bridging SEAM to AI with QSO

All three approaches have positive visions. SEAM seeks to unleash human potential that has been trapped in what Worley, Zardet, Bonnet and Savall (2015) called the "TFW virus" (Taylor-Fayol-Weber) that "hinders the organizational processes required to promote performance, engagement, and adaptability" (p. 23). Taylor's (1911) scientific management has combined with Henri Fayol's (2013) administrative controls and Max Weber's (1924) bureaucratic authority in ways that are dysfunctional, and they promote the ineluctable accretion of hidden costs rather than value (Worley et al., 2015). Through SEAM, hidden costs are identified in weeks, sometimes months of intensive field work, collecting stories and constructing quantitative estimates of the losses that the enterprise is experiencing. Hidden costs are not reflected in income/expense statements that management uses to make its strategic choices as they are not in plain sight.

Hidden costs are not reflected in income/expense statements that management uses to make its strategic choices as they are not in plain sight.

AI, by contrast, steers clear of "deficit" discourse, preferring to stay in its positive core. From a storytelling-practices perspective, the AI rule is to collect more positive than negative stories. In SEAM the rule is to collect quite a few dysfunction stories for every positive story and to capitalize on dysfunctions by transforming them into positive stories of learning from the bad stories to onward organizational success.

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QSO bridges the two approaches by characterizing dysfunction and the positive core as two sides of the same coin.

One way of looking at dysfunction is one of opportunity to deliver on a fore-caring, ideal future. Dysfunction becomes part of AI's positive core as a direct result of looking at the positive side of an otherwise bad situation. Rather than ignoring the dysfunction outright, SEAM communicates vicariously through AI the message that there is a positive side to every dysfunction. In this way, SEAM and AI work together through the overarching QSO to promote a better tomorrow for the organization and its stakeholders through the lens of the aforementioned eleven Ds of QSO.

In QSO, directionality is a spatializing movement, moving to the right, to the left, upward or downward. In this vein, QSO bridges the two approaches by characterizing dysfunction and the positive core as two sides of the same coin that is also in constant flux because the coin itself is a spacetimemattering, dialectical event.

Hegel's three kinds of negativity

Hegel (1807/1977) clarified the spacetimemattering event through a triumvirate of three kinds of negativity: alpha, beta and gamma. Boje (2016) elaborated by exploring how these types of negativity each impact QSO through the lenses of AI and SEAM.

Alpha negativity

Alpha negativity fails to account for the positive within some negative content. A careless characterization of AI could be that alpha negativity is where AI lands squarely due to the cursory promulgation that AI pursues only positive stories within the organization and fails to see that the negative story has its positive aspects due to AI practitioners having "little self-reflection or critique" (Grant & Humphries, 2006, p. 402). Other scholars such as Fitzgerald, Oliver and Hoxsey (2010) and Boje (2010) propounded that AI fails to see the "negative" as a shadow process. Similarly, Pratt (2002) stated that the "requirement that negative experiences…be suppressed or denied or framed in 'appreciative terms' clearly privileged the process of AI over people" (p. 117).

Closer inspection, however, reveals that although AI does not explicitly look for negative stories, AI is not without an inherent mechanism to show that, once divulged, learning experiences stemming from important events that are negative in nature can be transformed into stories belonging to the positive core (Bushe, 2012, 2013; Kolodziejski, 2004). For example, aforementioned Pratt (2002), while still self-identifying as an AI practitioner, has altered her AI approach to include both polarities so as not to sacrifice her "sense of integrity as it relates to 'being' in an appreciative space with another" (p. 117). Similarly, Bushe (2013) saw how even very bad stories of experiences can lead to

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a positive turnaround in what he labeled as "compassion circles" (p. 5) where AI practitioners focus on the generative[2] as well as the positive.

Beta negativity

Beta negativity is manifested by what SEAM advocates, where each negative (each dysfunction) has a movement of positive content (possible ways to produce value-added spaces, times, structures, behaviors, etc.) when considered in the whole process or system. SEAM puts great stock in negative stories of dysfunctions, where a revelation of hidden costs occurs, so as to convert them into revenue potential from untapped human resource development, technology investments, structural and behavioral changes, value-added time management, strategic implementation and so on. Once hidden costs are unearthed, SEAM practitioners proceed to calculate the dollar amount of their hidden costs and to use it to convince the client to recover those hidden costs by designing intervention projects.

Gamma negativity

Gamma negativity is what Hegel (1807/1977, p. 36) calls "ratiocinative thinking." It is defined here as a skilled and methodological process of reasoning in which there is a back-and-forth rhythm of movement, meter and accent, between positive and negative. It is this rhythmic aspect of Hegel's dialectic, working its self-movement out in space, time and matter (to be more accurate, in a spacetimemattering that is inseparable) that we want to focus on here and is illustrated by the eleven Ds of QSO (See Table 2).

Eleven Ds of QSO

Directionality & Dwelling – Directionality is Being-in-the-world that is already ready-to-hand. Upon identifying dysfunctions (SEAM) or defining positive core (AI), there is already direction, a momentum of the enterprise. Dwelling is the enterprise's situation – its place in its industry and in nature.

Duration & Disclosability – SEAM assesses the duration of hidden costs and untapped revenue potential. For AI, the duration is the "now" situation of the positive side of what is going on. So what SEAM calls unrealized human potential and hidden costs stand out as clues about what would improve the magnitude of AI discourse.

