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# AI Research Notes

## edited by Lena Holmberg and Jan Reed

AI Research Notes carries news of AI research developments. We'd like to make it as collaborative and appreciative as we can – we know that many of you are working and thinking about the relationship between academic research and AI, and that you have news, comments and questions which we'd like you to contribute.

**Editors' note**

The following paper describes a study which used a quantitative approach to explore changes after applying Appreciative Inquiry. The paper is interesting because AI research has often been qualitative and has explored the ways in which change is perceived rather than the impact AI has on behaviour. The study described below has gone through the process of identifying and defining this potential impact, and developing measures for change. This process of reflection has value as an exercise that all researchers might undertake, whatever their methodological persuasion.

**Invitation to contribute**

So AI research is entering the academic arena! We know that there are many more students at various levels who are using Appreciative Inquiry in their academic work as a framework, as a method, as inspiration, as a research focus and much more. Are you interested in presenting your work? Please get in touch.

Please send suggestions and material to [jreedhexham@gmail.com](mailto:jreedhexham@gmail.com) or [lmholmberg@gmail.com](mailto:lmholmberg@gmail.com)

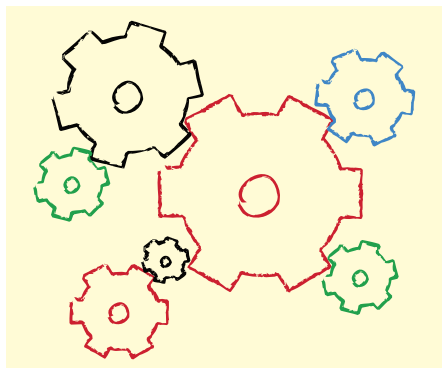
### A Quantitative Approach to AI Research

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Appreciative Inquiry started as an action research method. Its growing success shows that AI is not only a research method, but a method for action: AI has the ability to create a new spirit in an organisation. Participants in this process co-create the organisation with their own strengths and possibilities.

The success of AI has mainly been researched with qualitative methods and only a limited number of quantitative studies on the impact of AI have been reported in recent literature. In a linear process where A is affecting B, it is easy to set up a quantitative study. AI, however, is not a linear process: AI is an organic process of emerging organisational life. In an AI-process, people strive toward a new wholeness of the reality, based on relatedness. This togetherness-concept of AI is the complete opposite of the quantitative approach: dividing reality into measurable components indicating causes and effects. Moreover to enable systematic research into AI, these measurable components must be clearly defined while many concepts related to AI remain vague.



One of the advantages of quantitative research into the AI domain is that people can see the impact that AI has on organisations. Reports of this are currently largely anecdotal and seldom based on objective research. The success of an AI-process is multi-faceted: What is changing in the organisation? What is changing in a person? These questions tend to gauge the evidence-based reality behind the happy and shiny story telling in AI. Quantitative methods can point out these underlying processes, and allow a greater generalisability of the results.

### Operationalising a study into AI

Operationalisation in a scientific study involves the effort to define fuzzy concepts, making them measurable. This was done by a research team in 2009 studying the impact of AI on different psychological variables. What follows are the experiences of the involved researchers (Verleysen and Van Acker, 2010).

In this study, AI was investigated by comparing two groups of organisations: organisations working with AI, or without, AI. A questionnaire was developed measuring experienced AI (eAI). The questionnaire contained 15 items, with a focus on two approaches: the 4D cycle and critical situations in the organisation.

The results of the AI questionnaire showed a different level of eAI in organisations with and without AI-practice. Although the results were statistically significant, the difference between the level of eAI was small. One possible explanation for this limited effect is the choice of participating organisations. Are there any objective measures to identify organisations adopting AI? AI is more than going through the 4D cycle: AI is a complex process. Organisations which allegedly practice AI may not do so effectively, while organisations which have never heard of AI may implement some of its techniques implicitly.

