



APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY CONSULTING, L.L.C. HEALTH CARE ALLIANCE

Aiming Higher in Health Care



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Appreciative Inquiry – a positive revolution in change

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INTRODUCTION

What is AI Consulting, L.L.C.

AI Consulting (AIC) is a unique, worldwide organization that combines features of a large consulting firm, a global change movement, a network organization, a knowledge web, a socially responsible business entity, an alliance and an association.

AIC's design is inspired by the spirit of Appreciative Inquiry with the ideas of "chaordic" organizing. It incorporates characteristics that we rarely see together: business focus and social change work, local relevance and global scope, freedom and relatedness, intimate connection and large-scale engagement.

AIC creates a positive revolution in change by discovering the positive core in clients' systems. Guided by [AIC's purpose and principles](#), AIC consultants work with clients in the business, public, and social sectors to co-create a way of being in the world and doing business that has deep, lasting impact.

AIC Health Care Alliance

We work in the service of co-creating health care communities where patients want to go, staff want to work, students want to learn, and families want to take their loved ones. We partner with healthcare leaders and professionals to cultivate vibrant work cultures and processes characterized by exceptional care and healing. Our offerings include approaches to:

- Patient, employee, and student satisfaction • Quality of care/patient safety •
- Staffing productivity and retention • Improved labor and union relations •
- Building personal leadership • Strengthening individual and organizational resilience •
- Teamwork and trust • Cross-cultural communication and sensitivity •
- Cultivating great working cultures • Diversity • Eldercare • Patient rights •

Appreciative Inquiry - A Positive Revolution in Change

Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system "life" when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential. It mobilizes inquiry through crafting an "unconditional positive question" often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people. In AI, intervention gives way to imagination and innovation; instead of negation, criticism, and spiraling diagnosis there is discovery, dream, design, and destiny. AI assumes that every living system has untapped, rich, and inspiring accounts of the positive. Link this "positive change core" directly to any change agenda, and changes never thought possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized.

The Positive Power of Appreciative Inquiry Stories

"Stories have wings and they fly from mountain top to mountain top."

-Romanian proverb

Following are the stories of 10 organizations who embraced the spirit of Appreciative Inquiry and positively transformed their organizations and members by reconnecting with the positive core that brings and sustains life and the spirit of healing and harmony, restoring balance in health care systems.

Case 1: Northern Berkshire Health Systems (NBHS), by Anthony L. Suchman, Penny R. Williamson, & Diane B. Robbins

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To engage the community in strategic planning for an integrated healthcare system.

Client Organization:

NBHS is a vertically integrated, not-for-profit healthcare organization serving the population of the northern Berkshires in Massachusetts. It provides hospital, visiting nurse, hospice, skilled nursing residential care, and a retirement community for a semi-rural population of 40,000+ people.

Client Objective:

As a newly integrated system, NBHS wanted to involve the community in its first strategic planning session. Rather than asking managers, healthcare professionals and board members to be proxies for the community in determining its needs, this new process allowed the community to speak for itself regarding its goals, values and aspirations for local healthcare.

What Was Done:

Members of 12 major stakeholder groups were invited to participate on the Stakeholder Interviewing Team. Nineteen volunteers came to the first meeting and collectively donated over 1200 hours. Over a 4-month period, they designed an interview format focusing on stories of outstanding care, conducted and documented hour-long interviews with more than 135 people throughout the community, and performed a formal qualitative analysis of the interview reports.

The Stakeholder Interviewing Team identified several overarching themes describing what people valued most about NBHS. The interviews created three compelling images of the future of local healthcare:

- Caring relationships based on compassion, deep listening and mutual understanding
- Partnering to achieve the greatest good for patients, their families, and our entire population
- Full spectrum excellence; providing access to and individualized coordination of services

across the spectrum – from self-care programs to locally provided professional services to specialized services at regional centers

Several other groups were undertaking studies of a type more traditionally associated with strategic planning: analyses of market share, utilization rates, financial performance, key clinical services and facilities needs. Members of all of the workgroups and the Board of Directors then met for two days to review and integrate the information from the various components. The retreat was designed to give all participants a sense of the “big picture,” to allow board members to develop a deep understanding of the work that was being passed on to them, and to give workgroup members confidence that their work was understood and would have a meaningful influence on the strategic plan. The format of the retreat juxtaposed images from the community’s stories with each of the other types of data in turn. During and after the retreat, many people related that their perspective had been broadened by the chance to encounter and talk about such a diverse mix of information.