Deployment & Drafts – Deployment is the "for-the-sake-of" in which an involvement or relationship already dwells. What SEAM is attempting to deploy is an upward draft into a socially responsible capitalism by overcoming dysfunction.

2 Bushe (2013) defined generativity as "the processes and capacities that help people see old things in new ways" (p. 2).

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AI also seeks a positive capitalism, one that is more caring and concerning, by staying in the positive core and collecting positive stories.

Datability & Detaching – In SEAM, datability and detaching can be seen in the D–P–I–E cycles that are datable moments of change, in which non-value-added processes are changed and sometimes detached, in order to deploy more value-added projects that realize human potential. The HORIVERT model (Savall, 2007; Worley et al., 2015) explains how collaboration can occur simultaneously through both horizontal and vertical construction of teams. Horizontal construction involves taking a middle manager, for example, and tasking him or her to form a team with proximate collaborators. Vertical construction occurs when at least two different units within the organization are tasked to collaborate (e.g., management and floor personnel). For AI, there is a co-constructing of the ideal in which Discovery-Dream-Design-Destiny is often referred to as a "change cycle", also implemented to increase value-added processes.

Destining – Destining is not a succession of phases (or eras); rather it is "Being-of-care" (Heidegger, 1962: sections #150 & #385). Destining is already grounded in fore-having (preparing for what is arriving in the future), fore-structuring (putting processes in place for it), fore-concepts (coming up with ways to talk about it), fore-sight (bets on the future possibilities), and fore-caring. These are what Haley and Boje (2014), Boje, Haley and Saylors (2015), and Svane and Boje (in press) call aspects of antenarrating – a more prospective, sensemaking approach to storytelling (See Figure 4).

SEAM's Destining is to bring about a management practice that implements strategy in ways that change the rules of the game to bring about a more caring capitalism. AI's destiny concept is defined by practitioners as ways to empower, learn, adjust, improvise and do.

Deseverance & Dispersion – Deseverance means joining together and finding the connection. It is to discover modes of Being-in-the-world of spacetimemattering that are guided by concern or care (Boje, 2014). For SEAM, the joining together is done by research interventions that negotiate new, more productive

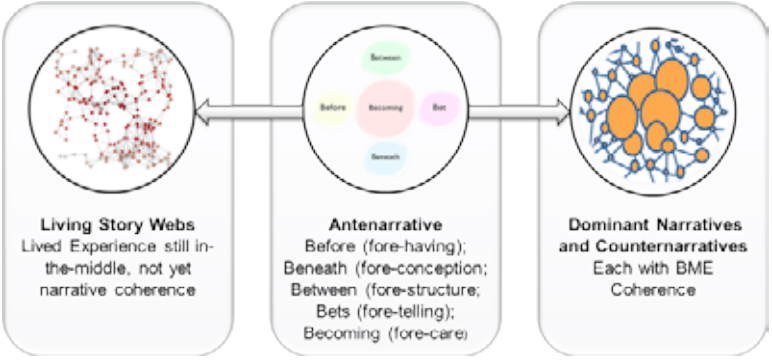

Figure 4. The five Bs of antenarrative and BME (beginning-middle-end plot structures;from Boje and Svane, in press, used by permission)

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SEAM's Destining is to bring about a management practice that implements strategy in ways that change the rules of the game to bring about a more caring capitalism.

relationships among stakeholders. In AI, there is the concept of Delivery – how to bring about an ideal future.

SEAM	QSO Ds	AI – 6D Cycle
Identification of dysfunctions that hamper the enterprise	Directionality & Dwelling	Define positive core, guiding the inquiry in an appreciative focus
Hidden costs and untapped revenues disclosed in "mirror effect" meetings	Duration & Disclosability	Discovery of a "now situation" that is at its best
Socially responsible capitalism	Deployment & Drafts	Dream of a better future
D–P–I–E cycles (diagnosis–project–implementation–evaluation) in HORIVERT teams	Datability & Detaching	Design by co-constructing what should be the ideal
Strategic implementation that changes rules of the game	Destining	Destiny – to empower, learn, adjust, improvise and do Deliver on the future
Researcher intervention and (re)negotiated contracting	Deseverance & Dispersion	

Table 2. Using QSO to bridge SEAM with AI

Conclusions

In sum, by taking a both-and approach, we can bridge SEAM and AI through QSO. There are still points of difference, however. SEAM stays within the framework of diagnosis, project implementation and developing a more socially responsible capitalism by overcoming dysfunctional narrative. AI maintains consistency with its positive core, not wanting to give attention through deficit discourse to the negative side of enterprise. The limitation of what we advocate is that each approach may elect to stay in its own domain with the caveat that Fitzgerald et al. (2010) and Boje (2010) have pointed out which is that downplaying the importance of the dark side can lead to deleterious consequences, such as an unwillingness to delve into the underlying, deeper issues.

The advantage of bridging AI and SEAM through QSO is that transformation can manifest itself through approaches that spend more time on diagnosis. Thus, initiatives can be translated into the pervasive language of costs and revenues within an enterprise. It is possible that deficit discourse actually has some positive impact upon the reality of a more socially responsible capitalism. If so, looking at the positive impact of deficit discourse could be an extension of AI after all and not just a feature of SEAM. Furthermore, investigating the dysfunctions and identifying the potential for hidden value from an extensive, scientific exploration of all stories – both good and bad – can be represented by

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a dynamic dialectic of movement back and forth in the valiant attempt to spiral upward and robustly toward a successful and socially responsible organization.

