A Positive Revolution in Change:
Appreciative Inquiry

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Introduction

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) begins an adventure. The urge and call to adventure has been sounded by many people and many organizations, and it will take many more to fully explore the vast vistas that are now appearing on the horizon. But even in the first steps, what is being sensed is an exciting direction in our language and theories of change—an invitation, as some have declared, to "a positive revolution".

The words just quoted *are* strong and, unfortunately, they are not ours. But the more we replay, for example, the high-wire moments of our several years of work at GTE, the more we find ourselves asking the very same kinds of questions the people of GTE asked their senior executives: "Are you really ready for the momentum that is being generated? This is igniting a grassroots movement…it *is* creating an organization in full voice, a center stage for the positive revolutionaries!"

Tom White, President of what was then called GTE Telops (making up 80% of GTE's 67,000 employees) replies back, with no hesitation: "Yes, and what I see in this meeting are zealots, people with a mission and passion for creating the new GTE. Count me in, I'm your number one recruit, number one zealot". People cheer.

Enthusiasms continue, and they echo over subsequent months as lots of hard work pays off. Fourteen months later --based on significant and measurable changes in stock prices, morale survey measures, quality/customer relations, union-management relations, etc.-- GTE's whole system change initiative is given professional recognition by the American Society for Training and Development. It wins the 1997 ASTD award for best organization change program in the country. Appreciative inquiry is cited as the "backbone".

How Did They Do It?

This paper provides a broad update and overview of AI. The GTE story mentioned at the outset is, in many ways, just beginning but it is scarcely alone. In the ten years since the

theory and vision for "Appreciative Inquiry Into Organizational Life" was published, (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider 1986) there have been literally hundreds of people involved in co-creating new practices for doing AI, and for bringing the spirit and methodology of AI into organizations all over the world. The velocity and largely informal spread of the ideas suggests, we believe, a growing sense of disenchantment with exhausted theories of change, especially those wedded to vocabularies of human deficit, and a corresponding urge to work with people, groups, and organizations in more constructive, positive, life-affirming, even spiritual ways.

In this paper we hope to serve as conduit to this impulse as we touch on exciting examples and concepts, and provide references for future study. And while the outcomes and illustrations we have selected are often dramatic, we do want to emphasize, throughout, that AI is clearly only in its infancy. Questions are many, and we believe they will be a source of learning for many years.

Could it be, for example, that we as a field have reached "the end of problem solving" as a mode of inquiry capable of inspiring, mobilizing and sustaining significant human system change? What would happen to our change practices if we began all of our work with the positive presumption—that organizations, as centers of human relatedness, are "alive" with infinite constructive capacity*?* If so how would we know? What do we mean by infinite capacity? What would happen to us, lets say as leaders or catalysts of change, if we approached the question of change only long *after* we have connected with people and organizations through systematic study of their already "perfect" form? How would we talk about "it"—this account of the ideal-in-the-real? Would we, in our work, have to go any further once we and others were connected to this positive core*? How can we better inquire into organization existence in ways that are economically, humanly, and ecologically significant, that is, in ways that increasingly help people discover, dream, design and transform toward the greatest good?*

What is Appreciative Inquiry?

> ***Ap-pre'ci-ate, v.,*** *1. valuing; the act of recognizing the best in people or the world around us; affirming past and present strengths, successes, and potentials; to perceive those things that give life (health, vitality, excellence) to living systems 2. to increase in value, e.g. the economy has appreciated in value.* Synonyms*: VALUING, PRIZING, ESTEEMING, and HONORING.*
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> ***In-quire' (kwir), v.,*** *1. the act of exploration and discovery. 2. To ask questions; to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities. Synonyms: DISCOVERY, SEARCH, and SYSTEMATIC EXPLORATION, STUDY.*

AI has been described by observers in a myriad of ways: as a *paradigm of conscious evolution* geared for the realities of the new century (Hubbard, 1998); as a methodology that takes the idea of the *social construction* of reality to its positive extreme-- especially

with its emphasis on metaphor and narrative, relational ways of knowing, on language, and on its potential as a source of generative theory (Gergen, 1994); as the most important advance in *action research* in the past decade (Bushe, 1995); as offspring and "heir" to Maslow's vision of a *positive social science* (Chin, 1998; Curran, 1991); as a powerful second generation *OD practice* (French and Bell, 1995; Porras, 1991; Mirvis, 1988/89); as model of a much needed *participatory science*, a "new yoga of inquiry" (Harman, 1990); as a radically affirmative approach to change which completely lets go of problem-based management and in so doing vitally transforms strategic planning, survey methods, culture change, merger integration methods, approaches to TQM, measurement systems, sociotechnical systems, etc. (White, 1996); and lastly, as OD's *philosopher's stone* (Head & Sorenson, et. al 1996). Indeed it is difficult to sum up the whole of AI—as a philosophy of knowing, a normative stance, a methodology for managing change, and as an approach to leadership and human development. However, for purposes here, it might be most useful to begin with a practice-oriented definition of AI, one that is more descriptive than theoretical and one that provides a compass for the examples to follow:

Appreciative Inquiry is about the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them. In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives "life" to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the "unconditional positive question" often-involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people. In AI, the arduous task of intervention gives way to the speed of imagination and innovation; instead of negation, criticism, and spiraling diagnosis, there is discovery, dream, and design. AI seeks, fundamentally, to build a constructive union between a whole people and the massive entirety of what people talk about as past and present capacities: *achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, high point moments, lived values, traditions, strategic competencies, stories, expressions of wisdom, insights into the deeper corporate spirit or soul, and visions of valued and possible futures.* Taking all of these together as a gestalt, AI deliberately, in everything it does, seeks to work from accounts of this "positive change core"—and it assumes that every living system has many untapped and rich and inspiring accounts of the positive. Link the energy of this core directly to any change agenda and changes never thought possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized.

The *positive core* of organizational *life*, we submit, is one of the greatest and largely unrecognized resources in the field of change management today. As said earlier, we are clearly in our infancy when it comes to tools for working with it, talking about it, and designing our systems in synergistic alignment with it. But one thing is evident and clear as we reflect on the most important things we have learned with AI: human *systems grow in the direction of what they persistently ask questions about and this propensity is strongest and most sustainable when the means and ends of inquiry are positively*

correlated. The single most prolific thing a group can do if its aims are to liberate the human spirit and consciously construct a better future is to make the positive change core the common and explicit property of all.

Let's Illustrate:
The Appreciative Inquiry "4-D" Cycle

(insert 4-D cycle here—see page 28)

You have just received the following unsettling phone call:

My name is Rita Simmel; I am President of a New York consulting partnership. Our firm specializes in dealing with difficult conflict in organizations: labor-management issues, gender conflict, issues of diversity. We have been retained by a fortune 500 corporation for the past several years. The contract is around sexual harassment, an issue that is deeper and more severe than virtually any corporation realizes. The issues are about power, the glass ceiling, and many things. As you know, millions of dollars are being expended on the issues. Our firm has specialized in this area for some years and now I'm beginning to ask myself the Hippocratic oath. Are we really helping? Here is the bottom line with our client. We have been working on the issues for two years, and by every measure-- numbers of complaints, lawsuits, evaluations from sexual harassment training programs, word of mouth—the problem continues in its growth. Furthermore people are now voting with their feet. They are not coming to the workshops. Those that do seem to leave with doubts: our post-workshop interviews show people feel less able to communicate with those of the opposite gender, they report feeling more distance and less trust, and the glass ceiling remains. So here is my question. How would you take an appreciative inquiry approach to sexual harassment?

