



 Special Video Issue

Innovation² & Appreciative Inquiry: Positive Images, Positive Action

Guest Editors: **Joanne Daykin, Lisa Hirsh and Ada Jo Mann, Innovation Partners International**
Sponsor: **The Taos Institute**

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Acknowledgement

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Innovation² & Appreciative Inquiry

Positive Images, Positive Action

ABSTRACT

An innovative video essay issue of *AI Practitioner* documenting the creative ways in which people use Appreciative Inquiry in their work and their lives to tell their stories.

Last spring Anne Radford approached Innovation Partners International and asked if we would be interested in editing a special issue on 'innovation' for release at the 2012 World AI conference. We were intrigued with the idea, and innovators that we aspire to be, decided to add a new wrinkle. What came up for us was a whole new format for showcasing innovation. Instead of inviting stories in print – we invited people to submit stories of using AI in video.

Little did we know what we were getting ourselves into – contributors and editors alike. The whole adventure has been one of discovery and inquiry, and we have been delighted with the experience. We thought you might be interested in the process.

With the support of the Taos Institute and working closely with Anne Radford, we sent out an invitation to submit video stories that are examples of innovations in the practice of AI and examples of using AI to drive innovation. We asked the questions:

- What are some of the breakthroughs, and next generation stories that demonstrate the life-giving factors in the practice of AI?
- Where are the innovative connections that enrich the practice of AI with individuals, teams, communities or business?

Five countries, six arenas

We received 22 proposals from five countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, France and Spain, and from six arenas: healthcare, education, social service, manufacturing, journalism and libraries. In telling their stories, people's experiences varied widely. Some, like the nurses and front-line staff of Core Physicians, had never used a video camera. Others, like Phillips, had

'It is clear that this approach is what people implicitly are waiting for.'
Bernard Tollec

professionally produced stories. We think the range of experiences is important because it gives a real feel for the breadth of experiments that are going on in the field and the variety of people who are telling these stories.

Over the intervening months, we had many conversations with our storytellers: about the focus of their stories, the ways of capturing them, filming technique including music and lighting. What you see is the work of many drafts, conversations, iterations and much learning for all of us. Our technical advisor, Mickey Lee, was an invaluable partner in making this issue happen.

We have organized the video stories in three groupings: Engaging people in strategy and improvement, The power of stories, and Innovative approaches to using AI. Here is a snapshot of what you will experience in viewing this wide range of storytelling through the medium of video:

Engaging people in strategy and improvement

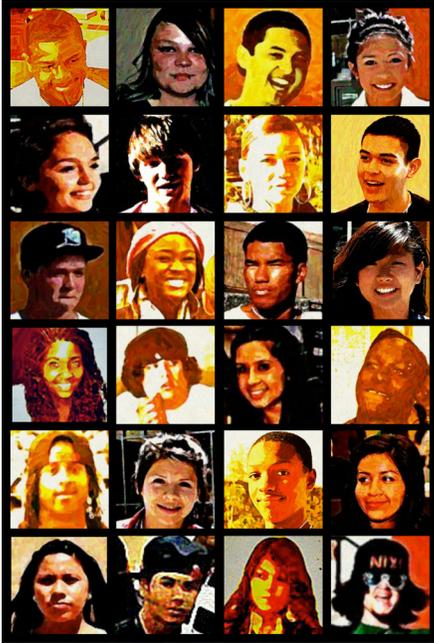
In An Innovative Approach to an Innovative Company, we see a business, Phillips Automotive Lighting, use AI to improve the operations of its supply chain organization. As Bernard Tollec writes, 'AI was introduced in an organization, a sector and a country where the philosophy is totally different. It is very encouraging that this approach can be introduced in environments where one might anticipate it would be rejected because of the culture. If focusing on what works is not totally obvious from the beginning, it is clear that this approach is what people implicitly are waiting for.'

Two videos highlighted ambitious engagement with the broad community, while a third shows the engagement of residents of a particular community:

- In 'The Energetic Learning Campus', by Larry Espe and Lesley Lahaye, we see the involvement of more than 400 people: students, staff and the community in the design of a learning space and curriculum to create powerful learning, inspired teaching and a real connection with the community.
- 'Living Well with Dementia' by Julie Barnes and Jill Guild tells the story of an ambitious series of workshops and a summit which led to the creation of a dementia strategy for the East Midlands National Health Service Strategic Health Authority.
- 'Working Together to Put Living First', a film by Schlegel-University of Waterloo Research Institute for Aging and Schlegel Villages shows the engagement of residents, family and team members from every level of the organization involved in an AI culture-change process focused on enhancing strengths, participation and learning.

The Power of Stories

- 'Spreading Sparks: Stories from Core Physicians' by Lisa Hirsh, shows front-line nurses and office staff in multi-specialty medical offices capturing stories of innovative practice and staff 'going above and beyond' for patients and the community.



Montage of young people 'choppin' it up and telling their positive stories (page 17)

Three stories demonstrate resilience and growth:

- In 'Choppin' it Up' we see the power of positive images affecting positive actions as young people from troubled backgrounds create new futures for themselves.
- In 'Back on My Feet' by Suzanne Quinney, a new program for substance abusers in a hostel in the UK creates a sense of new possibilities.
- In 'Using Our Influence', we see a moving example of an innovative program in rural Nova Scotia that is helping to reduce stigma for women who experience substance abuse, gambling, violence and abuse.