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AI Practitioner

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Research Review and Notes

Appreciative Inquiry and its Impact on United States Municipalities

In 2014, a preliminary review of literature found that Appreciative Inquiry practitioners indicated a need for further research into AI success and failure, identifying the processes and levers that lead to an outcome, and to fill the gaps in AI literature. This study explored the use of AI as a methodology for change by US municipalities.

In 2014, a preliminary review of literature found that Appreciative Inquiry (AI) practitioners indicated a need for further research into AI success and failure, identifying the processes and levers that lead to an outcome (Bushe, 2011; Head, 2005), and to fill the gaps in AI literature (Bushe, 2011; Messerschmidt, 2008). Schooley (2008) examined the viability of public administrators using AI to improve government effectiveness, through interviewing 20 managers from large cities (not exceeding populations of 250,000.) Schooley's study found that negative environments (due to political context) were a barrier, hindering a successful outcome. The specific issue addressed in the present study was to determine why AI outcomes fail and succeed, specifically in US municipalities. First, it was necessary to examine existing literature to understand the AI methodology and how it could be used in organizations. Secondly, it was necessary to organize a theoretical framework for further exploration on the successes and failures with emphasis on AI processes and levers. This study explored the use of AI as a methodology for change by US municipalities. The research questions (RQ) that guided the study are:

1. What are the Appreciative Inquiry key processes and levers that led to application success and failure in those city governments that adopted the methodology in the past ten years and the three highest populated municipalities (populations identified by the US Census Bureau in 2013)?

2. What is the success and failure rate of Appreciative Inquiry initiation in US municipalities that adopted the methodology in the past ten years?

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Research Design

To address the two primary RQs, the study utilized a mixed methods exploratory sequential design, consisting of two phases (Figure 1). In essence, this approach addressed the RQs through review of the AI literature and survey research. To build a theoretical basis for exploring and understanding US municipalities' use of AI and causes for its outcomes, the fundamental steps of this mixed methods research were used to gather data for this study, including specifying the problem, engaging in a systematic process of inquiry, and analyzing data for understanding the nature of the problem (Creswell, 2013).

From conducting a qualitative data analysis of the literature, findings were used to help build two instruments, a survey questionnaire and an interview protocol. A sample was taken from three population groups. A nonprobability purposive sampling technique known as judgment sampling was utilized.

Survey

The survey targeted two populations and consisted of members from the web-based LinkedIn social networking community. Many of their members are also members of various LinkedIn groups who identify with their work-related background, which provided an opportunity to tap into people with specialized knowledge and experience in AI. Four AI LinkedIn groups represented population group one, and one municipal LinkedIn group represented population group two:

- Population group one: AI Practitioners, AI Facilitators, other AI Professionals (and has US municipality AI implementation experience within last 10 years), and
- Population group two: HR personnel (with US municipality employment and knowledge of AI within last 10 years, current or former employees).

Survey participants from LinkedIn reside worldwide to include a gender dyad composition. Group one and two population sizes were determined by analyzing the targeted LinkedIn group statistics. To apply the survey questionnaire, a discussion was crafted requesting participation and posted to the five LinkedIn groups. Respondents proceeded to a researcher-created website for prescreening and informed consent, and then to the survey site.

The survey consisted of 20 logically driven questions. There were 16 survey respondents, eight from each group.

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Interview Protocol

Only US municipalities with populations of 600,158 and smaller were identified as having utilized AI. To find out if larger US municipalities utilized AI (New York, Los Angeles and Chicago), the interview protocol was applied to a third population group consisting of:

- Current HR personnel with specialized informed inputs, senior or otherwise.

The interview protocol was semi-structured, consisting of three primary open-ended questions (including sub-questions dependent upon answers), and defining AI to ensure understanding. Group three's population came from the three cities' official websites. There were 43 attempts to conduct an interview by phone and 16 interviews were conducted: eight with personnel working for the City of New York, and four each for the cities of Chicago and Los Angeles.