This was a tough one. We requested time to think about it, asking if we could talk again in a day or two. We can do the same for you right now (give you a bit of time) as we invite you to think about things you might seriously propose in the callback.

So before going further with the story lets pause and look at a typical flow for AI, a cycle that can be as rapid and informal as in a conversation with a friend or colleague, or as formal as an organization-wide analysis involving every stakeholder, including customers, suppliers, partners, and the like.

Figure one shows (page 28), on the outside, four key stages in AI: **Discovery—** mobilizing a whole system inquiry into the positive change core; **Dream—**creating a clear results-oriented vision in relation to discovered potential and in relation to questions of higher purpose, i.e., "What is the world calling us to become?" **Design—**creating possibility propositions of the ideal organization, an organization design which people feel is capable of magnifying or eclipsing the positive core and realizing the articulated new dream; and **Destiny—**strengthening the affirmative capability of the whole system enabling it to build hope and momentum around a deep purpose and creating processes for learning, adjustment, and improvisation, like a jazz group over time (see the excellent article by Barrett, 1998).

At the core of the cycle, is **Affirmative Topic Choice.** It is the most important part of any AI. If, in fact, knowledge and organizational destiny are as intricately interwoven as we think, then isn't it possible that the seeds of change are implicit in the very first questions we ask? AI theory says yes and takes the idea quite seriously: *it says that the way we know people, groups, and organizations is fateful. It further asserts the time is overdue to recognize that symbols and conversations, emerging from all our analytic modes, are among the world's paramount resources.*

Topic Choice

So back to our phone call. If inquiry and change are a simultaneous moment; if the questions we ask set the stage for what we "find"; and if what we "discover" (the data) creates the material out of which the future is conceived, conversed about, and constructed—then how shall we proceed with an appreciative approach to sexual harassment? Here is an excerpt from the response:

D.C.: Hello Rita. Before we get into our proposal we have an important question. What is it that you want to learn about and achieve with this whole intervention, and by when?

Rita: We want to dramatically cut the incidence of sexual harassment. We want to solve this huge problem, or at least make a significant dent in it.

D.C.: O.K. Rita… But is that all?

Rita: You mean what do I *really* want to see? (Long pauses…then she blurts out). *What we really want to see is the development of the new century organization—a model of high quality cross-gender relationships in the workplace!*

DC: Great topic. What would happen if we put an invitation out in the company newsletter, asking people in pairs to step forward to nominate themselves as candidates to study and share their stories of what it means to create and sustain high quality cross-gender relationships in the workplace? It might be interesting to do a large conference, and really put a magnifying lens to the stages of development, contextual factors, tough

questions of adult attraction, breakthroughs in terms of power relations, and so on. What do you think?

To move fastforward, a relatively small pilot project was created which surpassed everyone's expectations. Hundreds, not dozens, of pairs nominated themselves. That was surprise number one. Then other organizations got word of the pilot and a truly major effort, moving through the 4-D framework, was conceptualized by another consulting firm, Marge Schiller and Associates. The pioneering organization she worked with, which now can happily be named, was the Avon Corporation in Mexico. Again there were similar issues—including the glass ceiling at senior management levels—but again there was interest in framing the whole thing in terms of an inquiry.

To begin, a hundred people were trained in the basics of AI interviewing. They in turn went out into every part of the organization and over the next several weeks completed many more interviews, about 300 in all. At the end of each interview, the interviewers asked the person interviewed if they too could help do some interviewing. A waterfall was experienced. Stories poured in—stories of achievement, trust building, authentic joint leadership, practices of effective conflict management, ways of dealing with sex stereotypes, stages of development and methods of career advancement.

The second two "Ds"-- articulating the new century dream and creating designs for an organization that maximally supported the development of high quality cross-gender relationships-- came next. These were combined in a large group format much like a future search. Using stories from the interviews as a basis for imagining the future, expansive and practical propositions were created, for example, "Every task force or committee at Avon, whenever possible, is co-chaired by a cross-gender pairing". The significance of even this simple proposal proved to be big. Likewise, propositions in other areas of organization design were also carefully crafted. Soon, literally *everything* in the organization was opened to discussion: corporate structures, systems, work processes, communications, career opportunities, governance, compensation practices, leadership patterns, learning opportunities, customer connections, and more.

In the end, some 30 visionary propositions were created. Subsequent changes in system structures and behaviors were reported to be dramatic (Schiller, 1998). As it turns out, the story, like GTE's, gets even better. Avon Mexico was just recently singled out, several years later, by the Catalyst organization. *They were given the 1997 Catalyst Award for best place in the country for women to work.*

It is a classic example of the power of topic choice. Affirmative topics, always homegrown, can be on anything the people of an organization feel gives life to the system. As a rule of thumb most projects have between 3-5 topics. Words like empowerment, innovation, sense of ownership, commitment, integrity, ecological consciousness, and pride are often articulated as worthy of study. Topics can be on anything an organization feels to be strategically and humanly important. AI topics can be on technical processes, financial efficiencies, human issues, market opportunities, social responsibilities, or anything else. In each case of topic choice, the same premise is

firmly posited: human systems grow in the direction of their deepest and most frequent inquiries.

The Phase of Discovery

The inquiry we are talking about is anything but wishful. If we were to underline one of the two words-- appreciative or inquiry—our pen would immediately move to the latter. In Vital Speeches of the Day (1996), Tom White, President of what was then called GTE Telephone Operations, puts his interpretation of AI in executive language, months before GTE's change effort was recognized by ASTD:

Appreciative Inquiry can get you much better results than seeking out and solving problems. That's an interesting concept for me—and I imagine most of you—because telephone companies are among the best problem solvers in the world. We troubleshoot everything. We concentrate enormous resources on correcting problems that have relatively minor impact on our overall service and performance (and which)…when used continually and over a long period of time, this approach can lead to a negative culture. If you combine a negative culture with all the challenges we face today, it could be easy to convince ourselves that we have too many problem to overcome—to slip into a paralyzing sense of hopelessness….Don't get me wrong. I'm not advocating mindless happy talk. Appreciative Inquiry is a complex science designed to make things better. We can't ignore problems—we just need to approach them from the other side".