Innovative Approaches to Using AI

The videos include:

- 'Footfeet' by María del Carmen Muñoz de Bustillo, María Dolores García, María Fernández, Carolina Martín, Sara Cerdeña, Natalia Dorta and Manuel Clayseed uses metaphor and play (and no words!). This video illustrates three community experiences with AI: a technical team of a youth offenders' local government center, leaders of immigrant associations and a group of informal caretakers of dependent families.
- 'Essays in Two Voices' by Madelyn Blair and Michael Sands describes a way of using collaborative writing to partner in an appreciative way.
- 'I Love My HSL', by Robert Ladd and Barbara Renner, invites you into the lively world of the University of North Carolina's Health Sciences Library and the experiments they have been doing with AI and social media to document the many ways users value the library's services.
- Jackie Kelm has developed 'Appreciative Inquiry Learning Circles' and kits to help facilitators and participants apply AI principles in daily living, particularly when facing challenging situations.
- In 'Scaling Up Appreciative Inquiry with Generative Journalism,' Axiom News from Canada demonstrates how they are practicing 'generative journalism' by seeking out stories that empower people.

What is your story?

We hope you enjoy these video stories, as we have. The taste of innovation that they reveal leads us to think we shouldn't wait too long for another edition on innovation. There are many stories of AI and innovation to be told. What's yours?



Bernard Tollec

Bernard Tollec is Managing Director of Involve Consulting, a French based coaching and consulting agency. As a strengths-based OD consultant and executive coach, he is pioneering AI in France and in French speaking countries, mainly in a corporate environment. He is actively involved in the AI European Network.

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Engaging People in Strategy and Improvement

01 An Innovative Approach to an Innovative Company



ABSTRACT

Philips Automotive Lighting needed a way to involve employees. Using a strengths-based approach was a successful innovation both in the automotive industry, and in France.

This video is an example of how Appreciative Inquiry helped an organization achieve great results. Empowering staff at all levels has created a breakthrough in terms of culture change. By its very nature, AI has influenced this culture shift within the organization. The automotive industry largely focuses on what does not work.

Conducting a root-cause analysis of the problem is the usual approach. Focusing on strengths and what works created significant insights during the project both at professional and personal levels. The client considered it a highly innovative and surprising approach.

Who was involved, where did it take place and in what sector?

Philips Automotive Lighting is known for its innovation efforts (it is first worldwide). The European supply chain division was facing enormous difficulties: people were not sufficiently involved in achieving business results and the division received unsatisfactory results in their employee engagement survey. They required help to improve this situation. (I was their former HR Director before working as an independent strengths-based consultant and Executive Coach).

All stakeholders participated in the project (management team members, supervisors and workers).

This example gives energy and confidence to all AI practitioners about the relevance of the approach.

This AI project has been highly successful and has helped make breakthroughs both in the stakeholders' results and in their mindset. Using this strengths-based approach has been an innovative process both in the automotive industry, and in France where the culture is generally more focused on what does not work.

The positive results have gathered attention and as a result, the other part of the organization (the industrial sector) has asked to test the approach as well. Another video was made of this second experiment for a strengths-based annual business review.

What key learnings will your contribution offer to the AI global community?

AI was introduced in an organization, sector, and a country where the philosophy is totally different. It is encouraging that this approach can be introduced in environments where one might anticipate it to be rejected because of the culture.

Although focusing on what works may not be the most obvious choice from the beginning, it is clear that this approach is what people are unconsciously waiting for. Indeed, this way of working and thinking has been accepted immediately despite the initial surprise at the proposal's focus on strengths and successes.

This was contrary to their usual way of tackling issues. This example gives energy and confidence to all AI practitioners about the relevance of the approach in a very different environment.

This essay relates to video:

01 An Innovative Approach to an Innovative Company



Lesley Lahaye

Lesley has 35 years' experience working in public education as a teacher and district administrator. She worked with colleague Larry Espe on a collaborative action research project and co-authored their doctoral dissertation on systems-change in public education using AI.
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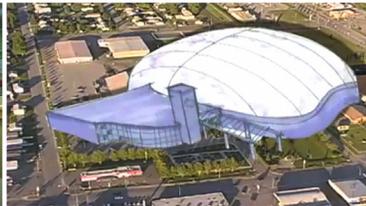
Larry Espe

Larry, born and raised in British Columbia, Canada, received his B.Ed. from the University of Alberta in 1981 and started teaching the same year. Larry has been an administrator at four schools; an assistant superintendent; and in 2006 was appointed superintendent. In 2010 he completed the Taos-Tilburg Ph.D. program.
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Engaging People in Strategy and Improvement

02 The Energetic Learning Campus



ABSTRACT

Asset-based conversations help create the best new high school campus possible for a Canadian community.

In the spring of 2008, two school district administrators embarked on a journey.

How could asset-based conversations, made possible through Appreciative Inquiry (AI), help a community examine its schools, determine what was of greatest value to continue doing, and generate possibilities for action and innovation in order to better prepare students for a future world? Over 300 staff, students, parents and community members took part in a series of World Café meetings and a 4-D cycle of AI. Root causes of success harvested from the AI cycle were used as a basis for collaboratively planning a new high school campus.