A second issue is that although AI is presented as a specific method with distinct steps, there are many differences in implementing the AI-method, depending on the organisation's aims. Comparing organisations which have adopted AI with other organisations would thus imply neglecting the complexity of the AI construct. It would probably be more useful to measure the extent to which organisations use AI, instead of working with a dichotomy of adopters and non-adopters. Moreover it is not the fact of implementation *per se*, but rather the subjective experience of this implementation which is of interest to many scientists.

The result could also be due to the questionnaire itself, which was not able to differentiate the actual behaviour in organisations with or without AI-practices. When developing a questionnaire it is possible to choose different focuses. First, one can investigate whether an employee thinks that the organisation is adopting the AI-method by asking the employee about his or her 4D cycle knowledge and awareness.

Secondly, one could focus on typical organisational situations and behaviour: is there a difference behaviour between employees in organisations with or without an AI practice? Finally, one should focus on the attitude of the employee: does the employee report a daily AI-life attitude in appreciating possibilities? Is he or she striving toward exploring and co-creating, appreciating and giving life to those possibilities? All of these aspects need to be translated into specific questions which are relevant for different organisational contexts.

### Challenges for future research

Constructing a subjective AI measure on an individual level is a necessary and important step toward fundamental research on AI. Once the AI-level in a person can be determined, researchers can relate this to other psychological factors (e.g. stress and motivation).

On an organisational level, the challenge is to identify those elements which distinguish between AI and non-AI practices. On an individual level it seems important to look at situations eliciting behaviour: which are the critical situations where AI behaviour can make a real difference? What is typical behaviour in those situations for someone living up to the AI-principles? Moreover it is important to identify the behaviour which provides evidence for a genuine AI-life.

Constructing and validating the aforementioned questionnaire is important for further scientific research on AI, moreover it could be useful in daily organisational practices. Knowing how successful the implementation of AI is, assessing the level of AI attitude and behaviour of employees could help to evaluate and adjust the ongoing AI-process.

### References

Verleysen, A.L.J., and F. Van Acker. (2010). 'Appreciative Inquiry Evaluated from a Self-deterministic Perspective: The Impact on Psychological Capital.' *Fifth European Conference on Positive Psychology*, Copenhagen, Denmark. Retrieved from [http://www.talent-bezeling.be/images/stories/documenten/poster\\_def.pdf](http://www.talent-bezeling.be/images/stories/documenten/poster_def.pdf)

### Advertisement

## Useful tools for AI and Research

### Impact of Appreciative Inquiry on Research: Experiences, Reflections and Thoughts for the Future.

AI Practitioner, November 2007

Guest editors: Professor Jan Reed and Dr. Lena Holmberg.

### Impact of AI on Research – the Latest Experience DVD

DVD documentation of the workshop led by Professor Jan Reed and Dr. Lena Holmberg on 9th November 2007 in Gateshead, UK.



**Both are available from [www.aipractitioner.com](http://www.aipractitioner.com)**



### Jackie Stavros

DM, is Associate Professor and DBA Program Chair, College of Management at Lawrence Technological University, has co-authored books, book chapters and articles including *Thin Book of SOAR: Building-Strengths-Based Change*. She consults and provides training using strength-based whole system approaches.

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### Dawn Dole

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# AI Resources

## edited by Jackie Stavros and Dawn Dole

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

### Editors' Note

The August 2010 issue answered a frequently asked question at AI workshops, presentations, and trainings or on a list-serve: 'What's a good book to learn more about the basics of AI?' The column featured eleven primer AI books.

In this November 2010 issue, we present a list of practitioner books on specific AI topics such as evaluation, coaching, knowledge management, strategy, nonprofit management, project management, personal living, community building, relationships, research, schools, teamwork and more.