Outcomes:

In addition to a high level of shared understanding and new working relationship, the planning process and retreat resulted in a list of 15 specific action steps for the board to consider. The senior managers of NBHS consolidated these 15 steps into five initiatives, and recommended three of these to the Board for immediate approval, which was granted at the very next Board meeting. A strategic plan was implemented based on themes voiced by the community and the Board communicated powerfully its intention to listen deeply to its community and to work in partnership.

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Case 2: Lovelace Health Systems by Susan O. Wood

Discovering the Passion for Nursing

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To improve nursing retention and job satisfaction.

Client Organization:

A nationally recognized integrated health care organization, Lovelace Health Systems includes a hospital in Albuquerque, NM and a statewide network of physicians, hospital and clinics. Of 3,182 employees, over 500 are nurses. The vision for Lovelace Health Systems is “to be the best place to get care and the best place to give care”. Achieving this vision was challenging with nurse turnover ranging from 18-30%. Short staffing, unfilled vacancies, and low morale were among the negative effects.

Client Objective:

The aim is to discover why nurses choose to stay at Lovelace and to gather this insight in such a way that the process, in and of itself contributes positively and minimizes negativity. Specific goals:

- Increase nurse satisfaction and retention at Lovelace
- Discover why nurses choose to stay at Lovelace Health Systems
- Generate qualitative findings that articulate the “positive core” the nursing organization
- Identify tactics to enhance future retention

What Was Done:

Within the hospital population of over 300 nurses, an inquiry was conducted on four topics that were generated from real stories from interviews. Stories reflect existing positive aspects of work life at Lovelace that nurses wish to amplify. Lovelace topics are - The Privilege of Nursing, Humor: The Other Vital Sign, Appreciation, and The Exceptional Team.

Outcomes:

Benefits to Lovelace professional nursing community include: reduction in nurse turnover by 13%; nurse vacancy rate reduced by 30%; hospital nurse rating of Lovelace as a place to work increased 16% and; Press Ganey patient satisfaction with nursing measures rose 20 percentile points on the ranking. Qualitative benefits

include improved communications between nursing colleagues, rediscovery of the essence of the nursing profession, ability to transfer newly acquired Appreciative Inquiry skills and techniques to other areas of professional and personal life and new found energy to participate in improving work life at Lovelace. Specific results include a new recruiting brochure featuring “Discovering the Passion for Nursing” at Lovelace, new assessment and orientation programs, a recognition process, a calendar illustrating stories and quotes of nurses at work, a video for Nurses Day, training.

For Further Information:

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Case 3: Integrating Mental Health Teams in the United Kingdom by Anne Radford

Combining Local Creativity with National Mandates

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To create and implement integrated mental health services in the southern region of the UK.

Client organization:

Hampshire County Council Social Services Department which is responsible for the full range of social services in the region.

Client Objective

The specific purpose of the project in each locality:

- To envision an integrated mental health service in each locality, jointly delivered by health and social service agencies
- To create this service by involving the psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers, art, occupational and behavioral therapists, administrators, clerks and secretaries who were engaged in delivering mental health services in the community
- To achieve this by maintaining stakeholder trust, integrity, cooperation and optimism

The organizational objective was to encourage and support a 'can do' culture where local creativity could flourish within the national mandates. A wider objective was to develop regional joint agency health service and social service standards to meet national targets.

What was done?

A series of one-day events for all the stakeholders was held in each locality to discover the best of the two cultures in the health service and social services teams, to envision a new integrated mental health service for the users and carers in their specific locality, and to identify the key areas that will make that future happen. While each locality developed its own set of images of an integrated service and systems to deliver that future, consistency across these localities was maintained by line managers and managers who had held national and regional perspectives. They also maintained a watching brief on the follow-on activities which were crafted for each locality.