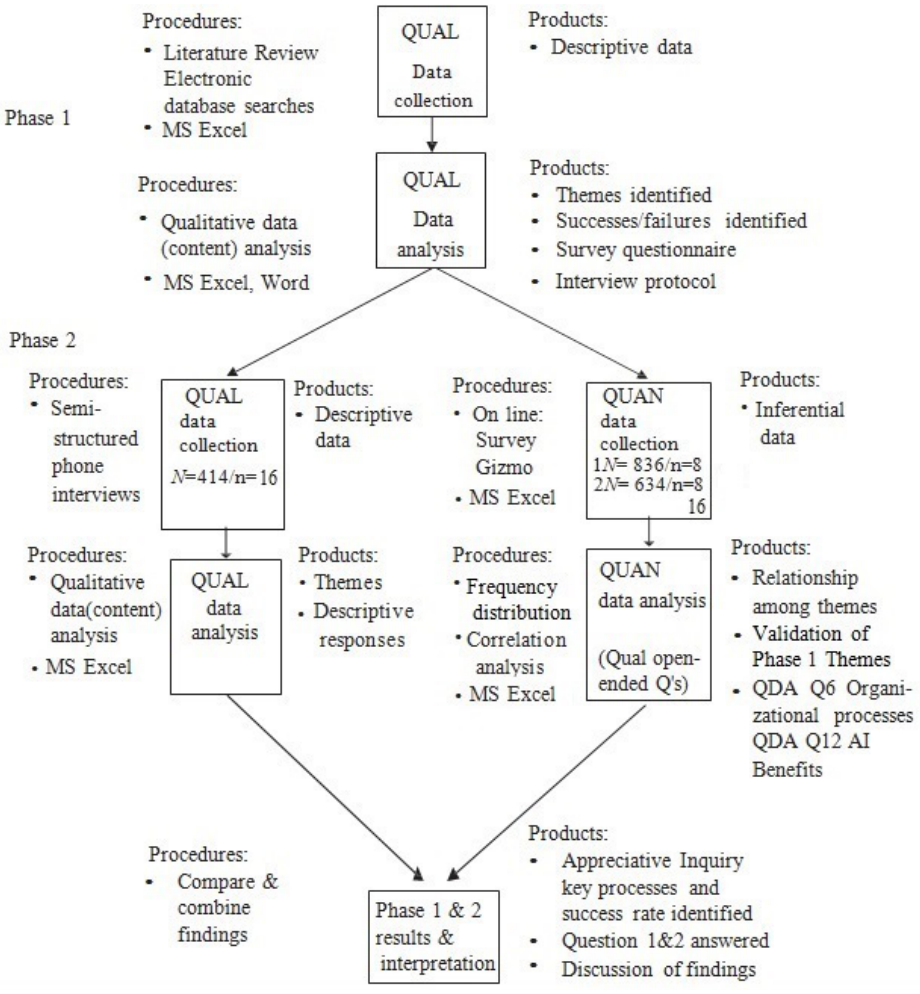

Figure 1. Research Design
This figure is a representation of a flowchart of this mix methods research, identifying phase one and two procedures and corresponding products for data collection and analysis, and with a final step to compare and combine data—triangulate and interpret. N refers to population size; and n to sample size (subjects, participants, respondents, elements).

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Summary of Findings

Qualitative content analyses of secondary research revealed eight US municipalities applied the AI methodology in 14 projects from 2001 through 2014 (see Table 1), although four initiatives marginally exceeded the ten-year period for this study.

Table 1: Appreciative Inquiry initiated in US municipalities

City	*Form of municipal government*[b]	*Population*[c]	*Year(s) AI initiated*	*Resistance identified*
1 Berkeley, CA	Council-Manager	112,580	2002	No
2 Buckeye, AZ[a]	Council-Manager	50,876	2008	No
3 Cleveland, OH	Mayor-Council	396,815	2009	Yes
4 Denver, CO 5 Denver, CO 6 Denver, CO	Mayor-Council	600,158	2001 2004 2010	No No No
7 Hampton, VA	Council-Manager	137,436	2001	No
8 Longmont, CO 9 Longmont, CO 10 Longmont, CO 11 Longmont, CO 12 Longmont, CO	Council-Manager	86,270	2006 2008 2008 2010 2011	No Yes Yes No No
13 St. Louis Park, MN	Council-Manager	45,250	2006	No
14 Worcester, MA	Council-Manager	181,045	2012	No

Note. [a] Became a city in 2013 per J. Rogers, personal communication, February 16, 2015.
[b] As reported on each city's official website. [c] Population size as per 2010 United States Census.

Thirteen initiatives utilized the 4D Cycle; one was not specified (refer to Table 2). External consultants facilitated ten of the 14 AI initiatives. Internal staff received specialized AI training and facilitated the change effort in four initiatives. Regarding the survey, respondents indicated external consultants were utilized to facilitate the AI initiative. The survey questionnaire reflected a combined 15 respondents (population groups one and two) involved in an AI at a US municipality; seven from group one and eight from group two (although there were eight respondents from group one, the data from one respondent did not meet the criteria). There were no AI initiatives identified through utilizing the interview protocol (population group three).

Eight of the 14 AI initiatives identified in secondary research showed that the motivator for AI usage was internal, specifically from city council and the mayor. Survey findings revealed that the political environment affects change positively more than negatively, as indicated by 73% of those surveyed (11 of 15 respondents of both population groups). All of population group one respondents selected positively. Population group two were split 50–50, indicating that they thought the political environment affects change both positively and negatively. Two set of eyes (internal and external personnel) equate to two perspectives.

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Table 2: Similarities and differences among the 14 AI initiatives

US City	*Project goal*	*AI Motivator / facilitator*	*Application framework*	*Initiating frameworks, activities; Number of participants*
Berkeley 2002	Collaborative partnership	Internal leader / consultant	–	Retreat setting; 89
Buckeye 2008	Develop vision	City council / consultant	4D	Mini-Summits Workshops; 40 Interviews; 200
Cleveland 2009	Sustainable vision	Mayor / consultant	4D	Summit; 700
Denver 2001	Merge two departments	Internal leader versed in AI / consultant	4D	Summit; 50
Denver 2004	Enhance cross-functional relationships and mutual support	Internal leader versed in AI / consultant	4D	Mini-Summits; 200 Interviews; 600
Denver 2010	Collaborative partnership	Internal leader versed in AI / consultant	4D	Mini-Summits; 12 Interviews; 25
Hampton 2001	Reenergize workforce	City Council / internal staff[a]	4D	Workshops; 246
Longmont 2006	Police and community sustainable plan	City Council / consultant	4D	Summit; 200
Longmont (first) 2008	Police and Fire Strategic plan	City Council / internal staff[a] and table facilitator	4D	–
Longmont (second) 2008	Internal customer service strategic plan	City Council / City Manager[b]	4D	Workshops; 40
Longmont 2010	Community branding economic plan	City Council / internal manager[a]	4D	Focus groups; 250 Survey; 2000
Longmont 2011	Downtown development plan of action	City Council / Consultant	4D	Workshops; 75 Interviews; 1000
St. Louis Park 2006	Develop vision	Internal leader / consultant	4D	Summit; 200
Worcester 2012	Partnership creation–three-year energy plan for Sustainability	National Grid senior leaders / consultant	4D	Summit; 300