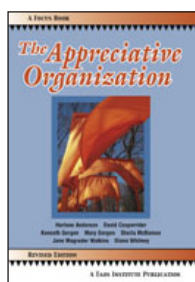
In the February 2011 issue, we will be featuring books on Appreciative Leadership. If you know of one that should be considered please email us. If you know of other books that focus on Appreciative Inquiry, we invite you to submit a book to the AI Commons at: <http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/intro/bookReview.cfm>

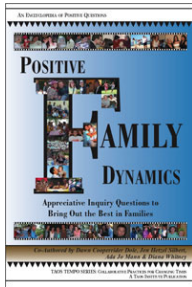
We have listed the books alphabetically by author:

### The Appreciative Organization (Revised Edition)

Anderson, H., D. Cooperrider, K. Gergen, M. Gergen, S. McNamee, J. Watkins, D. Whitney. (2008). Chagrin Falls, OH: The Taos Institute Publications. ISBN: 978-0-9712312-7-6

The authors are unanimous in their view that the appreciative construction of meaning is essential to the efficacy of an organization and the fulfillment of its participants. This book addresses the challenges of decision making, leadership, group functioning, personnel evaluation and the relationship of the organization to its context.

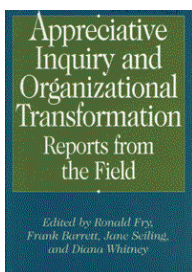




**Positive Family Dynamics: Appreciative Inquiry Questions to Bring Out the Best in Families**

Dole, D., J. Hetzel-Silbert, A.J. Mann and D. Whitney. (2009). Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publication. ISBN: 978-0-9712312-9-0

The questions, stories and activities in this book will help you create positive dynamics within your family. The book's questions, exercises, and positive spirit create simple approaches for helping families discover reserves of strength and opportunities for better living. This book contains 56 appreciative questions designed to increase learning, listening and positive dynamics within your family.



**Appreciative Inquiry and Organizational Transformation: Reports from the Field**

Fry, R., D. Whitney, J. Seiling and F. Barrett. (2002) Westport, CT: Quorum Books. ISBN: 1-56720-458-9

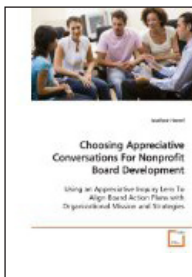
This is a collection of articles by some of AI's most renowned practitioners. They provide detailed reflections by leading practitioners on the use of AI. These reports from the field show how this unique approach is applied as well as its consequences. Readers will learn to identify the 'positive core' of any system: the practices and principles that encourage the best in organizational capacity and performances.



**Birth of a Global Community: Appreciative Inquiry in Action**

Gibbs, C. and S. Mahe. (2003). Brunswick, OH: Crown Custom Publishing, Inc. ISBN-13: 978-1933403168

The birth of the United Religions Initiative (URI) is the story of how thousands of people across cultures, oceans and faith traditions began to share a common call to make the world they lived in more like the world they yearned for in their dreams. This book tells how one person's vision and conviction evolved to include a global community working together to make their dreams real – dreams reflected in a call of the sacred within a world-wide, faith-based organization.

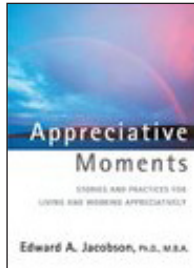


**Choosing Appreciative Conversations for Nonprofit Board Development**

Hamel, J. (2009). VDM Verla, ISBN: 9783639138535

This action research project explored how sharing stories of board excellence through an AI process could strengthen a nonprofit board. By participating in the AI 4-D cycle, board members shared stories, identified themes that contributed to higher board efficacy, constructed a shared vision, and developed an action plan. Through interviews, the researcher

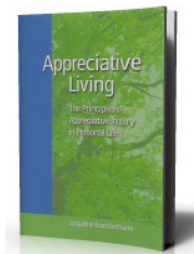
assessed participants' perceptions regarding the effect of the process on individual and team learning, commitment to action, and group effectiveness.



**Appreciative Moments: Stories and Practices for Living and Working Appreciatively**

Jacobson, E. (2008). iUniverse. ISBN: 978-0595429110.

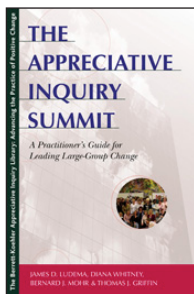
With true stories, humor, self-reflection and practical exercises, this book shows how to enrich your everyday life, starting right now. Appreciative Moments uses positive psychology and an AI approach to affect personal and organizational change. Topics: welcoming your life's work, letting your soul catch up with you, and refrigerator magnet thinking.