What Tom White calls "the other side", we are describing as the positive change core. AI, most simply, is a tool for connecting to the transformational power of this core. Willis Harman (1990) talks about AI as a participatory science, a yoga of inquiry, where the term yoga comes from the Sanskrit root yug which means link or bond. In that sense if we remember something or someone, it can be said that there is a form of yoga happening. AI helps make the memory link by concentrating systematic inquiry into all aspects of the appreciable world, into an organization's infinite and surplus capacity—past, present and future. By concentrating on the atom, human beings have unleashed its power. AI says we can do the same in every living system once we open this ever emergent positive core—every strength, innovation, achievement, resource, living value, imaginative story, benchmark, hope, positive tradition, passion, high point experience, internal genius, dream-- to systematic inquiry.

The core task of the discovery phase is to discover and disclose positive capacity, at least until an organization's understanding of this "surplus" is exhausted (which has never happened once in our experience). AI provides a practical way to ignite this "spirit of inquiry" on an organization-wide basis. Consider this example:

At Leadshare in Canada, AI was used to help this big eight accounting firm make the tough transition in the executive succession of a "legendary" managing partner. The managing partner seized the moment as an incredible leadership development opportunity for all 400 partners. Everyone was interviewed with AI. An extensive interview protocol was designed (it ended up taking about 2 hours per interview)

focusing on affirmative topics like innovation, equality, partnership, speed to market, and valuing diversity (in Canada between francophone and anglophone). And not one outside consultant did the interviews. All were done internally, by 30 junior partners as part of a leadership development program. A powerful and instant intergenerational connection was made, and organizational history came alive in face-to-face stories. Instead of amnesia, or a problem-to-be-solved, people began to relate to their history in a whole new way. Like a good piece of poetry filled with endless interpretive meaning, people at Leadshare ascended into their history as a reservoir of positive possibility. At the next annual partners meeting, with over 400 people in the conference hall, the material was showcased and coupled to the future, as the strategic planning became one of the "best" the partners could ever remember (Rainey, 1996)

Perhaps it is obvious, but the process of doing the interviews is as important as the data collected. When managers ask us how many people should be interviewed or, who should do the interviews, we increasingly find ourselves saying "everyone". It is not uncommon in AI work to talk about doing thousands of interviews. A hospital in Seattle recently did three thousand interviews in preparation for an organization-wide Appreciative Inquiry Summit (Whitney and Cooperrider, 1998). People themselves, not consultants, generate the system-wide organization analysis using questions like this: " Obviously you have had ups and downs in your career here at XYZ. But for the moment I would like you to focus on a high point, a time in your work experience here where you felt most alive, most engaged, or most successful. Can you tell me the story? How did it unfold? What was it organizationally that made it stand out? What was it about *you* that made it a high point? What key insights do you have for all of us at XYZ?"

In Chicago, in one of the most exciting AI's we have seen, there is talk of over a million interviews. And guess whose interviews have produced the best data—the most inspiring, vision-generating stories? It is the children. It is happening through inter-generational inquiry where the elders are valued and share hopes in settings with the young. One of our favorite papers is about the Imagine Chicago story and the leadership of Bliss Browne. It is titled *"The Child as the Agent of Inquiry" (*Cooperrider, 1996). It argues that the spirit of inquiry is something all of us in change work need to reclaim and aspire to: openness, availability, epistemological humility, the ability to admire, to be surprised, to be inspired, to inquire into our valued and possible worlds.

What distinguishes AI, especially in this phase of work, is that every carefully crafted question is positive. Knowing and changing are a simultaneous moment. The thrill of discovery becomes the thrill of creating. *As people throughout a system connect in serious study into qualities, examples, and analysis of the positive core --each appreciating and everyone being appreciated-- hope grows and community expands.*

From Discovery to Dream

When an artist sits in front of a landscape the imagination is kindled not by searching for "what is wrong with this landscape", but by a special ability to be inspired by those things of value worth valuing. Appreciation, it appears, draws our eye toward life, but stirs our feelings, sets in motion our curiosity, and provides inspiration to the envisioning

mind. In his analysis of esthetics and the origins of creative images, Nietzsche once asked of the power of appreciation: " Does it not praise? Does it not glorify? Does it not select? Does it not bring {that which is appreciated} to prominence?" (In Rader, 1973, p. 12). Then in the same passage he takes a next step, linking valuing (discovery) and imagination (dream). He elaborates: " valuing is creating: hear it, ye creating ones! Valuation is itself the treasure and jewel of valued things".

During the dream phase, the interview stories and insights get put to constructive use. As people are brought together to listen carefully to the innovations and moments of organizational "life", sometimes in storytelling modes, sometimes in interpretive and analytic modes, a convergence zone is created where the future begins to be discerned in the form of visible patterns interwoven into the texture of the actual. The amplified interaction among innovators and innovations makes something important happen: very rapidly we start seeing outlines of the New World. Some organizations turn the data into a special commemorative report celebrating the successes and exceptional moment in the life of the organization (Liebler, 1997). Others have created a thematic analysis—careful to document rich stories and not succumb to "narrative thin" one line quotes (Ludema, 1996). In all cases the data onto the positive change core serves as an essential resource for the visioning stages of the appreciative inquiry 4-D model.

Before their strategic planning session in 1997, Nutrimental Foods of Brazil closed down the plant for a full day to bring all 700 employees together for a day of Discovery into the factors and forces that have given life to the system when it had been most effective, most alive, and most successful as a producer of high quality health foods. With cheers and good wishes a "smaller" group of 150 stakeholders—employees from all levels, suppliers, distributors, community leaders, financiers, and customers—then went into a four day strategy session to articulate a new and bold corporate dream. The stories from the day before were used just as an artist uses a palette of colors—before painting a picture the artist assembles the red paints, blue, green, yellow and so on. With these "materials" in hand people were asked to dream: "What is the world calling us to become? What are those things about us that no matter how much we change, we want to continue into our new and different future? Lets assume that tonight while we were all asleep a miracle occurred where Nutrimental became exactly as we would like it to be—all of its best qualities are magnified, extended, multiplied the way we would like to see…in fact we wake up and it is now 2005…as you come into Nutrimental today what do you see that is different, and how do you know?"After four days of appreciative analysis, planning, and articulation of three new strategic business directions, the organization launches into the future with focus, solidarity, and confidence. Six months later, record bottom line figures of millions of dollars are recorded—profits are up 300%. The co-CEOs Rodrigo Loures and Arthur Lemme Netto attribute the dramatic results to two things: bringing the whole system into the planning process, and realizing that organizations are in fact "centers of human relatedness"(Loures and Lemme Netto, 1998) which thrive when there is an appreciative eye—when people see the best in one another, when they can dialogue their dreams and ultimate concerns in affirming ways, and when they are connected in full voice to create not just new worlds but better worlds.

Design

Once the strategic focus or dream is articulated (usually consisting of three things in our model-- a vision of a better *world, a* powerful purpose, and a compelling statement of strategic intent) attention turns to the creation of the ideal organization, the social architecture or actual design of the system in relation to the world of which it is part. What we have found is that the sequencing is crucial, moving first through in-depth work on Dream before Design, followed with back and forth iterations. In Zimbabwe we recently worked with a partner organization of Save the Children. It was fascinating to observe how easy it was to re-design the organization in terms of structures and systems once broad agreement was reached on a powerful Dream. The articulation of the image of the future was simple: "Every person in Zimbabwe shall have access to clean water within five years". The critical design shift, demanded by the large dream, was to a new form of organization based on a network of alliances or partnerships, not bureaucracy's self-sufficient hierarchy.