The new campus, which opened in the fall of 2011, features flexible use of space and scheduling, a variety of learning environments, project-based curriculum integrating content from traditional subject areas, and the use of new technologies. Students study over-arching themes and inquiry questions that link to issues in the community and in the world, in the belief that this will enhance student engagement and produce citizens able to think both creatively and critically.

An action initiative generated from the AI process can lead to transformational change.

A unique healthy-learning-living environment

The new campus is housed in the city's new sports complex. The complex is also home to two ice hockey rinks the size of those used in the National Hockey League, an Olympic speed-skating oval and a 350 meter running/walking track. It is next to the community curling rink, swimming pool and indoor soccer pitch. Students will have access to a sports and fitness center opening in the complex in 2012. The new campus offers a unique healthy-living-learning environment where students can explore the benefits of daily physical activity through a variety of recreational options.

AI driving innovation

This project is an example of how AI can be used in the public education system to drive innovation. It offers an alternative to traditional change practices in the education sector. It provides an example of how an action initiative generated from the AI process can lead to transformational change.

This contribution to the special edition of AIP on innovation features a short video introducing the new learning campus and highlighting its unique features. It also captures comments from students, parents, teachers and administrative staff as they share what they see as important and why in this departure from a traditional school.

This essay relates to video:
02 The Energetic Learning Campus



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Engaging People in Strategy and Improvement

03 Living Well with Dementia



ABSTRACT

Living well with dementia requires compassion, common sense, flexibility and creativity. Everyone needs to be involved to have the best possible outcome, especially those at the heart of the issue: those with dementia and their carers.

‘The energy for doing something in the room was palpable, which gave me some hope that something might change!’ Dave, Carer

Using Appreciative Inquiry (AI), people with dementia and their carers were at the heart of a major initiative to create local strategies based on a shared regional vision of ‘living well with dementia’.

Involving those forgotten in planning social services

In responding to the UK national strategy, the East Midlands National Health Service Strategic Health Authority was determined that people with dementia and their carers – those often excluded or forgotten – would be at the heart of planning processes begun in October 2009. The programme was gradually extended to include health and social care practitioners, managers and commissioners from public, private and voluntary sectors across the region.

We used AI to discover what ‘living well with dementia’ means to those who live with it everyday and to staff and other stakeholders working in this area. The visions we created together informed and focused the local planning workshops as well as being used to promote the regional vision at conferences and a local NHS art exhibition.

AI helps participants to stay focussed on what really matters.

The Department of Health Care Services Efficiency Delivery Team (CSED) worked in five counties across the region to design detailed local commissioning strategies which outlined in detail local health and social care needs and specified the services that would be purchased and delivered to meet those needs. Each workshop included people with dementia and their carers, and together they systematically matched services with local needs, eliminating waste and making joint decisions for the best outcomes.

At the end of the first year, in September 2010, 320 people met to celebrate and review the stories, plans and successes from each local area and created a Quality Charter for Dementia Services, so that everyone knew what they could expect from regional services.

Learnings – from the unthinkable to the compelling

Audacious visions compel people to act and the idea of 'living well with dementia' was at first unthinkable and then extremely compelling. Sometimes painful, sometimes funny, people shared stories about their lives and their hopes for the future. We learned that 'living well with dementia' requires compassion, common sense, flexibility and creativity.

We watched in awe as people responded to the healing power of their conversations and the relationships that developed. Our participants grew in confidence, recognising their own power and compelling others to listen and to learn from their stories. Several of these carers and people with dementia now regularly advise and train medical and social care staff.

Being at the heart of the planning and design services

People with dementia and their carers must be at the heart of planning and designing the services they will use. AI offers a powerful way of supporting and including them as equals; giving them and the whole system an innovative and creative way of discovering, dreaming, designing and acting together to powerful effect.

AI helps participants to stay focused on what really matters, cutting through bureaucracy, unleashing passion, connecting people as they work together, and creating personal and professional investment in successful outcomes.

**This essay relates to video:
03 Living Well with Dementia**



Jennifer Carson

is a doctoral candidate in the University of Waterloo's interdisciplinary Aging, Health and Well-Being Program. Since 2009, she has worked with the Schlegel-University of Waterloo Research Institute for Aging and Schlegel Villages as the lead researcher and guide of an organization-wide culture change initiative guided by Appreciative Inquiry.
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Dan Sherman

broadcast journalist and videographer lives in Canada. He is driven by an insatiable curiosity to tell the extraordinary stories of ordinary people and to open a window on their lives for others to enjoy. With words, sounds and images Dan sketches scenes reflecting the passions of people and the worthwhile things they do.
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Engaging People in Strategy and Improvement

04 Working Together to Put Living First



ABSTRACT

The institutional model of long-term care homes limits participation by those directly involved. Deep changes are needed to make LTC homes humane and life-affirming.

The overwhelming majority of long-term care (LTC) homes reflect an institutional model of care which diminishes the quality of life of those who live and work there. The hierarchical structure of the institutional model often limits or restricts participation in decision-making by those most directly involved in care and creates silos of regimented service delivery in which residents comply with facility routines at the expense of their own self-determined interests.

The culture change movement

There is growing consensus that deep changes are needed across the continuum of aging services, but more specifically within LTC homes, as we progress from institutional models of care to more humane and life-affirming social models of living (Fagan, 2003). This is known as the 'culture change' movement.