**Appreciative Living: The Principles of Appreciative Inquiry in Personal Life**

Kelm, J. (2005). Venet Publishers. ISBN: 978-0977216109

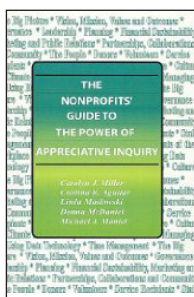
This book is an encyclopedia for living. It covers the AI principles supported with theories from positive psychology and the New Sciences. It includes five new AI principles suggested by AI practitioners, and introduces the 3-step AIA process.



**The Appreciative Inquiry Summit: A Practitioner's Guide for Leading Large-Group Change**

Ludema, J., D. Whitney, J. Mohr and T. Griffin. (2003). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers. ISBN 1576752488

This book is guide to the AI Summit – a methodology when applying AI to whole-scale change and large groups. This book explores the underlying theories of organization change and large-group process and walks the reader step-by-step through planning, conducting and following up on an AI Summit. Examples include John Deere, Verizon, British Airways, the United Religions Initiative, World Vision and many others.

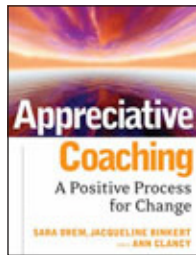


**The Nonprofits' Guide to the Power of Appreciative Inquiry**

Miller, C. J., C. R. Aguilar, D. McDaniel and L. Maslowski. (2004). Denver, CO: Community Development Institute. ISBN: 0-9761843-0-3

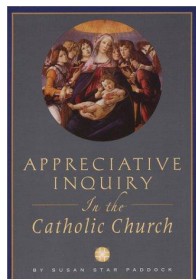
This book provides a variety of sample questions in many topic areas useful for non-profits (e.g. fundraisers, boards, volunteers, etc.) as well as a theoretical background of the use of AI in non-profits and other organizations. It

presents an emerging model for organizational theory of 'organizations as a network of conversations'.



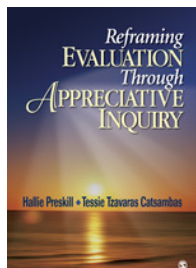
**Appreciative Coaching: A Positive Process for Change**  
Orem, S., J. Binkert and A. L. Clancy. (2007). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 978-0787984533

This book describes an approach to coaching rooted in AI. At its core, the Appreciative Coaching method shows individuals how to tap into their sense of wonder and excitement about their present life and future possibilities. Rather than focusing on individuals in limited or problem-oriented ways, Appreciate Coaching guides clients through an AI 4-D Cycle that inspire them to an appreciative and empowering view of themselves and their future.



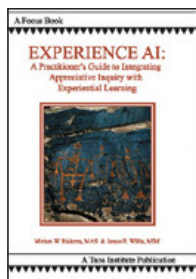
**Appreciative Inquiry in the Catholic Church**  
Paddock, S. S. (2003). Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing. ISBN: 978-0966537345

This book highlights AI as a way of looking at the world that turns problem-solving upside-down by looking within our heart-felt memories for the undiscovered solutions that already exist. It provides information for those who use AI in Catholic communities for strategic planning, parish planning, relationship building, transition, community development and for spiritual renewal. There are stories of Catholic Relief Services, the Diocese of Cleveland, the Catholic Health Association of Canada and many others.



**Reframing Evaluation Through Appreciative Inquiry**  
Preskill, H. and T. T. Catsambas. (2006). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. ISBN: 1412909511

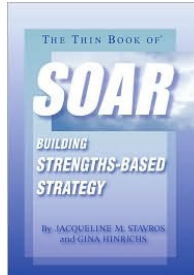
This book offers evaluators a generative to view their work. AI is the search for what aspects of an organization are effective and holds the key to innovation and growth. Illustrations are provided that have been used to frame, design and conduct evaluations in various sectors worldwide. The authors show how to apply AI to various aspects of evaluations. The book is helpful for evaluation workshops.