At the regional level, there was a set of activities for health and social services executives to establish joint agency standards.

Outcomes:

In the initial events, professionals, managers and administrative staff in the Health service and Social service teams:

- Developed an appreciation for and understanding of each other's commitment to creating a quality integrated mental health service
- Described the skills, capabilities and qualities they shared as well as those that were complementary
- Became aware of their colleagues' support for the new team approach, for retaining their professional identities and for having a full role in creating the new integrated service
- Developed plans that built on current or earlier initiatives rather than replaced them

In the first locality, the integrated service has been launched with many of the key systems in place that were identified in the initial events. The other localities are gradually implementing their integrated service. At the joint agency level, budgets, plans and targets are being set with a much greater mutual transparency.

"Teams are feeling positive about the change and are looking forward to it... They know much more about each other's work and jobs than similar teams in the area. Their attitude towards change is significantly different from that of other teams in the area."

For further information

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Case 4: St. Joseph Villa by Patreece M. Thompson

Creating a Culture of Service, Safety and Collaboration

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

- Improve safety (for staff and residents)
- Build better teamwork
- Enhance conflict management/resolutions skills
- Develop stronger communication skills

Client Organization:

St. Joseph Villa, a life term care facility for religious women, has a little over 50 employees with 13 registered nurses, six LPN's, 36 nursing assistants and one activities assistant. Seven out of 36 assistants had English fluency of 70% or less. The strengths of this organization included: the leadership of the Administrator and her team (the Director of Nursing, the Human Resource Manager and the Training Director) who were highly motivated to do what was needed to accomplish their vision, the spiritual focus of the organization, the mission. The mission is to aid in the self development of its female employees as well as provide the quality of care for the resident sisters, and the interest of the employees in caring for the sisters.

Client Objective:

Initially, the Administrator requested assistance in optimizing a few areas in human resources. For 16 months between 2000 and 2001, CCI provided consulting services in the area of compensation/benefits, staffing retention, payroll, performance management, and rewriting employee policy and procedure manual. The consultant established a positive, collaborative working relationship with the Administrator, the Human Resources Manager, and the nursing staff, which significantly contributed to acceptance of appreciative approach to organizational change.

Once the policies and procedures were in place and the staff received training, it became clear that the nurse supervisors needed additional support to empower them to take the lead in modeling and implementing the changes. The vision was for the nurse supervisors to feel more comfortable with conflict, to have everyone become involved in creating and maintaining a safe environment, to improve the quality of service delivered to the resident sisters, and to have everyone demonstrate behaviors of taking responsibility and accountability for their work and responding helpfully when asked for assistance.

What was done:

A series of four six-hour workshops were provided to two different groups of nurse supervisors and nurse assistants in September and October of 2001. The participants interviewed each other using an interview protocol and discovered the life giving forces of the facility. The dream phase asked people to visualize what St. Joseph Villa would be like if the themes could be realized. One response was "heaven." The groups were able to engage playfully in developing skits and slogans illustrating the themes and then capturing the themes in provocative propositions. Finally, a micro-design and destiny phase was completed based on simple commitments and how they will work with each other to manifest the vision they had created.

Outcomes:

The main outcome was that the nursing staff rallied to form committees to address issues on their wish list and to build upon the themes that emerged relating to care of the sisters, teamwork, God-centeredness, safety and communication.

For Further Information:

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Case 5: A Journey Of Transformation by Ravi Pradhan

In Government Hospitals in South Asia

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To engage a whole hospital to embark on a journey to transform the functioning and quality of their maternal and obstetrics care.

Client Organization:

In this pilot project, there were 25 government-owned and operated hospitals in the rural and semi-urban parts in six South Asian countries. The project is being funded with financial assistance from the Bill/Melinda Gates Foundation and supported and implemented jointly by Columbia University's School of Public Health and UNICEF offices in these countries.

The working hypothesis is that when hospitals provide 24 hour quality obstetrics care, it will help eliminate the risk of death and morbidity for those 15-20% of pregnant women who will need such care. In addition, many of the rural hospitals are inadequately equipped, lack needed manpower, or the medical skills to take care of these types of emergencies. The general consensus is that any change effort will take a big miracle. To initiate, nurture and sustain real changes required involving the whole site in the hospital.