While many LTC homes have experimented with culture change, only a few hundred have truly transformed (Baker, 2007). This is because culture change is hard work, and it takes time. The most effective and empowering culture change initiatives develop from collaborative processes that include all stakeholder groups – residents, family members, team members and community partners – in decision-making (Caspar, O'Rourke and Gutman, 2009). Transforming LTC requires us to break free of the dominant discourses which structure and

We are Working Together to Put Living First by:

- Offering flexible living and dining
- Promoting cross-functional teams
- Creating opportunities for shared and meaningful activities
- Fostering authentic relationships
- Connecting research and innovation to Village life
- Honouring diversity and
- Promoting resident empowerment

perpetuate the institutional model, and to seek, instead, alternative sources of knowledge, those which are too often subordinated.

Explore, build, strengthen

Appreciative inquiry (AI) (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008; Ludema and Fry, 2008) is well-aligned with the values and principles of the culture change movement (Fagan, 2003). As a change process, it enables us to explore, build upon and strengthen the open qualities of human-discourse, honouring the experiences and knowledge of all those involved within the context of LTC, especially those who live and work there. Through appreciative dialogue and action with others, we can raise our consciousness, and with a range of meanings, instead of a single, authoritative interpretation, address the question, 'Where do we go from here?' Some culture change initiatives ironically and sadly carry forward the deficits-discourse of the institutional model as specific 'problems' within homes and organizations are identified and treated. AI, by contrast, draws upon our personal and collective strengths, values, positive experiences and dreams as we work toward a more ideal future.

In this video, you will see the powerful potential for transformation unleashed when Schlegel Villages, a LTC and senior living organization comprised of eleven communities in Ontario, Canada, embarked on a culture change process guided by AI. Our organization has a strong reputation for excellence in LTC and senior living. Therefore, when considering different approaches to culture change, we sought to identify a process that would enable us to build on the history, strengths and values of our organization. While recognizing the importance of continuous improvement, we are proud of who we are today, the journey that brought us here, and the unique skills, talents and contributions of each Village member. This video demonstrates how AI is helping our organization transform the experience of living and working within our Villages.

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This essay relates to video:
04 Working Together to Put Living First



Lisa Hirsh

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The Power of Stories

05 Spreading Sparks

Stories from Core Physicians



ABSTRACT

A team of front-line staff, nurses and administrators in New Hampshire came together for a bold experiment in capturing stories of the 'extraordinary inside the ordinary'.

In the fall of 2011, with health care facing challenging changes, a team of five front-line staff, nurses and administrators of Core Physicians, a multi-specialty network of offices in the seacoast region of New Hampshire, came together for a bold experiment.

They wanted to capture stories of the 'extraordinary inside the ordinary': everyday acts of people who make a difference in the lives of patients, families and the community. And they wanted to find examples of innovation.

As Sue Swift, a nurse on the team, said: 'Health care has taken a beating in the media these days, yet everyone works hard and what I see is spectacular things done by spectacular people. Only they think what they do is commonplace. I joined the Sparks Team because I think we need a boost – to be reminded of the positive outcomes of what we do every day, every hour. It's uplifting, and gives us a little more energy to go forth and do what we do best.'

Facilitated by Lisa Hirsh of Innovation Partners International and supported by Laurie Berube and Ron Goodspeed of Core Physicians, the team was first trained in Appreciative interviewing and then in the use of small flip cameras. Every three weeks they participated in early morning Sparks Team meetings, showed the stories they captured and talked about what they had been learning.

'The spark is catching on. I hear the enthusiasm around this table and I hear it out in the field.'
Ron Goodspeed

Six months into the project, they are sharing their work for the first time with this film. And they are planning ways to share these stories throughout Core as well as in other settings, such as Exeter Hospital, a nearby affiliate partner.

Spreading like wildfire

Their hopes: the stories will spread like wild-fire and other staff will want to get involved both in telling stories, and in filming – and that as a whole, the organization will notice and share positive experiences as a regular part of life.

In a recent session, members of the team reflected on what drew them to Sparks and what they have learned so far.

Spark Team Members:

Back row (L-R): Ron Goodspeed, Physician Recruiter; Carrie White, Medical Office Coordinator Lead; Sue Swift, RN; Louise Thaden, RN; Karen Rydeen, Medical Office Coordinator Lead; Sybil Dodier, Medical Office Coordinator Lead; Laurie Berube, RN, BC, Manager of Physician Engagement
Front row (L-R): Lisa Hirsh, IPI, Project Facilitator; Billi Petroski, Medical Assistant



The team's reflections

Karen Rydeen: 'We've been through so many changes – and I wanted to capture the passion we feel about the service that we do. The people we're filming are going after something, they are making things happen, they're really helping.'

Sybil Dodier: 'After I left that first meeting when we interviewed each other with appreciative questions, it was really uplifting. I wanted to take the camera and talk to everyone. I felt like this project gave everyone in our office an opportunity to be known, to tell their story, to show the connection they feel to Plaistow office.'

Louise Thaden: 'I find that the people we interview are very enthusiastic and proud. They love what they do and it shows and I love being part of that.'