**Experience AI: A Practitioner's Guide to Integrating Appreciative Inquiry and Experiential Learning**  
Ricketts, M. and J. Willis. (2001) Chagrin Falls, OH. Taos Institute Publications. ISBN 978-0-9712312-2-1

This volume invites you to share in a conversation around the power and efficacy of embedding experiential learning models, tools and techniques into appreciative inquiry in order to accelerate positive change, motivate teams and individuals, generate buy-in and engage people at all

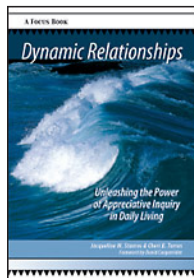
levels. By sharing and learning from experience, people attain the high levels of rapport, empathy, trust and mutual understanding necessary to risk and embrace change together.



### **The Thin Book of SOAR; Building Strengths-Based Strategy**

Stavros, J.M. and G. Hinrichs. (2009). Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing. ISBN: 978-0982206805

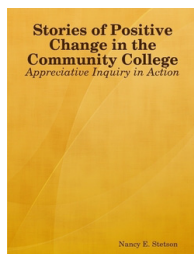
SOAR is an approach for framing strategy through an appreciative lens. SOAR stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results. SOAR takes the AI philosophy and applies it to provide a strategic thinking and dialogue process. This book highlights several organizations throughout the world that have used it and achieved measurable results.



### **Dynamic Relationships: Unleashing the Power of Appreciative Inquiry in Daily Living**

Stavros, J. M. and C. B. Torres. (2005). Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publishing. ISBN: 0971441669

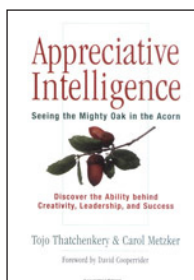
This book invites us to step into the appreciative paradigm, where the principles governing our actions and relationships offer a means for increased value and meaning in our lives and our communities of work and play. Dynamic Relationships offers us the opportunity to practice these principles through cycles of reflection and action in ways that empower us to become a force for creating and sustaining life-affirming relationships and success in daily living.



### **Stories of Positive Change in the Community College: Appreciative Inquiry in Action**

Stetson, N. E. (2008). Palm Springs, CA: Company of Experts.net. ISBN: 9780615239730

This book is designed to help community college and other educational leaders bring about positive change. The book features 40 colleges that are using AI for areas from teambuilding, planning, teaching human resource development, self-study for accreditation to assessing organizational strengths, culture, student engagement, student recruitment and retention.

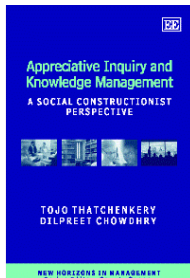


### **Appreciative Intelligence: Seeing the Mighty Oak in the Acorn**

Thatchenkery, T. and C. Metzker. (2006). Berrett-Koehler Publishers. ISBN: 978-1576753538

This book argues that the keys to Appreciative Intelligence are revealing the hidden value in others and building an

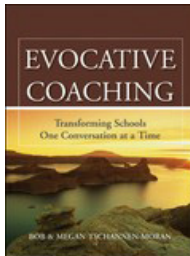
infrastructure, environment or culture that spreads the leader's Appreciative Intelligence. The authors draw on real-life examples and thorough interviews with top executives to identify actual examples of this elusive ability. They show how a knack for creatively dealing with unexpected situations is the common bond among a diverse range of success stories.



### **Appreciative Inquiry and Knowledge Management: A Social Constructionist Perspective**

Thatchenkery, T. and D. Chowdhry. (2007). Edward Elgar Publishing. ISBN: 978-1845425906

The authors of this book advance the Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge (ASK), by which organizations create a culture which facilitates the sharing of information. Using social constructionist approaches, historical data and case studies, the authors demonstrate that appreciation – or affirmation – is the key ingredient for people to trust each other and overcome their inhibitions and concerns about sharing what they know.