Client Objective:

The primary objective was to help the pilot hospitals provide 24-hour quality obstetric care. It includes treating women with respect and dignity. A secondary objective is to train and develop in-country facilitators to work with these hospitals.

What Was Done:

A series of meetings and workshops were held to co-create the vision and objectives of the project.

The Health Ministries and UNICEF country teams were involved in this exercise. An AI approach was used – discovery, dream, design and destiny. The next major step was to enroll the leadership of each hospital to embark on a journey of transformation. This included training a core group to design the questions, conduct the interviews and complete the report with the help of facilitators. At the end of the workshop, they formed teams to focus on specific challenges called “breakthrough tasks”. The facilitators meet with the leadership team and each of the breakthrough teams to coach them in achieving their results. Then five months later, a second workshop was held. A third workshop is planned for these hospitals. They will do another discovery in which the community stakeholders and patients will be involved. The topics will include specific indicators of quality care.

Outcomes:

The impact is seen in the volume and quality of EOC services, the improvement in other medical services, greater cooperation and collaboration between various departments, higher level of motivation and accountability, more participatory leadership styles, greater involvement of the community stakeholders, reduction in costs, better inventory management, increased pride and ownership, and appreciation of their own value and capacity to bring about positive changes. Each country has its own set of results.

For More Information:

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Case 6: An Appreciative Approach to Community Building by David Smith & Jill Golde

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To improve employee morale and overall job satisfaction for all nurses, certified nursing assistants, therapists and administrative staff who make up the Willowcrest team, resulting in staff decision to not seek unionization.

Client Organization:

The Albert Einstein Healthcare Network is a large, urban medical network in Philadelphia, PA that has been serving the community for over 130 years. The Willowcrest facility is the largest sub-acute skilled nursing facility in the Philadelphia region with approximately 160 staff. The goal of Willowcrest is to provide high-quality, cost-effective healthcare for patients who are not well enough to return home.

Client Objectives:

To immediately start a process to listen to staff and to build with them a positive, supportive Willowcrest community, specific goals included:

- Build a strong, positive union-free Willowcrest culture and environment where staff would feel included and respected
- Create a strong, united Willowcrest team to build a great future
- Build open, honest communications
- Develop a culture that respected and supported rich diversity

What Was Done:

An Appreciative Inquiry was done with staff and management. Following the steering group's recommendations, appreciative interviews were done within a series of group meetings, called Power Up sessions. A mural was created at each session representing the stories' highlights and themes. These murals were hung throughout the facility for the next several weeks. Over two-thirds

of the employees participated in these sessions, geared at identifying the positive core. The interviews themselves were organized around the central areas reflected in the objectives: teamwork, communication and diversity.

Two 1-day Summits were held in order to accommodate the 24x7 healthcare operation. The Summits included additional appreciative interviews that focused on envisioning the best possible future and creating action teams to address themes identified.

Outcomes:

The outcomes have been significant. On the anniversary of the union election, the staff of Willowcrest chose not to hold another election. The work climate has improved dramatically with staff stating their commitment to the Willowcrest community, their satisfaction with being members of the Willowcrest "family" and their strong desire to continue to promote activities that will amplify their positive core. The staff restated their unwavering support for each other and the primary challenge of providing high quality patient care. The census numbers increased, making Willowcrest a sound entity financially within the overall network. Turnover is down and most healthcare positions are currently filled. Other members of the Albert Einstein Healthcare Network have noticed and commented on a significant improvement in employee morale as they interact with Willowcrest employees on patient care issues. Willowcrest employees are working on action teams to implement the plans generated at the Summits.

For Further Information:

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Case 7: Tendercare Wayne Seniors by Jackie Stavros

Cultivating the Positive Core

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To discover the positive core of the Wayne Seniors group which enables the staff to focus upon projects, process improvements, and rewards that are aligned to increase census while cultivating a team spirit.

