

THE BROCCOLI ALLIANCE

Interview Guide V.1.4 -- April 25, 2001

Opening

The Broccoli Alliance is a bold experiment. We are flourishing as a highly engaged, professionally and personally inspiring group who learn and generate projects together.

We started with the question:

What kind of agreements and focused intentions do we want that will support us in working cleanly, trustingly, and effectively together?

We decided to use Appreciative Inquiry to structure our approach to this question. Our initial interviews were wonderful to experience and they generated four major themes, which we explore further in today's conversation.

- Adult Play Group
- Generosity of Spirit
- The Exquisite Practice of Being Appreciative
s(formerly known as 'working where we live -- being it')
- Working With Heart and Courage

We have clear agreements so we can be our best selves with one another, learn fully together, and grow in understanding the practice of AI.

We recognize that the process of applying Appreciative Inquiry to the Broccoli Alliance has the potential to reshape our relationships, our practices, and our world views.

Adult Play Group

AKA Reclaiming Play

AKA Zippity Do Dah

Adult play group has to do with a spirit of adventure and spontaneity. It is a place to experience the joy of discovery and have a mindset of “Hey, let’s try this,” or “Wow, I never thought of that.” Intrinsic to adult play is allowing for uncertainty as to how to do something or whether it will work. Therefore, part of the discovery is the exhilaration of playing on the edge of one’s comfort zone.

Adult play is also about being goofy, pushing the envelope of the rules, suspending the “shoulds” even for a moment – being just plain silly. It is about being totally absorbed in the discovery in a full bodied way – the experience is as full as it gets.

1. Describe play. (*note what people say and the energy and feelings evoked in the person.*) Draw, or write a poem, or give me an analogy. Why is play important?
2. Think of a time when you were fully engaged in a learning experience in an unselfconscious way: where you were able to go with the flow, be in the moment, make it up as you go; where you were open to the possibilities of what you might discover. What factors enabled this to happen? What got sparked in you to enable this?
3. Think of a time when you experienced that sense of “play” in a work-related group. Describe the experience. Who was there, what were you doing, what were others doing?
4. It is three years from now. Describe how we have played in the Broccoli Alliance. What does our play mean to us? What does it enable us to do?

Generosity of Spirit

Relating to one another with generosity of spirit is a luxurious form of safety and creativity that is a foundation for the Broccoli Alliance. We honor each other and our group, no matter how full our plates or our agendas become.

When we slow down and let go of our usual fast pace and worries, we are able to be more present with each other. We make a space to listen to one another, and a place where we are nurtured and given full attention. We're willing to jump in, lavishly giving the best of ourselves. We're able to respond to others with curiosity and encouragement. We call each other to a higher place.

We allow ourselves to be influenced by one another and we experience ourselves and one another in different ways. Something new is likely to be created that wasn't there before: an understanding, deepened trust, a discovered or reclaimed sense of wholeness. We're part of something that is bigger than the sum of its parts.

1. Tell me about a time when you experienced generosity of spirit in a group. What did you and others do and say? What was present that allowed generosity of spirit to arise?
2. What conditions inside you enable you to come from generosity of spirit? What is it about who you are that allows the experience you describe to happen? What part do you play in supporting that experience?
3. It's three years from now and generosity of spirit is ever-present, an acknowledged foundation of the Broccoli Alliance. What are two or three things we do or say that ensure our generosity of spirit?

The Exquisite Practice of Being Appreciative

As practitioners of Appreciative Inquiry, we commit to more than just a way of working or a way of interacting with our clients. We choose to live our lives and function in our relationships in an appreciative way. We seek the creative emergence that appreciative inquiry makes possible inside ourselves as well as for others.... to make inseparable how we aspire to be from what we aspire to do.

As a community of AI practitioners, the Broccoli Alliance is more than a group of colleagues with a common interest. We are a source of energy, a touch-point, a place that holds the appreciative space and allows us to immerse ourselves in the spirit of AI. We create opportunities to apply AI to deepen the quality of the connection among us and between our clients and ourselves.

1. Describe a time when you experienced an “ah-ha” about “living an appreciative life” – a time when the principles of AI helped you live your personal and professional commitments. What happened to make that so? What did you do differently as a result of your insight?
2. We've all had experiences of working with others when 1 plus 1 equals 3, where the synergy carries us to a new place. Share your best experience of collaboration with one or more members of the Broccoli Alliance. What made it the best? What do you want to bring from that experience to the life of the Broccoli Alliance?
3. It is three years from now and the Broccoli Alliance has collaborated on writing a best-selling book on both living and working as Appreciative Inquiry practitioners. What chapter did you write? What was the most important thing you talked about in that chapter? What are the readers, people from other AI groups, learning from the Broccoli Alliance about "working where we live," about the exquisite practice of being appreciative?

Working With Heart and Courage

We are courageous with our clients and with one another. We take heart-pounding risk, step through fear, and have the conversations we need to have. By fully bringing who we are and what we know to the group, we invent new possibilities.

1. Tell me about a time when you were courageous with a client and the impact went beyond your wildest dreams. What is it within you that allowed you to be courageous?

2. What are the courageous conversations we, the Broccoli Alliance, need to have in order to flourish as a group? (*elicit a list*)
 - Think of a time when, as a member of a group, you had a courageous conversation about a topic like one of these. What enabled you to have that conversation?

3. It's the year 2004, and we have been working with heart and courage.
 - What are the extraordinary breakthroughs we've had with our clients?

 - What are the extraordinary characteristics of the Broccoli Alliance that are everyday and ordinary?

Summary

In closing, I have a few more questions.

1. How has the Broccoli Alliance impacted your learning of Appreciative Inquiry?
2. What experiences have you created to learn more about AI?
3. Where is your growing edge for learning AI?
4. What risks do you see yourself taking to propel further learning of AI?