### **Evocative Coaching: Transforming Schools One Conversation at a Time**

Tschannen-Moran, B. and M.Tschannen-Moran. (2009). Jossey-Bass, ISBN 978-0470547595

This book maps out a way to change the conversations within schools. By taking a teacher-centered, no-fault, strengths-based approach to performance improvement, the Evocative Coaching model generates the motivation and movement that enables teachers and schools to achieve desired outcomes and enhance quality of life in four steps – Story, Empathy, Inquiry and Design. Each step is presented with illustrative materials and end-of-chapter discussion questions to prompt further reflection.



### **Recharge Your Team: The Grounded Visioning Approach**

Vogt, J. W. (2008). Praeger. ISBN: 978-0313355424

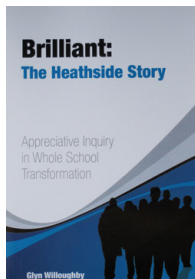
The author shows managers how to come up with a vision for a company, division or department – in less than one day. Grounded Visioning focuses on the positive, giving organizations a process for overcoming even bitter disappointments, efficiently setting the groundwork in place to move together toward a more positive future. This book describes a group planning process utilizing a variation of Appreciative Inquiry that is simple, short and easy to use.

### **Appreciative Team Building: Positive Questions to Bring Out the Best in Your Team**

Whitney, D., A.T rosten-Bloom, J. Cherney and R. Fry. (2004). iUniverse. ISBN 0595335039



This book provides your team with everything needed to discover the keys to past successes and future possibilities by igniting engaging conversations. Providing 48 positive questions, sample interview guides and a step-by-step process for self-managed inquiry, this book demonstrates the development of high performance teams. Choose positive questions on any one of eight topics that are pivotal to team development; then follow a step-by-step self-managed AI process that guides your team.



### **Brilliant: The Heathside Story – Appreciative Inquiry in Whole School Transformation**

Willoughby, G. and N. Samuels. (2009). London, United Kingdom: Kingsham Press.

In this book, the authors brought their best skills to helping students, teachers, staff and governors in Heathside develop an image of their future and then live it. Everyone at Heathside got involved, experienced a new way of working with each other and achieved more than they thought they could.

## What's in AIP November 2011



[www.aipractitioner.com/aip2011](http://www.aipractitioner.com/aip2011)

### **Appreciative Governance: The Principles and Practice**

**Guest editors: Bernard J. Mohr, Cheri Torres and Sallie Lee**

This unique issue of the AIP initiates an on-going inquiry into the principles and practices of Appreciative Governance. A group of 13 AI practitioners began this inquiry during a Collaboration Studio fall of 2010. The articles in this issue reflect their effort in developing a set of governance principles for strength-based organizations and their work and research into how Appreciative Governance models allow members of these organizations to generate sustainable value.

For a limited time, get 2011 AIP subscriptions @ 2010 rates at [www.aipractitioner.com](http://www.aipractitioner.com)



# AI Practitioner

## Team and Group Development the AI Way

Guest Editors: **Cora Reijerse and Ronald van Domburg**

### Inside:

**Team Effectiveness**

**How to Conquer  
Conflict**

**Appreciative Facilitation  
Rules of Thumb**

**Building a Team of  
Passionate Callers**

**Givers Gain/Geven loont**

**Interview with  
Joep C. de Jong**

**Engaging 'the Other'  
in Dialogic Work**

**High-Performing  
Transient Teams**

**AI Research Notes and  
AI Resources**

# International Journal of Appreciative Inquiry

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- 21** Engaging 'the Other' in Dialogic Work in a Nursing Home by Ilene Wasserman, Michael Shay, Richard Doran and Yvette Hyater-Adams  
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- 25** How to Conquer Conflict with Appreciative Conversation by Richard 'RJ' Johnson  
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Wat was het effect van AI interventies? Hoe werd erop gereageerd? Waren er zichtbare effecten? Wat werkte minder goed? Wat heb ik ervan geleerd?

# International Journal of Appreciative Inquiry

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