Client Organization:

Tendercare, Inc. is Michigan's largest provider of long-term care services with 35 health centers located throughout Michigan and over 3,400 employees. The Marketing Department created the Plus One Campaign and selected Wayne Seniors (WS) as one of four facilities, which possessed the most potential for increased census (based on location, staff, building showing, etc.). Wayne Seniors has the capacity of 120 beds with a current census fluctuating between 93 and 96 residents. The budgeted census for this fiscal year is 102. Tendercare's mission is to be the provider of choice.

Client Objective:

The Plus One Campaign Appreciative Inquiry (AI) project had the following goals as its focus:

- Discover the Positive Core of Wayne Seniors
- Educate the staff as to the importance of census building, its impact on the center and how they can help with the census development efforts
- Create an environment of energy and excitement toward the center's census goal
- Increase census and teambuilding efforts

What Was Done:

Over 75 interviews were conducted of staff and residents. This AI intervention was designed and combined with the Plus One Campaign to enhance the education and participation while identifying the positive core of the center. Four topics were chosen as the project focus: Provider of Choice, Resident Loyalty, The Excellent Team, and

Appreciation. The main goal in using the AI approach was to constructively obtain information as to what has been working best at Wayne Seniors and to learn what can be done to increase census and community, plus improve in areas as it relates to the four topics.

Outcomes:

The AI approach was favorably received by the staff and residents and yielded highly insightful information about how the staff relates to each other and to the residents, and how the residents relate to each other. Four managers at Tendercare remarked how drastically the culture had changed. They observed that the culture had gone from a negative to a very hopeful and positive one in a matter of weeks. A Master Wish List was created and used as an action list by management and employees to implement the ideas to improve the overall quality of work life and living conditions. It was found that the positive core of the staff lies within the genuine compassion and sincere caring for the residents and for each other.

The census at the beginning of this project was 92. Within six weeks of the campaign launch, it had increased to 99. Monthly in-service meetings for the staff were re-instituted. The employees of this center, who were unionized, initiated a union decertification campaign. Additionally, a cross-disciplinary team of employees within the center completed a marketing action plan based on the information collected from the interviews and within the framework of the four possibility statements. The goal of this on-going project is to make Tendercare, Inc. the provider of choice by building an excellent team through appreciation and developing resident loyalty thereby making the world a better place for our residents and staff.

For Further Information:

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Case 8: Appreciative Leadership by Roberta Peirick

Creating Positive Conversations Around Exceptional Healthcare Dining Services

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To have a group of 20 Foodservice Directors discuss and identify their experience with exceptional dining services and transfer that learning to their healthcare facilities.

Client Organization:

UHF Purchasing is a group purchasing organization that provides prime vendor contracts, product supply contracts and services to healthcare facilities through a national purchasing agreement. The majority of the participants worked in long term care facilities or small community hospitals through out the state of Wisconsin. The Food Service Directors meet quarterly to discuss trends and issues affecting the foodservice departments. The AIC consultant was invited in to create positive conversations around the dining experience and to teach the Foodservice Directors to train their staff in an appreciative approach.

Client Objective:

Specific goals:

- Build energy around training regarding excellent customer satisfaction
- Educate the Foodservice Directors on an appreciative approach to learning versus gap analysis
- Create a dialogue in which Foodservice Directors can share and learn from others in the Purchasing Group

What was done:

UHF Purchasing created a learning seminar "Breakfast for Champions" in which Foodservice Directors could get together for four hours. An interview guide was developed to explore in detail the elements that make up an excellent dining experience. The participants paired up for interviews and then shared with the group the stories and their key learning from the interviews. The participants identified themes and elements that contributed to their exceptional dining experience. The participants shared with each other how they could use a similar process for training their staff.

Outcomes:

- Collectively the Foodservices Directors created a list of elements for an exceptional dining experience
- Foodservice Directors were exposed to an appreciative process for training

For Further Information:

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Case 9: The Camp Recovery Centers by Paula A. Comunelli

Accessing & Unleashing Clients' Core Strengths

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To develop tools to support the clients' recovery process.