Note. A dash (–) indicates specified data was not identified in the literature.

[a]From affected area, [b]from unaffected area.

Across all 14 AI initiatives identified in secondary research, 14 key AI processes and levers were identified that led to a successful AI interventions (none were a failed AI; refer to Table 3). All 14 AI initiatives were identified with collaboration and the positive principle; 13 were identified with inclusion and the wholeness principle; and tied for the fifth most salient, 11 were identified with the design task/question, AI education, and the anticipatory principle. No initiative was identified as utilizing all 14 processes and levers.

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Table 3: US Municipalities: Themes for a successful Appreciative Inquiry

City	*Collaboration (x-factor #4)*	*AI principle positive*	*Inclusion (x-factor #3)*	*AI principle wholeness*	*Design task (x-factor #2)*	*AI education*	*AI principle anticipatory*
Berkeley	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Buckeye	▪	▪	▪	▪		▪	
Cleveland	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Denver 2001	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Denver 2004	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Denver 2010	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Hampton	▪	▪	▪	▪		▪	▪
Longmont 2006	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Longmont 2008	▪	▪			▪		
Longmont 2008	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	
Longmont 2010	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪		▪
Longmont 2011	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
St. Louis Park	▪	▪	▪	▪			▪
Worcester	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
TOTALS	14	14	13	13	11	11	11

City	*Strategy*	*Generativity recognized*	*AI principle constructionist*	*AI principle enactment*	*AI principle simultaneity*	*AI principle poetic*	*Facilitator skills importance*
Berkeley	▪	▪			▪	▪	
Buckeye	▪						
Cleveland		▪	▪		▪	▪	
Denver 2001		▪	▪				
Denver 2004		▪		▪			
Denver 2010		▪	▪	▪			
Hampton	▪			▪			▪
Longmont 2006	▪						
Longmont 2008	▪						▪
Longmont 2008			▪				
Longmont 2010	▪	▪					
Longmont 2011	▪	▪					
St. Louis Park	▪						
Worcester	▪	▪	▪		▪		
TOTALS	9	8	5	3	3	2	2

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Regarding how AI was beneficial from the survey respondent's point of view, Figure 2 reflects one of the two open-ended questions on their prospective, presenting similarities and differences.

Figure 2. SQ12: Benefit resulting from using AI in respondent's municipality. The data represents the answers of the respondents, displayed to show the similarities and differences in their answers between both groups in answering this open-ended question.

Population group 1 responses	*Population group 2 responses*
Similarities	
Innovative ideas	Ideas
	Work ideas
Improving efficiency	AI itself
	Better processes
Widespread motivation	Increased motivation
	Improved energy renewal
	Increased motivation from top down
New partnerships	Partnering
	Improved working relationship
Differences	
Three successful improvement projects	Improved commitment
	Retention increase
Many successful initiatives	Happy employees
Project completion time; Time saved is a factor for benefit	Improved environment
	Happier place of work
	Inclusion
	Culture change
	More work

RQ1 Answer

Table 4 presents triangulation of the salient AI processes and levers identified from the literature and survey. Clear validation between the review of the AI literature and the two surveyed groups were realized among the majority of themes. Dr. Cooperrider's (2012, 2013) generativity x-factors for success, specifically 2, 3 and 4, plus the positive and wholeness principles were instrumental. RQ1 is answered.

AI education helps diminish resistance to the change process. The literature revealed that knowledge of how AI works is an important factor for its success, as 78.6% (11 of 14) of the identified AI initiatives involved participant understanding of AI. In having some basic understanding of the change process, participants can become susceptible to buying in to the change effort, diminishing resistance. Educating staff to understand a change methodology in which they become participants is not the normal process in change efforts, but is normal with AI. Survey respondents were, at a minimum, all aware of the AI methodology by name.

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Table 4: Appreciative Inquiry processes and levers for success in a US municipality

Secondary AI initiatives and %		*AI processes and levers*	*Survey (SQ8[a]) Respondents and %*	
14	100%	Collaboration (x-factor #4)	15	100%
14	100%	Positive principle	10	66.7%
13	92.9%	Inclusion (x-factor #3)	14	93.3%
13	92.9%	Wholeness principle	10	66.7%
11	78.6%	Design task topic/question (x-factor #2)	8	53.3%
11	78.6%	AI education/awareness	15[b]	100%
11	78.6%	Anticipatory principle	4	26.7%
9	64.3%	Strategy	7	46.7%
8	57.1%	Generativity recognized	3	20%
5	35.7%	Constructionist principle	3	20%
3	21.4%	Enactment principle	2	13.3%
3	21.4%	Simultaneity principle	1	6.7%
2	14.3%	Poetic principle	1	6.7%
2	14.3%	Facilitator skills importance	5	33.3%

Notes. Triangulation of the literature and survey are presented.
[a] SQ8 Summary of Population Group 1 and 2. What are the Appreciative Inquiry key processes or levers that led to application success or failure in US municipalities (within the past 10 years)? (Combined n=15). [b] Data from SQ14, which asked if the respondents were aware of the AI methodology was being utilized for the change effort. All 15 respondents to this question indicated awareness of AI at the time of the change effort.