One aspect that differentiates Appreciative Inquiry from other visioning or planning methodologies is that images of the future emerge out of *grounded* examples from an organization's positive past. Sometimes this "data" is complimented with benchmark studies of other organizations creating a "generative metaphor" for circumventing common resistances to change (Barrett and Cooperrider, 1990). In both cases, the good news stories are used to craft possibility propositions that bridge the best of "what is" with collective speculation or aspiration of "what might be". In the working of the material people are invited to challenge the status quo as well as common assumptions underlying the design of the organization. People are encouraged to "wander beyond" the data with the essential question being: "What would our organization look like if it were designed in every way possible to maximize the qualities of the positive core and enable the accelerated realization of our dreams?"

When inspired by a great dream *we have yet to find an organization that did not feel compelled to design something very new and very necessary*. Here is an example of a possibility proposition, one of about twenty organization design visions that were created at DIA Corporation, a rapidly growing distributor of consumer products. Today this proposition is modus operandi at the corporation:

DIA has become a learning organization that fosters the cross fertilization of ideas, minimizes the building of empires, harnesses the synergy of group cooperation, and cultivates the pride of being a valued member of one outstanding corporation. DIA accelerates its learning through an annual strategic planning conference that involves all five hundred people in the firm as well as key partners and stakeholders. As a setting for "strategic learning", teams present their benchmarking studies of the best five other organizations, deemed leaders in their class. Other teams present an annual appreciative analysis of DIA, and together these data-bases of success stories (internal and external) help set the stage for DIA's strategic, future search planning.

Recently we have had the opportunity to team up with Dee Hock, one of the greatest visionary CEOs we have ever worked with. Dee was the founder of VISA, a

breakthrough organization that has over 20,000 offices, and since 1970 has grown something like 10,000%; this year annual sales expected to pass $1 trillion. The whole Visa system, from Calcutta to Chicago, in over 200 countries is completely *unmanageable* from the perspective of using centralized, command-and-control design principles.

If General Motors once defined the shape of the old model, perhaps Dee's "chaordic organization" –combining chaos and order in ways which interweave (like nature's designs) infinite variety and self-organizing order—is a foreshadowing of an emerging prototype. What we have learned by working with Dee is how to move pragmatically and substantively from appreciative Discovery and Dream to truly post-bureaucratic Design that distributes power and liberates human energy in a way we have never seen. Most recently we have collaborated on a re-constitution of the United Way of America as well as an initiative to design something akin to a United Nations among the world's great religions and spiritual traditions (it is called United Religions). In each case helping people agree on a set of design principles is crucial. That is "principles" as in "We hold these truths to be self evident: that all people are created equal…" Again, this is not a set of platitudes but a manifesto, what people believe in and care about in their gut.

Destiny

Of all the creatures of earth, said William James in 1902, only human beings can change their pattern. "Man alone is the architect of his destiny".

In our early years of AI work we called the 4th "D" Delivery. We emphasized planning for continuous learning, adjustment, and improvisation in the service of shared ideals. It was a time for action planning, developing implementation strategies, and dealing with conventional challenges of sustainability. But the word delivery simply did not go far enough. It did not convey the sense of liberation we were seeing, like the well documented hotel case, where the system tranformed itself from a one-star to four-star hotel by using AI and literally putting a moratorium on all the traditional problem solving efforts that it had going (Barret and Cooperrider, 1990).

Executives like Jane Watkins (former Chair of the Board at NTL) and Jane Pratt (executive at the World Bank and now CEO of the Mountain Institute) argued that AI engenders a repatterning of our relationships not only with each other but also our relationship to reality itself. Reminiscent of Paulo Friere's concept of pedagogy of the oppressed—where people move in their relationship to reality from "submergence" to "reflexive awareness" to "co-participation"—these leaders insisted that AI's gift is at the paradigmatic level. AI is not so much about new knowledge but new knowing. Indeed people frequently talk, as they move through the pedagogy of life-giving Discovery, Dream, and Design, that something suddenly hits home: *that interpretation matters*—that the manner in which they/we read the world filters to the level of our imaginations, our relationships, and ultimately to the direction and meaning of our action. We create the organizational worlds in which we live.

What we discovered quite honestly was that momentum for change and long-term sustainability *increased the more we abandoned "delivery" ideas of action planning, monitoring progress, and building implementation strategies.* What was done instead, in several of the most exciting cases, was to focus only on giving AI away, to everyone, and then stepping back. The GTE story, still unfolding but already attracting national recognition, is suggestive. It is a story that says organizational change needs to look a lot more like an inspired movement than a neatly packaged or engineered product. Dan Young, the head of OD at GTE, and his colleagues Maureen Garrison and Jean Moore, call it "organizing for change from the grassroots to the frontline". Call it the path of positive protest, or a strategy for positive subversion—whatever it is called it is virtually unstoppable once "it" is up and running. Its structure is called the Positive Change Network (PCN). One especially dramatic moment gives the sense:

The headline article in GTE Together described what was spreading as a grassroots movement to build the new GTE. Initiated as a pilot training to see what would happen if the tools and theories of appreciative inquiry were made available to frontline employees, things started taking off. All of a sudden, without any permission, frontline employees are launching interview studies into positive topics like innovation, inspired leadership, revolutionary customer responsiveness, labor-management partnerships, and "fun". Fresh out of a training session on AI, one employee, for example, did 200 interviews into the positive core of a major call center. Who is going say "no" to a complementary request like—"would you help me out…I'm really trying to find out more about the best innovations developing in your area and I see you as someone who could really give me new insight into creating settings where innovation can happen… It is part of my leadership development. Do you have time for an interview…I would be glad to share my learning's with you later!" Soon the topics are finding their way into meetings, corridor conversations, and senior planning sessions—in other words the questions, enthusiastically received, are changing corporate attention, language, agendas, and learnings. Many start brainstorming applications for AI. Lists are endless. Have we ever done focus groups with the 100% satisfied customer? How about changing call center measures? What would happen if we replaced the entire deficit measures with equally powerful measures of the positive? How can we revitalize the TQM groups, demoralized by one fishbone analysis after another? What would happen if we augmented variance analysis with depth studies that help people to dream and define the very visions of quality standards? How about a star stories program to generate a narrative rich environment—where customers are asked to share stories of encounters with exceptional employees? How about a gathering with senior executives so we can celebrate our learning's with them, share with them how seeing the positive has changed our work and family lives, and even recruit them to join the PCN?