Client Organization:

For more than a decade, The Camp Recovery Centers have served the needs of the chemically dependent and offer the largest and most comprehensive treatment programs in Northern California. Each year, The Camp serves over 1200 adolescents and adults who are experiencing the negative effects of alcohol and other drugs through a variety of residential and outpatient programs and services. The mission of The Camp Recovery Centers is to provide persons with drug and alcohol problems a comprehensive program that emphasizes the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual transformation of the individual, designed to assist them in taking responsibility for their recovery. The project consisted of assisting those clients in treatment in accessing and unleashing their core strengths through storytelling, collaboration, and creative expression.

Client Objective:

The aim is to access clients' personal strengths to support their process of recovery. Specific goals:

- Uncover Core Gifts and talents of clients through storytelling
- Claim and activate Core Gifts and accompanying talents through a Core Gift statement

- Experience and practice collaboration and teamwork

What Was Done:

Over 45 residential clients participated in a brief overview of the Inspired Leadership process, integrating Appreciative Inquiry with indigenous wisdom. In triads, clients shared stories about peak experiences in their lives: times when they accessed the human resources of wisdom, vision, power, and love. Themes from these stories were consolidated and synthesized to uncover the Core Gift and accompanying talents for each person present. Each wrote their Core Gift statement on an affirmation card and decorated it to have as a reminder of the beauty of who they are and what they carry.

Outcomes:

All of the residential clients able to attend participated fully in this process. Each person uncovered some new information about themselves, which they recalled from the highlights of their past. There were about 15 people who were willing to publicly name and claim their Core Gift and were acknowledged with applause by all present. The level of excitement and energy in the room was palpable, and many people wanted to find out how to have access to more processes of this kind. It was a fun, fabulous, and fulfilling day.

For Further Information:

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Case 10: Strategic Planning in a Metropolitan Health Clinic by Steve Fitzgerald

Building Collaborative Capacity

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To explore open, just, and inclusive leadership.

Client Organization:

This locally prominent and nationally recognized award-winning non-profit clinic provides health care and human services to those who cannot or will not receive services elsewhere. At the time of the consultation, it had 120 personnel in three locations in a southwestern U.S. city.

Client Objective:

The executive team wanted to explore a more non-linear, transformational approach to change. They also wished to:

- Access more creativity in their approach to team problem-solving and planning
- Build upon the Clinic's leadership strengths and most effective practices
- Address employee concerns about leadership visibility, accessibility, and inclusiveness

What Was Done:

A strategic planning session using Appreciative Inquiry (AI) was conducted with the executive team on the second day of their annual retreat. The topics and questions were generated from the results of the annual employee survey (ES). The day began with a review of the ES results, an overview of AI, and strategically paired AI interviews. After lunch, the team crafted provocative propositions, then designed and prioritized actions and designated accountabilities to help manifest their vision. The team concluded by reviewing the ES data to ensure that issues identified in it had been addressed through this creative AI approach.

Outcomes:

Results far exceeded expectations. Significant outcomes included:

- Implementation of fundamental structural changes to address key organization issues

- The executive director's high engagement in the process and resolution of a long-standing conflict with a key team member
- The team's request of the use of AI for their subsequent all-staff retreat

By the end of the day the team members had co-created a powerful vision of open, just, and inclusive leadership. For example, one of team's provocative propositions was:

- The Clinic empowers all employees to be leaders. For us leadership is an organizational phenomenon that everyone shares. Everyone is responsible for an environment that fosters mutual respect, diversity, camaraderie, and fun!

Team members then generated organizational structures and personally committed to take specific actions to help manifest the vision that they had collaboratively created. Examples associated with above provocative proposition:

- Develop a new leadership-training program, and create a new mentoring program
- Establish greater accountability through setting and monitoring departmental goals and arrange celebration activities for collective wins
- Share patient success stories in the newsletter
- Add diversity questions to the annual employee survey

For Further Information:

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For full published article go to:

<http://connection.cwru.edu/ai/uploads/Alw.theExecTeamODJ.pdf>

Case 11: Interfaith Compeer by Paula A. Comunelli

Strategic Planning from the Heart

Focus of the Appreciative Inquiry:

To attract funding and Board of Directors membership.