Where SQ8 was a closed-ended question, providing possible answers (Table 4), Figure 3 displays an open-ended question – respondents were requested to provide the processes and/or levers that were key to AI success. For both groups, collaboration and inclusion were apparently predominant levers for success.

Figure 3. SQ6 Key organization processes and levers.

Group	*Participant Responses*
7 responses from population group 1	• 4D Cycle, design task, collaboration among key personnel • Anticipation leads to increased motivation to enact through collaborative efforts • Flexibility in decision making • Group ownership of the process • Ensuring everyone is involved in the project and the summit • Planning group, AI summit • Positive principle and collaboration

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8 responses from population group 2	• Strategy, collaboration, and central question • Strategy: Expanded several achievements over to areas where issues dwelled • Engaging employees • Including key staff affected and the strategy to implement • Partnering with key people in the community leading to ideas and projects • Asking employee input and motivates employees after learning about AI • Senior leader driving the initiative and including the correct participants; Generative question and stories • Engaging with the key staff and stake holders to come up with multiple projects and see transformations in attitude…climate and culture shifting to "we" rather than "me or I"

RQ2 Answer

All AI initiatives identified in this study were found to be a success – by the voices that had direct experience in the change (survey respondents), and those that created the literature (see Table 5). The rate of success for AI needs no statistical analysis if 100% of the identified initiatives were successful; it is too simple a calculation. The failure rate of AI in US municipalities is zero percent, since no initiatives identified failed. RQ2 is answered.

Table 5. Triangulation of AI initiatives, resistance, and success rate across US municipalities

Source	AI initiatives	No resistance	Resistance identified	Volume of Resistance	AI Success
Survey	15	7	8	53%	100%
Secondary	14	11	3	21%	100%
Protocol	0	–	–	–	–

The survey sampling was not performed for identifying the institution the respondent was addressing in answering the SQs. Due to the low number of cases identified in secondary literature regarding AI use in US municipalities, a low survey sample was expected. The respondents answered the questions regarding their experience of one AI initiative within a US municipality with which they were involved. Respondents were not asked the name of the US municipality they were involved with when using AI because of the potential for a respondent to choose not to participate if failure had occurred or they had an undesirable experience. This researcher felt a more truthful response could

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be obtained if there were anonymity. So, although there is no US municipality for the respondent to correlate their answers to, the data remains relevant, as it validates the researcher's findings in secondary research, thus validating the answers. to some degree. Through triangulation, using quantitative and qualitative data directly contribute to validity of the results (Yauch and Steudel, 2003; Denzin, 1970).

Conclusion

Content analyses of 14 AI initiatives revealed 14 processes and levers key to achieving AI success. This mixed methods exploratory case study contributed to proving that AI is 100% effective when initiated in US municipalities, which is in direct opposition to Schooley's findings (2008). The political environment did not have a negative effect in any AI initiative identified in this study. Although resistance was present in some AI initiatives, it was overcome in all cases. This study found that AI is a proven model for US municipalities. Proponents of positive change and AI should inform public administrators of AI and these findings after their reading of this study. This researcher wholeheartedly recommends AI in the local government workplace, positing that collaboration and inclusion of government employees can lead to new workplace relationships and achieving highly desirable results.

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AI Practitioner

Appreciative Inquiry Resources

Appreciative Inquiry Resources features a rediscovery of classic and new resources for your use. Resources will include list-serves, books, journal articles, book chapters, DVDs, websites, blogs, podcasts, etc. ... all in one place useful for learning more about AI to help with your consulting practice, internal work, teaching, training and extending your knowledge base and resources.

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The August 2015 issue of AI Practitioner *focuses appreciative and relational leadership.*

The co-editors and Resources column editors of the August 2016 issue of *AI Practitioner* have brought together resources relating to appreciative, relational leadership. Some are new, some are rediscoveries of materials relevant to this issue. We hope that these resources will be useful to practitioners, researchers and leaders.

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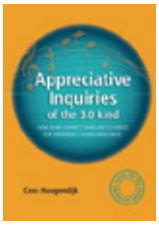
Books



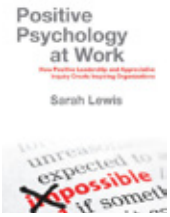
Appreciative Inquiries of the 3.0 Kind

CEES HOOGENDIJK (2015)

CREATESPACE INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING PLATFORM

ISBN 978-90-79679-37-9

Non-profit or social profit? Deadline or birthline? Appreciative Inquiry addresses a human art, involving conversational craftsmanship. It takes specific, carefully chosen words, questions, gestures and of course deep listening to help conversations being generative, appreciative and empowering.