Ron Goodspeed: 'It has been exciting for me to see people's interest in this new concept. We're getting good imagery in these spark moments and the spark is catching on. I hear the enthusiasm around this table when we get together and I hear it out in the field.'

This essay relates to video:
05 Spreading Sparks

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Kristin Bodiford

brings strategic planning and communications experience to her work with groups, organizations and systems to support positive change in communities. Community Strengths' aim is to support community members to create change that works towards meeting everyone's needs, and supports resilience and positive human development throughout the lifespan
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AI in action: members of Choppin' it Up



The Power of Stories

06 Choppin' it Up



ABSTRACT

Through Choppin' it Up youth created meaningful stories about their lives, hopes and dreams that build bridges to positive social action.

In communities struggling with youth violence, gangs, and poor academic performance, community members often view youth and their behaviors as the problem. By subscribing to and participating in this dominant narrative we often miss seeing and hearing the multitude of strengths, dreams and hopes youth have to imagine positive possibilities and build better worlds together.

In May 2011, Families Thrive, the Antioch Unified School District, and the Youth Intervention Network invited a group of high school youth to participate in an approach which they called Choppin' it Up. The term Choppin' it Up means talking it out, being in dialogue, holding conversations. This collaborative approach, based upon principles from Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and Dialogue for Peaceful Change, supports a shift from a deficit-based single story to a dialogic, relational process. Through Choppin' it Up, we worked to understand a fuller context and build richer descriptions and stories of people's lives, experiences and capacity for resilience and thriving.

The principles

The following principles of AI (Cooperrider, 2001) reinforce an affirmative capacity and were incorporated into the program:

- Images of our potential and the potential of others are shaped through the language we use and the stories we tell each other.
- Stories give life to our strengths from which to envision the future.

We emphasize the importance of training staff to co-design and find their own way to deliver.

With a new confidence in residents and staff alike by the second day we were all like a well-oiled team; no more “us” and “them” just “us”. The exercises were fun and engaging and by the end I didn’t think anyone wanted to go home and we were all filled with a new zest for life and full of confidence. It isn’t a magic wand but it has given me an awful lot to take with me on my journey into life, so thank you for the opportunity AI. Westminster hostel resident

Staff with skills and confidence

Following this event both staff and residents continued to do more with AI in their own way. We have since done two more residentials and shorter sessions ranging from two hours to a full day. All participants in these programmes have made positive changes in their lives, and not reoffended – within six months, five out of eight had moved into independent living. The progress that residents made encouraged Westminster council to extend the programme.

This allowed us to train two more groups of staff from other hostels, and complete another residential. One hostel staff member took more AI training and has become a floating AI resource person for hostels in London. We have always emphasized the importance of training the staff to have the skills and confidence to co-design and then find their own ways to deliver – this means that the power of the programme is continuing to develop.

A strengths-based approach for a unique client group

The innovative nature of this programme lies in the creation of a strengths-based personal development programme for this unique client group, and the training that we customized to suit the specific needs of the staff and hostel environment. In general, hostel staff need to focus on risk and crisis management – AI has provided the staff with a strengths-based approach that can complement their other work.

The hostel staff allowed the appreciative approach to inform their work overall, and reconsidered aspects of the way they were currently performing their jobs. We have explored applying a strengths-based approach to the handover process and to the welcome interview assessments. To date, 45 staff have been trained in AI, 26 residents have attended a residential, and 30 have been introduced to AI in other ways.

Inexcess TV (<http://www.inexcess.tv>) is a web-based recovery programme that was interested in how the appreciative approach worked – it is thanks to its founder George Williams that the first version of the film got made and was uploaded to their site.

Appreciating People has subsequently developed another version of our programme for participants who are further along the road of recovery from addiction and this has been delivered with other organisations.

Thanks go to the dedicated and talented staff of King George’s who embraced the possibilities that they saw in AI – particularly Steve Davies, Leo Richardson, Grace Mundicha, Sally Razack, George Bossman, Kerry Ferguson, and Karren Ebanks. And to Victoria Aseervatham who supported the expansion of the programme in Westminster hostels. And thanks too to the first group of residents who attended the residential, and who have been very supportive of me and the AI work since then.

This essay relates to video:
07 Back on My Feet



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The Power of Stories

08 Using Our Influence



ABSTRACT

Substance abuse, gambling, violence and abuse are hidden to avoid stigma. A rural Canadian community gathered and engaged in an AI process that is fostering solutions and reducing stigma for women.

The forum 'Using Our Influence' invited residents of rural Nova Scotia communities to come together to tell stories, identify values and dreams, and commit to actions that would improve the lives of local women and girls. We asked: when have we been at our best living and working with women and girls affected by substance abuse, gambling, violence and abuse? These issues represent our hidden epidemics.

Developing an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) topic was challenging; it involved shifting our perspective. The planning committee was comprised of representatives from eight different organizations or health care departments that work separately with the concerns of women and girls. Our first steps as a committee were to agree on principles, values and objectives while these different sectors worked together to plan the forum. This provided a foundation for identifying the changes that we perceived would make the most difference.

Exploring influence instead of spotlighting problems

We are accustomed to drawing attention to the severity of women's problems in our province. The shift to asking 'When have we been at our best living and working with women and girls who have been affected by substance abuse, gambling, violence and abuse' would permit us to explore where we have

Harsh, stigmatizing words were replaced with hope, encouragement and care.

influence instead of spotlighting a problem. We used AI to face issues that are often addressed by quoting prevalence rates, trends and concerns.