The pilot now had a momentum all its own. The immediate response—an avalanche of requests for participation—confirmed that there were large numbers at GTE ready to be called to the task of positive change. To grow the network by the 100s, even thousands, it was decided to do a ten region training session, all linked and downloaded by satellite conferencing. A successful pilot of three sites—Seattle, Indianapolis, and Dallas—confirmed the same kind of energy and response could happen through distance

technologies. Quite suddenly the power of a 1000 person network caught people's attention. Just imagine the 1000 "students" of organization life coming together in a year at an AI Summit to share learning from 10,000 innovations discovered at GTE. Very rapidly, by connecting and consistently noticing breakthroughs, new patterns of organizing would become commonplace knowledge. Changes would happen not by organized confrontation, diagnosis, burning platforms, or piecemeal reform but through irresistibly vibrant and real visions. And when everyone's awareness grows at the same time—that basic change is taking place in this area and that area, it is easier to coalesce a new consensus that fundamental change is possible. PCN was becoming a lightning rod for energy and enthusiasm we all greatly underestimated. ***Then the unions raised questions. There were serious concerns, including the fact that they were not consulted in the early stages. We were told the initiative was over. There was to be a meeting of the unions and GTE at the Federal Mediation Offices in Washington D.C. to put the whole thing to rest.***

But at the meeting with the IBEW and the CWA, leaders from both groups said they saw something fresh and unique about AI. They agreed to bring 200 union leaders together for a 2-day introduction. Their purpose: "to evaluate AI…to see if it should have any place in the future at GTE". A month later, the session takes place. It looks like it is going pretty well and then the moment of decision. Tables of eight were instructed to evaluate the ideas and cast a vote as a group: "yes, we endorse moving forward with AI" or "No, we withhold endorsement". For thirty minutes the 30 groups deliberated. Dan Young calls the vote. Tensions are felt. "Table one, how do you vote?" The response was ready: "we vote 100% for moving forward with AI and feel this is an historic opportunity for the whole system". Then the next table: "We vote 100% with a caveat—that every person at GTE have the opportunity to get the AI training, and that all projects going forward be done in partnership, the unions and the company". On and on the vote goes. 30 tables speak. 30 tables vote. Every single one votes to move forward. It was stunning. Eight months later AI is combined with the "conflictive partnership" model of John Calhoun Wells of the Federal Mediation Services at the kickoff session and announcement of a new era of partnership. The historic statement of Partnership states: "The company and the Unions realize that traditional adversarial labor-management relations must change in order to adapt to the new global telecommunications marketplace. It is difficult to move to cooperation in one quantum leap. However the company and the Unions have agreed to move in a new direction. This new direction emphasizes partnership…"

AI accelerates the nonlinear interaction of organization breakthroughs, putting them together with historic, positive traditions and strengths to create a "convergence zone" facilitating the collective repatterning of human systems. At some point, apparently minor positive discoveries connect in accelerating manner and quantum change, a jump from one state to the next that cannot be achieved through incremental change alone, becomes possible. What is needed, as the Destiny Phase of AI suggests, are the network-like structures that liberate not only the daily search into qualities and elements of an organization's positive core but the establishment of a convergence zone for people to empower one another—to connect, cooperate, and co-create. Changes never thought

possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized when people constructively appropriate the power of the positive core and simply… *let go of* accounts of the negative.

But then the question is always voiced: "What do we do with the *real* problems?"

Basic Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

To address this question in anything other than Pollyannaish terms we need to at least comment on the generative-theoretical work that has inspired and given strength too much of AI in practice. Here are five principles and scholarly streams we consider as central to AI's theory-base of change.

The Constructionist Principle*: Simply stated— human knowledge and organizational destiny are interwoven. To be effective as executives, leaders, change agents, etc., we must be adept in the art of understanding, reading, and analyzing organizations as living, human constructions. Knowing (organizations) stands at the center of any and virtually every attempt at change. Thus, the way we know is fateful.*

At first blush this statement appears simple and obvious enough. We are, as leaders and change agents, constantly involved in knowing/inquiring/reading the people and world around us—doing strategic planning analysis, environmental scans, needs analysis, assessments and audits, surveys, focus groups, performance appraisals, and so on. Certainly success hinges on such modes of knowing. And this is precisely where things get more interesting *because throughout the academy a revolution is afoot, alive with tremendous ferment and implication, in regards to modernist views of knowledge.* In particular, what is confronted is the Western conception of objective, individualistic, historic knowledge—"a conception that has insinuated itself into virtually all aspects of modern institutional life" (Gergen, 1985, P. 272). At stake are questions that pertain to the deepest dimensions of our being and humanity: how we know what we know, whose voices and interpretations matter, whether the world is governed by external laws independent of human choices and consciousness, and where is knowledge to be located (in the individual "mind", or out there "externally" in nature or impersonal structures)? At stake are issues that are profoundly fundamental, not just for the future of social science but for the trajectory of all our lives.

In our view, the finest work in this area, indeed a huge extension of the most radical ideas in Lewinian thought, can be found in Ken Gergen's *Toward Transformation in Social Knowledge (1982)* and *Realities and Relationships: Soundings In Social Construction (1994).* What Gergen does, in both of these, is synthesize the essential whole of the post modern ferment and crucially takes it beyond disenchantment with the old and offers alternative conceptions of knowledge, fresh discourses on human functioning, new vistas for human science, and exciting directions for approaching change. Constuctionism is an approach to human science and practice which replaces the individual with the *relationship* as the locus of knowledge, and thus is built around a keen appreciation of the

power of language and discourse of all types (from words to metaphors to narrative forms, etc.) to create our sense of reality—our sense of the true, the good, the possible.

Philosophically it involves a decisive shift in western intellectual tradition from *cogito ergo sum,* **to** *communicamus ergo sum* and in practice constructionism replaces absolutist claims or the final word with the never ending collaborative quest to understand and construct options for better living. The purpose of inquiry, which is talked about as totally inseparable and intertwined with action, is the creation of "generative theory", not so much mappings or explanations of yesterday's world but anticipatory articulations of tomorrow's possibilities. Constructionism, because of its emphasis on the communal basis of knowledge and its radical questioning of everything that is taken-for-granted as "objective" or seemingly immutable, invites us to find ways to increase the generative capacity of knowledge. However there are warnings: "Few are prepared", says Gergen (1985, p. 271) "for such a wrenching, conceptual dislocation. However, for the innovative, adventurous and resilient, the horizons are exciting indeed." This is precisely the call AI has responded to. Principle number two takes it deeper.

The Principle of Simultaneity*: Here it is recognized that inquiry and change are not truly separate moments, but are simultaneous. Inquiry is intervention. The seeds of change—that is, the things people think and talk about, the things people discover and learn, and the things that inform dialogue and inspire images of the future—are implicit in the very first questions we ask. The questions we ask set the stage for what we "find", and what we "discover" (the data) becomes the linguistic material, the stories, out of which the future is conceived, conversed about, and constructed.*

One of the most impactful things a change agent or practitioner does is to articulate questions. Instinctively, intuitively and tacitly we all know that research of any kind can, in a flash, profoundly alters the way we see ourselves, view reality, and conduct our lives. Consider the economic poll, or the questions that led to the discovery of the atom bomb, or the surveys that, once leaked, created a riot at a unionized automobile plant in London (see Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). If we accept the proposition that patterns of social-organizational action are not fixed by nature in any direct biological or physical way, that human systems are made and imagined in relational settings by human beings (socially constructed), then attention turns to the source of our ideas, our discourses, our researches—that is our questions. Alterations in linguistic practices—including the linguistic practice of crafting questions—hold profound implications for changes in social practice.