Positive Psychology at Work: How Positive Leadership and Appreciative Inquiry Create Inspiring Organizations

SARAH LEWIS (2011)

WILEY-BLACKWELL

ISBN-13: 978-0470683200

This book attempts to bring the fields of positive psychology and AI together in an effort to provide leaders and change agents a powerful new approach to achieving organizational excellence. It draws on positive psychology and appreciative inquiry in the context of leadership organizational challenges and is academically rigorous. The book provides short contributions from experienced practitioners of positive psychology and Appreciative Inquiry, and includes case studies from the UK, Europe, Australia and the USA that readers and practitioners can use.

Choosing Wisdom: Strategies and Inspiration for Growing Through Life-Changing Difficulties by Choosing Wisdom

MARGARET PLEWS-OGAN, JUSTINE E. OWENS AND NATALIE MAY (2012)

TEMPLETON PRESS

The authors movingly explore the nature of wisdom and human adaptation to adversity in the context of patient experiences of living with chronic pain and physician responses in the aftermath of serious medical error. They found that amid potentially debilitating circumstances, some people display a creative response to adversity and emerge as better people: patients gained a more positive outlook, physicians became more compassionate.

Flourishing Together - Guide to Appreciative Inquiry Coaching

MIRIAM SUBIRANA VILANOVA, WITH A PREFACE BY DIANA WHITNEY (2016)

O-BOOKS

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How can we help each other flourish? *Flourishing Together* explores ways of understanding the power of our conversations, the language we use, and the

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MIRIAM SUBIRANA VILANOVA (2015)

ISBN 978-84-9988-459-2

The Spanish original of *Flourishing Together*, with an introduction by Diana Whitney.

Articles and Papers

Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership

LOUIS W. FRY (2003)

THE LEADERSHIP QUARTERLY 14 (2003) 693–727

DOI:10.1016/J.LEAQUA.2003.09.001

A causal theory of spiritual leadership is developed within an intrinsic motivation model that incorporates vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, theories of workplace spirituality, and spiritual survival. The purpose of spiritual leadership is to create vision and value congruence across the strategic, empowered team, and individual levels and, ultimately, to foster higher levels of organizational commitment and productivity. He also review religious and ethics-and-values-based leadership theories and conclude that, to motivate followers, leaders must get in touch with their core values and communicate them to followers through vision and personal actions to create a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership.

Leadership at Every Level: Appreciative Inquiry in Education

RICH HENRY (2003)

NEW HORIZONS FOR LEARNING, AUGUST 2003

HTTP://EDUCATION.JHU.EDU/PD/NEWHORIZONS/TRANSFORMING%20EDUCATION/LEADERSHIP%20IN%20EDUCATION/LEADERSHIP%20AT%20EVERY%20LEVEL/

This article focuses on how AI transforms and creates a shared positive experience. It strengthens networks in and across schools, generates commitment and ownership at the school level to follow-up on projects and community awareness initiatives, facilitates conversations and dialogues across functions, ages, experiences and boundaries.

Appreciative Inquiry and Leadership Transitions

MAUREEN R. KEEFE AND DANIEL PESUT (2004)

JOURNAL OF PROFESSIONAL NURSING, VOLUME 20(2) 103–109

In times of accelerated change accompanied by leadership transitions, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and sensemaking skills are necessary. AI is a philosophy, a model of change, and a set of tools and techniques that support

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discovery, dreaming, design, and creation of a vision that inspires people in an organization to move toward a collective destiny. Sensemaking involves sizing up a situation to create a framework for decision-making, creating a context for communication, linking with others, and focusing on what is and what could be. In this article, the story of the University of Utah College of Nursing's and the faculty's experience with an AI process illustrates the application of the AI leadership strategy to navigating organizational change and a leadership transition.

Appreciative Inquiry and Hospitality Leadership

THOMAS A. MAIER (2008)

JOURNAL OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN HOSPITALITY & TOURISM, 2008, VOL. 8(1), 106–117.

This paper demonstrates the application of AI to the hospitality industry and views it as a viable organizational methodology capable of improving overall organizational performance. It suggests that leaders in the accommodation, food and beverage industries can use the AI process to bring about change and transformation within their organizations that allow the organization to have increased focus on customer perception of service, and sustained profitable performance.

Bridge Leadership: A Case Study of Leadership in a Bridging Prganization

RONALD S. MCMULLEN, HENRY ADOBOR, (2011)

LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL, VOL. 32(7) 715–735

HTTP://DX.DOI.ORG.EZPROXY.IMT.EDU:2048/10.1108/01437731111170012

The research conducted for this paper revealed that the successful bridge leader tended: to build personal relations and goodwill as a way of creating personal obligations on the part of the stakeholders he led; championed the cause of the stakeholders and made their mission his/her own; created opportunities for individual and collective goal achievement; relied on symbolic behavior and ceremonies to reify the bridge mission; and engaged in frequent communication with a liberal use of humor and playfulness to make goals embraceable by the stakeholders in the collaboration

Distinguishing Between Transformational and Servant Leadership

JEANINE PAROLINI, KATHLEEN PATTERSON AND BRUCE WINSTON (2009)

LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL, VOL. 30(3) 274–291

HTTP://DX.DOI.ORG.EZPROXY.IMT.EDU:2048/10.1108/01437730910949544

Although transformational and servant leadership has been in existence since the 1970s and theoretical assumptions about the differences began in the 1990s, this paper seeks to relate the first empirical investigation distinguishing between the two leaders.