The participants came from over 40 different organizations in rural Nova Scotia. Those with first-voice experience worked side by side with helping professionals. The AI method had all of us talking about the ways in which we have reached out and cared for women affected by substance abuse, gambling, violence and abuse.

Working with tangible images

We invited our communities to talk together about solutions. Participants engaged in an exercise to imagine reaching out and supporting women and girls through the minefield of stigma that is associated with substance abuse, gambling, violence and abuse. We worked with tangible images expressing our dreams for women and girls to be all they were meant to be.

Harsh, stigmatizing words that women had used to describe their experiences were replaced with hope, encouragement and care. We made practical commitments identifying what each of us would contribute to making these dreams into realities.

We were encouraged by the spirit of the event – the best of our rural living was in action – working together for the welfare and benefit of ourselves and our neighbours. A year later this committee continues to meet to sustain the changes and initiatives that grew out of the forum.

This essay relates to video:
08 Using Our Influence



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Innovative Approaches to Using Appreciative Inquiry

09 Footfeet



ABSTRACT

Using metaphor and play (and no words!), this video illustrates three community experiences with AI.

Footfeet presents an innovative way of demonstrating the effects of Appreciative Inquiry through metaphor. Footfeet illustrates three community experiences with AI: a technical team of a youth offender's local government center, leaders of immigrant associations, and a group of informal caretakers of dependent families. Facilitators and participants in these groups identified three keys for developing perspectives which moved groups to explore relationships and actions from an Appreciative Inquiry perspective. Footfeet brings to life these three keys through a story in which the protagonists are feet.

Beautiful materials, enjoyable group activities, interpersonal dynamics are crucial.

First key: draining problem words

Footfeet starts with participants arriving tired, worried and focused on their individual problems. This is their situation when they ask us for advice. The first key (draining problem words) underlines the importance participants and facilitators see in the construction of an unusual and surprising initial context.

For creating this context, beautiful materials, enjoyable group activities, interpersonal dynamics, and the use of metaphorical and artistic language are crucial, because different ways of describing and acting generate different realities (Gergen, 2006) and ways of thinking.

This expands the Discovery phase, because it establishes appreciative relationships, facilitates the dissolution of discourses centered on problems, and helps to redefine the affirmative topic.

Second key: exploring alternative narratives

The second key (the serious game) highlights the transformational and generative potential (Bushe, 2007) of some narrative approaches during the Dream phase. In the words of one participant: 'it seems a game, but it is a serious one'. Exploring alternative narratives without limits helps to get rid of normalizing truths (White and Epston, 1993) and is useful for liberalizing transformational potentials and generating conversations about the common dream from a relational identity.

Third key: ally-oop!

The third key refers to the Design and Destiny phases. Its name, 'alley-oop!!', used in basketball and magic, reflects the surprise and lightness the groups experienced in decision making and the following actions. These characteristics are a self-organized design based on the resources of each participant and an improvisational action phase (Bushe, 2007) which implies coordinated trust, action evident in the group movement. By allowing the free flow of conversations and ideas, movement is promoted and it is possible to establish a quiet uncertainty which reveals the systemic reality and gives way to collective synergies.

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This essay relates to video:
09 Footfeet



Madelyn Blair

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Mike Sands

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Innovative Approaches to Using Appreciative Inquiry

10 Essays in Two Voices



ABSTRACT

'Essays in two voices' is a simple, robust, innovative process that can be used at many points in an AI intervention, offering different perspectives on the same question.

'Essays in Two Voices' offers a simple process that can be used at many points in AI interventions. It can be used to begin the opening interview in an AI intervention or as a new way to explore dreams. It can be used for working with a new partner in an appreciative way to find meaning; it can be used for gathering ideas from a large group. Much AI material describes the way it helps create directions and plans for organizations. Essays in Two Voices adds another dimension by helping individuals, in everyday conversations, feel safe, welcomed and affirmed.

Producing remarkable results through writing

This approach was started by Victoria Ward and Madelyn Blair, both leaders in the field of story in organizations, who wanted to write together in an appreciative manner that would preserve their voices and styles, and avoid wasted effort in trying to blend the two. The writing project used Essays in Two Voices and produced remarkable results with very little time investment. The original conversation began in Wales, but the actual writing was done long distance between London, England and Washington, DC – a testament to the robustness of the process to work as well virtually as in face-to-face conversation. The work progressed so well that the idea became a book called *Essays in Two Voices*. This process is now being used around the world for many different purposes.

New insights come from seeing the familiar from a different perspective.

The principle learning is that the process deepens and crystalizes the thinking that goes into the writing. Writers often say they learned as much from their own writing efforts as they did from their partner's comments. Yet, without the discipline of the process or the writing of the partner, the depth would not have been achieved.

Encouraging difference and sameness

Essays in Two Voices is a forum that encourages expression of both difference and sameness inside an envelope of non-judgment and respect. The method fosters exploration of possibility, rewards articulate expression, and very often provides a bridge of trust and curiosity between the participants.