Client Organization:

Interfaith Compeer (1998) recruits, trains, and supports volunteers from the community and matches them, one-to-one, with adults and children in mental health treatment in the Santa Cruz County area. The Compeer team consists of the volunteer, the friend or child, a mental health professional, and a Compeer staff person. The organization did not have a strategic plan, which created a lack of focus, limited volunteerism, and an inability to raise significant funds. Compeer needed to begin functioning more like a business to be able to sustain itself into the future.

Client Objective:

The aim was to collaboratively develop and initiate a strategic plan. Specific goals:

- Recommit to Compeer's mission or develop a new mission statement
- Discover "where Compeer is now" based on organizational experiences and strengths
- Develop a vision statement or "where Compeer wants to be" in the future
- Create a strategic plan or "where Compeer should be" to become a viable organization
- Strengthen the "team" that is the Board of Directors (BOD)

What Was Done:

An appreciative organizational assessment was designed & initiated to:

- Comprehend challenges through experiences & opinions of each BOD Member
- Build relationships with BOD Members

- Conduct groundwork required to design a customized strategic planning offsite

The organization assessment feedback was provided to the BOD at the commencement of their two-day retreat. The information was used to create a starting point for developing their strategic plan. During the two days, the BOD went through an Inspired Leadership process, including the Discover, Dream, Design, and Delivery phases of Appreciative Inquiry.

Outcomes:

Process outcomes were a realigned Board of Directors, new mission and vision statements, and four overarching goals to direct organizational activities:

Mission: To validate and empower people challenged with mental illness by creating caring, supportive friendships and erasing stigma through education.

Vision Statement: Through our thriving organization, and generous support from the community, we have stimulated love, acceptance and empowerment for the mentally ill with amazing results.

Goals:

- Grow the Organization through Recruitment of Volunteers
- Access Recurring & Surplus Funding
- Create & Implement a Powerful Public Relations Plan
- Expand the Educational Program

For Further Information:

Contact For further information, contact Paula A. Comunelli – SPIRARE: To Breathe Life into ... Individuals, Groups, and Organization, 831.335.3378, paula@spirare.net or website: www.spirare.net. For information about Interfaith Compeer: www.interfaithcompeer.org

Founding of Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry was born and co-founded in the doctoral program in Organizational Behavior at Case Western Reserve University in the collaboration between David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva in 1980. As a young doctoral student David Cooperrider was involved doing a conventional diagnosis or an organizational analysis of "what's wrong with the human side of the Organization?" In gathering his data, he was amazed by the level of positive cooperation, innovation and egalitarian governance he sees in the organization. Suresh Srivastva, Cooperrider's advisor noticed David's excitement and suggested going further with the excitement -making the life-giving elements the focus.

Having been influenced by earlier writings by Schweitzer on the idea of "reverence for life", David obtained permission from the Clinic's Chairman Dr. William Kiser to focus totally on a life-centric analysis of the factors contributing to the highly effective functioning of the Clinic when it was at its best. Everything else was ignored.

The Cleveland clinic became the first large site where a conscious decision to use an inquiry focusing on life-giving factors forms the basis for an organizational analysis. The term "Appreciative Inquiry" as first written about in an analytic footnote in the feedback report of "emergent themes" by David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva for the Board of Governors of the Cleveland Clinic. The report created such a powerful and positive stir that the Board called for ways to use this method with the whole group practice. The momentum set the stage for David Cooperrider's seminal dissertation on the theory and practice of Appreciative Inquiry. *—Excerpted from the AI Timeline at Case Western Reserve University's Appreciative Inquiry Commons.* <http://appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu>.

Appreciative Inquiry is now being shared across the globe and is positively transforming the lives of many organizations and people. Learn more by visiting the AI Consulting website: <http://www.aiconsulting.org/index.html>

For more information on the AI Consulting Health Care Alliance and our service offerings, please visit our website (<http://www.aiconsulting.org>) or contact:

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“Hope is a feeling that life and work have meaning. You either have it or you don't, regardless of the state of the world that surrounds you.... I can't imagine that I could strive for something if I did not carry hope in me. The gift of hope is as big a gift as life itself.”

-Vaclav Havel

“There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.”

-John Andres Holmes

“Human beings, by changing the inner attitude of their minds, can change the outer aspect of their lives.”

-William James, American Psychologist, Professor, Author