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Dialogue on Leadership Development

C. MANOHAR REDDY, VASANTHI SRINIVASAN

MANAGEMENT REVIEW (2015) 27, 44E55

HTTP://DX.DOI.ORG/10.1016/J.IIMB.2015.02.001

Sharing their considerable experience as teachers who have designed and conducted leadership development programmes, the authors discuss the challenges in the field of leadership development, distinguishing between leader development and leadership development; differentiating leadership theories from leadership development theories along with the need to synthesize Western and Indian approaches to leadership development; and the importance of designing coherent leadership development programmes which combine multiple methods and approaches.

Seeking and Measuring the Essential Behaviors of Servant Leadership

BRUCE WINSTON (2015)

LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL, VOL. 36(4) 413–434.

HTTP://DX.DOI.ORG/10.1108/LODJ-10-2013-0135

The purpose of this paper was to clarify the nature of how servant leadership is established and transmitted among members of an organization. The second goal was to identify and evaluate the unique actions by a leader essential to establishing servant leadership. The authors' efforts resulted in identification and validation of ten leader behaviors that seem to be essential to servant leadership.

Blogs, Videos and Films

Leadership Development – Appreciative Inquiry

BLUEPOINT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

HTTP://WWW.BLUEPOINTLEADERSHIP.COM/POINT-BLOG/LEADERSHIP-DEVELOPMENT-APPRECIATIVE-INQUIRY

The website is a link to leadership coaches who encourage the use of AI principles in coaching and facilitation. This resource is a source for various articles, training videos and webinars that practitioners can make use of.

Five Strategies of Appreciative Leadership

CORPORATION FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

HTTP://POSITIVECHANGE.ORG/FIVE-STRATEGIES-OF-APPRECIATIVE-LEADERSHIP/

This website engages in a discussion on appreciative leadership based on research in multinational global corporations to governments to university health care systems to small local non-profits. They address organizational development issues premised on the AI framework. Practitioners can benefit from the nature

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of services they provide. The blogs are an interesting platform from which to learn more about the subject.

On Leadership With ... A series of short film portraits of leaders working in/from the appreciative paradigm

PRODUCED BY JOEP C. DE JONG.

LINK: HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/GROUPS/347881

This series of short interviews filmed by Joep explores leaders' thoughts on working from an appreciative paradigm.

Saatva

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE SAMATVAM ACADEMY

WWW.SAMATVAM.CO.IN

A great resource which is very different and quite complimentary to AI-P is the Saatva - a monthly publication of the Samatvam Academy.
The Saatva offers a mix of inspiring case studies of positive, sustainable organizations that are changing the world along with cutting edge research studies on leadership development in the appreciative paradigm, uplifting interviews and a touch of yoga.

Appreciative Leadership: Focus on What Works to Build a Thriving Organization

DIANA WHITNEY (2013)

HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=QWP8WTF7OGM

Diana Whitney defines leadership as a powerful relational process and offers five strategies for extraordinary performance in this new video from her presentation to NC SmartStart entitled "Appreciative Leadership: Focus on What Works to Build a Thriving Organization."

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Founder, Instituut voor Interventiekunde (Institute for Interventionism), Amsterdam

Robbert Masselink

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Sarah Lee
Head of Department for Sport at Hartpury University Centre, Hartpury College, UK

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Appreciative Inquiry Theory and Practice in Amsterdam

The Instituut voor Interventiekunde (Institute for Interventionism) was founded in 2005 by Wick van der Vaart for two purposes:

- To train coaches, trainers, consultants and/or managers in the craft of appreciative interventionism. Students range in age from 24 to 65.
- As a network of practitioners who use an appreciative approach in working with individuals, groups and organisations.

The programs the Instituut voor Interventiekunde offers are both theoretical and practical. Our students not only read the works of Kurt Lewin, Chris Argyris, Edgar Schein, Karl Weick, Kenneth Gergen, David Cooperrider, Gervase Bushe and many others, they learn to apply these theories in their daily practice.

Our main programs are:

- A two year basic program in interventionism;
- International programs to become an AI practitioner, an AI master practitioner, and an AI meta practitioner.

THE TAOS INSTITUTE

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The Taos Institute is a community of scholars and practitioners concerned with the social processes essential for the construction of reason, knowledge and human value.

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JLS International

JLS International has been using Appreciative Inquiry to facilitate change and innovation in organizations ever since its introduction to AI by Jane Watkins and Barbara Sloan in 1995.

We are particularly interested in the sustainability of AI in organizations and how it facilitates our journey to connect to who we truly are. We have a special interest in what we call 'The Soul of the Appreciative Leader'. Find out more about our approach to facilitating change and innovation by watching a film interview with Joep at: http://vimeo.com/105648641.

Joep C. de Jong is its director and founder and also an associate of the TAOS Institute, member of the AIP Advisory board and member of the council of IDEIA.

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https://med.virginia.edu/appreciative-practice/

Center for Appreciative Practice at the University of Virginia

Changing the conversation in healthcare…and beyond since 2008, our multidisciplinary team has been serving groups across the University of Virginia and beyond to facilitate improvements in clinical care, education and interprofessional communication. We provide customized services applying expertise in appreciative inquiry, positive psychology, mindfulness, and wisdom as well as medicine, nursing, patient safety, quality improvement, and positive organization development.

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