One great myth that continues to dampen the potential here is the understanding that first we do an analysis, and then we decide on change. Not so says the constructionist view. Even the most innocent question evokes change—even if reactions are simply changes in awareness, dialogue, feelings of boredom, or even laughter. When we consider the possibilities in these terms, that inquiry and change are a simultaneous moment, we begin reflecting anew. It is not so much "Is my question leading to right or wrong answers?" but rather "What impact is my question having on our lives together…is it helping to

generate conversations about the good, the better, the possible… is it strengthening our relationships?"

The Poetic Principle: *A metaphor here is that human organizations are a lot more like an open book than, say, a machine. An organization's story is constantly being co-authored. Moreover, pasts, presents, or futures are endless sources of learning, inspiration, or interpretation—precisely like, for example, the endless interpretive possibilities in a good piece of poetry or a biblical text. The important implication is that we can study virtually any topic related to human experience in any human system or organization. We can inquire into the nature of alienation or joy, enthusiasm or low morale, efficiency or excess, in any human organization. There is not a single topic related to organizational life that we could not study in any organization.*

What constuctionism does is remind us that it is not the "world out there" dictating or driving our topics of inquiry but again the topics are themselves social artifacts, products of social processes (cultural habits, typifying discourses, rhetoric, professional ways, power relations). It is in this vein that AI says let us make sure we are not just reproducing the same worlds over and over again because of the simple and boring repetition of our questions (not "one more" morale survey which everybody can predict the results ahead of time). AI also says, with a sense of excitement and potential, that there can be great gains made in a better linking of the means and ends of inquiry. Options now begin to multiply. For example, informally, in many talks with great leaders in the NGO world (Save the Children, World Vision), we have begun to appreciate the profound *joy* that CEO's feel as "servant leaders"-- and the role this *positive affect* potentially plays in creating healthy organizations. But then one questions: is there a book on the Harvard Business book-list, or anywhere for that matter, on Executive Joy ? And even if there isn't… does this mean that joy has nothing to do with good leadership, or healthy human systems? Why aren't we including this topic in our change efforts? What might happen if we did?

What the poetic principle invites is re-consideration of aims and focus of any inquiry in the domain of change management. For it is becoming clearer that our topics, like windsocks, continue to blow steadily onward in the direction of our conventional gaze. As we shall soon explore, seeing the world as a problem has become "very much a way of organizational life".

The Anticipatory Principle: The *infinite human resource we have for generating constructive organizational change is our collective imagination and discourse about the future. One of the basic theorems of the anticipatory view of organizational life is that it is the image of the future, which in fact guides what might be called the current behavior of any organism or organization. Much like a movie projector on a screen, human systems are forever projecting ahead of themselves a horizon of expectation (in their talk in the hallways, in the metaphors and language they use) that brings the future powerfully into the present as a mobilizing agent. To inquire in ways that serves to refashion anticipatory reality—especially the artful creation of positive imagery on a collective basis--may be the most prolific thing any inquiry can do.*

Our positive images of the future lead our positive actions—this is the increasingly energizing basis and presupposition of Appreciative Inquiry.

Whether we are talking about placebo studies in medicine (Ornstein and Sobel, 1987); reviews of a myriad of studies of the Pygmalion dynamic in the classroom (Jussim, 1986); studies of the rise and fall of cultures (Boulding,1966; Polak, 1973); research into the relationships between optimism and health (Seligman, 1990); studies of positive self-monitoring and ways for accelerating learning (Kirschenbaum, 1984); analysis of the importance of imbalanced, positive inner dialogue to personal and relational well-being (Schwartz, 1986); research on positive mood states and effective decision making (Isen, 1983); studies from the domain of "conscious evolution" (Hubbard, 1998); or theories on how positive noticing of even "small wins" can reverberate throughout a system and change the world (Weick, 1984)—the conclusions are converging on something Aristotle said many years ago. "A vivid imagination", he said " compels the whole body to obey it". In the context of more popular writing, Dan Goleman (1987), in a well-written *New York Times* headline-article declares "Research Affirms the Power of Positive Thinking".

The Positive Principle. *This last principle is not so abstract. It grows out of years of experience with appreciative inquiry. Put most simply, it has been our experience that building and sustaining momentum for change requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding—things like hope, excitement, inspiration, caring, camaraderie, sense of urgent purpose, and sheer joy in creating something meaningful together. What we have found is that the more positive the question we ask in our work the more long lasting and successful the change effort. It does not help, we have found, to begin our inquiries from the standpoint of the world as a problem to be solved. We are more effective the longer we can retain the spirit of inquiry of the everlasting beginner. The major thing we do that makes the difference is to craft and seed, in better and more catalytic ways, the unconditional positive question.*

Although the positive has not been paraded as a central concept in most approaches to organization analysis and change, it is clear we need no longer be shy about bringing this language more carefully and prominently into our work. And personally speaking, it is so much healthier. We *love* letting go of "fixing" the world. We *love* doing interviews, hundreds of them, into moments of organizational "life". And we are, quite frankly, more effective the more we are able to learn, to admire, to be surprised, to be inspired alongside the people with whom we are working. Perhaps it is not just organizations—we too become what we study. So suggested, over and over again, is the life-promoting impact of inquiry into the good, the better, and the possible. A theory of affirmative basis of human action and organizing is emerging from many quarters—social contructionism, image theory, conscious evolution and the like. And the whole thing is beginning, we believe, to make a number of our change-management traditions look obsolete.

Appreciative Inquiry and Power in Organizations

We could have easily called this section "Eulogy for Problem Solving". In our view, the problem solving paradigm, while once perhaps quite effective, is simply out of sync with the realities of today's virtual worlds (Cooperrider, 1996). Problem solving approaches to change are painfully slow (always asking people to look backward to yesterday's causes); they rarely result in new vision (by definition we can describe something as a problem because we already, perhaps implicitly, assume an ideal, so we are not searching to expansive new knowledge of better ideals but searching how to close "gaps"); and in human terms problem approaches are notorious for generating defensiveness (it is not my problem but yours). But our real concern, from a social constructionist perspective, has to do with relations of power and control. It is the most speculative part of this chapter; and hopefully, it better illuminates the potentials advocated by AI. In particular is the more conscious linking of language, including the language of our own profession, to change. Words do create worlds—even in unintended ways.

It was an unforgettable moment in a conference on AI for inner city change agents, mostly community mobilizers from the Saul Alinsky school of thought (Rules for Radicals), in Chicago. After two days a participant challenges: "This is naïve…have you ever worked in the depths of the inner city, like the Cabrini Green public housing projects? You're asking me to go in and 'appreciate' it…just yesterday I'm there and the impoverished children are playing soccer, not with a ball, no money for that, but with a dead rat. Tell me about appreciative inquiry in the housing projects!"