John Seely Brown says that innovation occurs in the white spaces between disciplines. New insights come from seeing the familiar from a different perspective. Essays in Two Voices provides a place where the voices of two people automatically offer different perspectives on the selected question. If innovation is the small incremental improvement that happens when people see new possibilities among the familiar, then Essays in Two Voices does this for concepts, processes, ideas, and whatever two people can imagine.

This essay relates to video:
10 Essay in Two Voices



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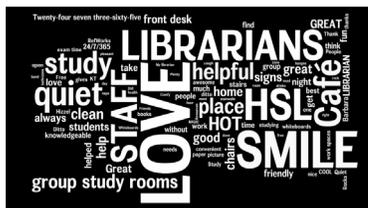
Barbara Rothen Renner

Barbara's areas of expertise include health professions education, distance learning, educational research and program evaluation, and use of emerging technologies in education. With a Ph.D., she has worked in the School of Medicine and the Libraries of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for a number of years. Contact: BRRenner@email.unc.edu



Innovative Approaches to Using Appreciative Inquiry

11 I Love My HSL



ABSTRACT

The authors share the lively world of the University of North Carolina's Health Sciences Library.

We are the Health Sciences Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a major public university in the southeastern US. Library users include faculty, staff and students of five health-affairs schools; healthcare professionals and patients of the state's public hospital; the statewide Area Health Education Centers; and the public.

Feedback in library services using social media

We created an Appreciative Inquiry-inspired blog as a way to gather and share stories of appreciation and success in library users' own words. The 'I Love My HSL' blog (<http://ilovemyhsl.org/>), launched on Valentine's Day, 2011, is made up of posts submitted by users – or created through audio and video interviews with users – and comments submitted in response to these posts. It includes text, images, video and audio. The blog has an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) page that includes links to information about AI, including locally designed resources to support the practice of AI at the university. 'I Love My HSL' allows users to learn about and contribute to the library in an innovative and engaging way. The blog provides important qualitative data supporting the work that we do.

The integration of AI with a multimedia blog resulted in a powerful new approach that has provided a fun, engaging way for users to interact with the library. This approach encourages the use of storytelling to share and communicate value in an environment that traditionally stresses quantitative measures of value. In

The integration of AI with a multimedia blog resulted in a powerful new approach.

a time of major budget cuts, the use of AI has allowed us to focus energy on our strengths and on the resources and services that users most appreciate.

Innovative integration – social media engaging users

This project is highly innovative in its:

- Integration of AI with social media and multimedia to engage users and to encourage their active participation
- Use of AI and social media to generate rich, qualitative data, including narratives and stories in users' own words
- Use of strengths-based narratives to demonstrate the value of the library to users and funders

In less than a year, the blog generated 63 posts and 4700 views. It has allowed us to capture qualitative data that helps shape important decisions about library resources and services, fundraising and communications efforts.

Presentations at medical library conferences have sparked interest. Locally, the blog was highlighted in an article in the university's alumni magazine where it stood out, especially in a time of budget cutbacks, as a positive example of contribution and engagement with the community.

'I Love My HSL' has helped build an appreciative community on our campus, and we hope it inspires similar efforts elsewhere.

This essay relates to video:

[11 | I Love my HSL](#)



Jackie Kelm

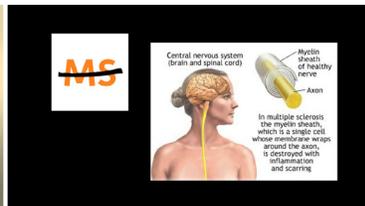
founded Appreciative Living to apply AI at the individual level, and is the author of two books and a national joy study. She recently launched the Appreciative Engagement certification program, which creatively applies AI beyond the 5-D cycle to build high engagement workplaces

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Innovative Approaches to Using Appreciative Inquiry

12 Appreciative Living Learning Circles



ABSTRACT

Appreciative Living Learning Circles, a program that anyone can facilitate, teaches the application of AI principles in daily life.

The purpose of Appreciative Living Learning Circles is to provide a program that anyone can facilitate which teaches the principles of Appreciative Inquiry in daily living. It was created out of a vision process led by Jackie Kelm, with over 70 people from across the world who wanted to spread the appreciative principles in a 'grass-roots' way.

Learning circles can help with any of life's challenges, such as overcoming grief or depression, dealing with career changes or life transitions, or creating greater abundance. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society completed four pilot programs with great success, and recommended them to chapters across the US. Learning Circles are also used in church groups, clubs, and personal growth workshops.

The Learning Circles program members meet for four weeks in 90-minute classes. Facilitators are provided with a 'program in a box' which includes a facilitator's guide, participant guides, instructional CDs, checklists and appreciative facilitation tips. Each class teaches one or more AI principles with illustrative stories, and integrates the learning through a group exercise. Ideas are reinforced at home with assignments to build the participant's 'appreciative muscle.'¹

1 To learn more visit www.AppreciativeLiving.com/start

'It can result in a whole new context for living.'
Dick McKenna

Facilitators' and participants' comments about the program

'My mother very unexpectedly passed away ... I attended grief workshops, read books on grieving, prayed to God, and talked to our friends and family. However, nothing could relieve the pain of my suffering. When we signed up for the Appreciative Living Learning Circles through our church, I had no idea it would be the solution I was seeking ... By applying the principles and doing the exercises I was forced to examine the positive elements of Mom's death instead of focusing on the loss. This brought the peace I had been seeking and the understanding ...'
Brenda Mauritz, participant, Atlanta Georgia