It was a powerful question. It was one that made us go deeper theoretically. At one level we were arguing typical approaches to problem diagnosis, including the Alinsky confrontation methods, would work, but at about half the speed of AI. But then as we explored the subject of the *cultural consequences of deficit discourse* we began seeing a disconcerting relationship between the society-wide escalation of deficit-based change methods and *the erosion of people power*. The analysis, from here, could proceed from virtually any "professional" discipline—the diagnostic vocabularies of social work, medicine, organization development, management, law, accounting, community development, editing—but lets begin with psychology and the social sciences (ample linkage will be made to our own field). Ken Gergen's (1994) work, again, is at the forefront for anyone wanting something more than a suggestive summary.

Consider the following characterizations of the self: *impulsive personality, narcissism, anti-social personality, reactive depressive, codependent, self-alienated, type-A, paranoid, stressed, repressed, authoritarian, midlife crisis.* These are all terms commonly used by the mental-health professions and are now common among people in the culture itself. But importantly, these terms, and several thousand others (Gergen 1994), have come into conventional usage only within the present century, many in only the last decade. But something else is noteworthy: the terminology's discredit, draw attention to problems, shortcomings, and incapacity's. Interestingly, the trajectory of the "professional" development of *vocabularies of human deficit* is rising at geometric rates, correlated as might be expected with the sheer growth in numbers of the profession. In

1892 when the American Psychological association was founded there were 31 members. By 1906 there were 181. The next thirty-one years witnessed an expansion of almost a hundredfold, to over 3000. In the next twenty-two years the figure grew again by twenty times, over 63,000. Add to this similar growth figures in social work, psychiatry, community development, and organization development and one realizes that the spiraling production of languages of deficit have become quite a growth industry. By 1980 mental illness was the third most expensive category of health disorder in the United States at more than $20 billion annually. By 1983, the costs for mental illness, exclusive of alcoholism and drug abuse, were estimated to be almost $73 billion. We have no figures for the consulting industry, but we can guess. While intentions are good, argues Gergen, some of the unintended consequences may not be.

From a constructionist perspective one realizes that words do not so much innocently "mirror" a world out there as they become vehicles for coordinating our actions with one another. Words in any profession function a bit like tools of the trade. When I used to give my son Matt a hammer, inevitably everything in the house soon became a nail. What happens when the "scientifically" legitimated vocabularies of human deficit become the common and explicit tool kit of all? Gergen suggests not everything about it is healthy. Such deficit discourse, when chronically used, "generates a network of increasing entanglements for the culture at large. Such entanglements are not only self serving for the professions, they also add exponentially to the sense of human misery" (1994 p. 142).

In particular, deficit based change approaches have an unfortunate propensity to *reinforce hierarchy*, wherein "less than ideal" individuals, who learn to accept what sometimes becomes a lifelong label, are encouraged to enter "treatment programs" under expert supervision; to *erode community*, wherein the mental health professions appropriate the process of interpersonal realignment that might otherwise (in other eras) have happened in a nonprofessional contexts like the family or community; to instill a sense of *self-enfeeblement,*wherein deficit terms essentialize the person and like a birthmark or fingerprint, the deficit is expected to inevitably manifest itself into many aspects of their lives (it is a "thing"); *to stimulate endless vocabulary expansion* wherein people increasingly construct their problems in the professional languages (diagnosing each other) and seek more help which in turn increased the numbers in the profession who are rewarded when they expand the vocabulary—"to explore a new disorder within the mental health sciences is not unlike discovering a new star in astronomy (Gergen p.159)". Gergen sums up: "As I am proposing, when the culture is furnished with a professionally rationalized language of mental deficit and people are increasingly understood according to this language, the population of "patients" expands. This population, in turn, forces the profession to extend its vocabulary, and thus the array of mental deficit terms available for cultural use (Gergen p.161). Is there no exit from such progressive infirmity?

After talking this over with the people in the inner city Chicago conference—and tracing the vocabularies of human deficit not only to the rise of the professions but also to the rise of bureaucracy, skeptical science, original sin theological accounts, the cynical media—the Alinsky trained activist sat down in a gasp. He said: "in the name of entertainment my people are being fed negative views of human violence—and they are

surrounded by endless description of their negative "needs" their "problem lives". Even in my methods, the same. And what do I see? I see people asleep in front of their TVs. Unable to move, like sleeping dogs. Yes they have voice in the housing project assessments. But it is a certain kind of voice…it is visionless voice. They get to confirm the deficit analysis; all the reports are the same. "Yes" they say, "The reports are true". What is hitting me right now is how radical the AI message might be. Marx could have said it better: perhaps the vocabularies of human deficit are the opiates of the masses. People have voice in the analyses—this involvement is what we fought for. But people are not mobilized by it anymore. No, they are asleep. Visionless voice is probably worse than no voice.

Elsewhere we have cautioned, in our own discipline, that it is not so much the problem solving *methodologies* per se that are of central concern, but the growing sense that we all, throughout the culture, have taken the tools a step further. It is not so much that organizations *have* problems, they *are problems (*see figure two on page 28*).* Somewhere a shift of this kind has taken place. Once accepted as fundamental truth about organizations, virtually everything in change-management becomes infused with a deficit consciousness. For example, as French and Bell (1995) define it, "Action-research is both an approach to *problem solving*—a model or paradigm, and a *problem solving process*—a series of activities and events" (p. 88). Levinson, in the classic on Organizational Diagnosis (1972) likens it to therapy—"like a therapeutic or teaching relationship it should be an alliance of both parties to discover and resolve these *problems…looking for experiences which appear stressful to people. What kinds of occurrences disrupt or disorganize people? (*p. 37). Chris Argyris, again in another classic, asserts: One condition that seems so basic as to be defined as axiomatic is the generation of *valid information.*…Valid information is that which describes the factors, plus their interrelationships, that *create the problem (1970, pp.16-17).*

Tough questions remain about power and deficit discourse. And of course there are an array of new innovations in the field, many in this volume, that are signaling significant departures. So at this point all we want to do is make a call for reflection and caution, taking a lesson from the wisdom of anthropology—*beware of the solid truths of one's own culture.*

Conclusion

To be sure, *Appreciative Inquiry (AI)* begins an adventure. The urge and call to adventure has been sounded by many people and many organizations, and it will take many more to fully explore the vast vistas that are now appearing on the horizon.

As said at the outset, we believe we are infants when it comes to our understanding of appreciative processes of knowing and social construction. Yet we are increasingly clear the world is ready to leap beyond methodologies of deficit based changes and enter a domain that is life-centric. Organizations, says AI theory, are centers of human relatedness, first and foremost, and relationships thrive where there is an appreciative eye—when people see the best in one another, when they share their dreams and ultimate

concerns in affirming ways, and when they are connected in full voice to create not just new worlds but better worlds. The velocity and largely informal spread of the appreciative learnings suggests, we believe, a growing sense of disenchantment with exhausted theories of change, especially those wedded to vocabularies of human deficit, and a corresponding urge to work with people, groups, and organizations in more constructive, positive, life-affirming, even spiritual ways. AI, we hope it is being said, is more than a simple 4-D cycle of discovery, dream, design, and destiny; what is being introduced is something deeper at the core.

Perhaps our inquiry must become the positive revolution we want to see in the world. Albert Einstein's words clearly compel: *"There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle"*.

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Dr. Cooperrider has served as researcher and consultant to a wide variety of organizations including (for example): Motorola, GTE, BP America, World Vision, Seattle Group Health,Teledesic, Imagine Chicago, Technoserve, the Mountain Forum, and United Way of America. Currently, as part of the above mentioned grant, David and his colleagues have organizational learning projects going on in 57 organizations working in over 100 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America. Most of these projects are inspired by the *Appreciative Inquiry* methodologies for which David is best known.

David often serves as meeting speaker and leader of large group, interactive conference events. His ideas have been published in journals like Administrative Science Quarterly, Human Relations, Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, The OD Practitioner, and in research series like Advances In Strategic Management. More popularly his work has been covered by The New York Times; Crain's Business, Cleveland's Plain Dealer, San Francisco Chronicle and others. He has been recipient of *Innovation* and *Best Paper of the Year Awards* at the Academy of Management, and numerous clients have received awards for their work with Appreciative Inquiry—GTE, for example, has just been recognized as 1998 *Best Organization Change Program* in the country by ASTD. David's most recent books include Organizational Courage and Executive Wisdom; and Appreciative Leadership and Management (both with Suresh Srivastva); International and Global OD (with Peter Sorenson); and The Organization Dimensions of Global Change: No Limits to Cooperation (with Jane Dutton). David has just been named editor of a new Sage Publication Book Series on *the Human Dimensions of Global Change*. Tel/Fax. 440-338-1546... COOPDLC@Prodigy.COM

Diana Whitney, Ph.D., is internationally recognized for her consulting, teaching and writing on innovative, large-scale processes for positive social and organizational change and has been instrumental in integrating appreciative inquiry in corporate change and leadership practices. Her work focuses on organization transformation, strategic culture change, communication and leadership development. Dr. Whitney applies social constructionist theory to mergers and acquisitions, organization development and strategic planning. She works collaboratively and creatively with executives, managers, and organization members, building teams and supporting them in the construction of the organization's future. She consults with corporate, nonprofit and government organizations including: Hunter Douglas, GTE, SmithKline Beecham, Johnson & Johnson, United Religions and Price Waterhouse. Her recent publications and presentations include: "Partnership at Work", "The Appreciative Inquiry Summit: Overview and Applications", "Postmodern Principles and Practices for Large Scale Organization Change", and "Spirituality as a Global Organizing Potential". Diana is a cofounder of the Taos Institute, where appreciative inquiry is taught to consultants and leaders of change. Phone number: 505-751-1232 and email whitneydi@aol.com .

Problem Solving

"Felt Need"
Identification of Problem

Analysis of Causes

Analysis and Possible Solutions

Action Planning
(Treatment)

Basic Assumption:
An Organization is a
Problem to be Solved

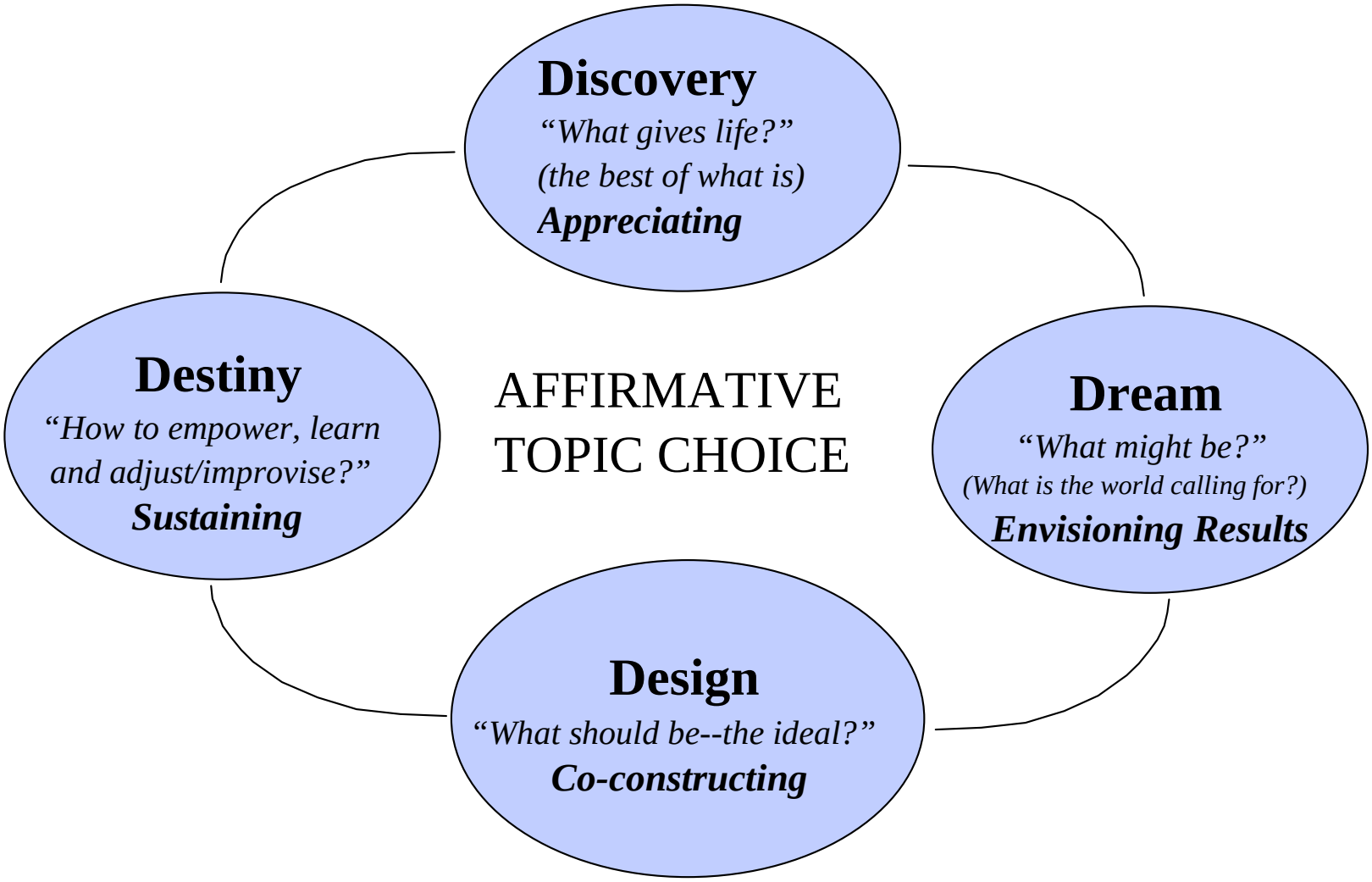
Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciating and Valuing
The Best of "What Is"

Envisioning "What Might Be"

Dialoguing "What Should Be"

Basic Assumption:
An Organization is a Mystery
to be Embraced



Appreciative Inquiry "4-D" Cycle

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