'I feel this process is transformational; it can result in a whole new context for living!' Dick McKenna, facilitator with multiple sclerosis, Cleveland, OH

'I just finished my first Learning Circle!!! Awesome! What I believe worked are two things: first, was the easiness for people to step in (no long therapeutic sessions or difficult concepts.). Second, to work with Appreciative Living in a group helps people think about ideas and bring in more perspectives than you have yourself, and that inspires people. It also stimulates accountability...'
Anja Doornbos, facilitator, Espel, Netherlands

'We completed our final Learning Circle last night. I was blown away with the growth the participants reported that they are making!...the group was saddened to say goodbye, but they were upbeat about continuing to use the exercises and principles.' Neal Kuhlhorst, facilitator, Atlanta, GA

This essay relates to video:
1 2 Appreciative Learning Circles



Axiom News: Jennifer Neutel

'Scaling Up AI With Generative Journalism' involved all the Axiom News team members. Jennifer Neutel, Peter Pula, and Michelle Strutzenberger served as the core organizing team. Axiom News, based in Peterborough, Ontario, covers and curates generative news of energizing systems in North America and around the world.

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Peter Pula

'Scaling Up AI With Generative Journalism' involved all the Axiom News team members. Jennifer Neutel, Peter Pula, and Michelle Strutzenberger served as the core organizing team. Axiom News, based in Peterborough, Ontario, covers and curates generative news of energizing systems in North America and around the world.

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Michelle Strutzenberger

'Scaling Up AI With Generative Journalism' involved all the Axiom News team members. Jennifer Neutel, Peter Pula, and Michelle Strutzenberger served as the core organizing team. Axiom News, based in Peterborough, Ontario, covers and curates generative news of energizing systems in North America and around the world.

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Innovative Approaches to Using Appreciative Inquiry

13 Scaling Up Appreciative Inquiry with Generative Journalism



ABSTRACT

For eight years Axiom News has been experimenting with AI practices as applied to journalism, looking for a way to contribute meaningfully through their work.

For eight years Axiom News has been experimenting with AI practices as applied to journalism. The company was looking for a richer way to understand how to deliver on the promise of asset-based community development applied media reporting. This team of journalists wished to make a meaningful contribution through their work. Ways to think about change and how to deliberately facilitate new thinking, action, and narrative were sought. Appreciative Inquiry provided answers to our questions and has since become a way of being for the company.

The 4-Ds are applied both to long-arc story series in which the stages of discovery, dream, design and destiny are being enacted. Alternatively, the 4-Ds are designed components for single-person, single-inquiry interviews. The stages inform the question sets used to guide our story gathering. It was not Axiom's intent to design an AI innovation, but it turned out that way. Our 'generative journalism' approach could be considered a new application of AI communications activity or as a part of post-summit infrastructure, for example.

AI-guided journalism: an innovation

While AI-guided journalism is in itself an innovation, a second element makes it even more innovative. As practiced by Axiom News, generative journalism is

enacted in service to organizations, rather than the general community, as a co-creative communications method. Set in an organization, generative journalism engages stakeholders throughout the client system, using the 4-Ds to generate interview-by-interview innovation in the client system.

As stories connect people of like mind, readers will often self-organize and adopt or shape new ideas which inevitably become tangible action in the short and long term. Real time reporting of these changes begins the cycle anew. As a communications technology, it has proven very useful for connecting people in different physical locations.

This video describes our discovery path, shares anecdotes from our client systems ranging from long-term care, to real estate management, to education in Canadian settings. The piece differentiates Axiom's approach from other communications forms, and speaks into our dream to Co-Create a Life-Giving News Network for a Renewed and Thriving World.

This essay relates to video:

13 Scaling Up Appreciative Inquiry with Generative Journalism

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Special Issue for the World Appreciative Inquiry Conference April 2012

Sales/Finance and Appreciative Inquiry: Positive Images, Positive Action, Positive Results

This is the first ever issue of AIP devoted to the themes of Appreciative Inquiry in Sales and Finance. In it you will find articles in this field, so important for individuals, organizations, companies and countries, with a special resonance for people coming to the World Appreciative Inquiry Conference.

The articles in this issue are innovative, exemplary, inspiring stories and examples of the practice of AI in Sales/Finance.

Sales is a relational process and has a natural partner in Appreciative Inquiry. As the articles in this issue show, when applied to the sales process, AI not only strengthens the process, companies find they receive consistent results.

Finance also has a friend in AI: the question 'what do I want more of' resonates in finance and allows us to experience finance as a generative process that involves all stakeholders.

This first issue of AI Practitioner devoted to sales and finance illuminates the power and potential of Appreciative Inquiry to change the conversation and spark the imagination in the sales and finance industries while delivering consistent results.

This WAIC issue of *AI Practitioner* was sponsored by Van Harte & Lingsma, a professional organisation working with customers to provide training, coaching and consultancy in leadership and personal development.

More information about this special issue can be found on the AI Practitioner website, <http://www.aipractitioner.com/aip-resources/sales-and-finance-2012>.

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Purpose of AI Practitioner

This publication is for people interested in making the world a better place using positive relational approaches to change such as Appreciative Inquiry.

The publication is distributed quarterly: February, May, August and November.

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