



**Dialogues that Deliver:  
Generative Practices in Collaboration,  
Conflict and Community  
Sept. 25 – 28, 2008, Sarasota, Florida**

**Dialogue Break-out Sessions**

The following are one-hour sessions designed to explore dialogic practices in various settings. Please choose ONE session to attend each hour.

**FRIDAY, Sept 26, 2008**

**2:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

**A1 – Bliss Browne: A Conversation with the Future**

An interactive workshop on questions and approaches being used by the global Imagine movement to focus attention in large cities on developing a long term vision for sustainable development. Examples will include Calgary, Durban, and Tacoma.

**A2 - Kathleen Clark: The use of dialogues in collaborative law/practices and health care.**

This will be a discussion of the dialogues that Kathy has convened and facilitated regarding collaborative law (CL), an alternative to traditional medical malpractice litigation, and possibilities for usage of CL in health care settings. The dialogues have brought together attorneys, physicians, other health care providers and insurers, professionals often at odds with each other. She used appreciative inquiry to bring forth for discussion what is working in various health care arenas, including medical error, and how these various professionals can create trust, work together, and build community.

**A3 - Jakob Nørlem: Narrative coaching**

*“In the coldest time of year, darkness all around my heart. I was alone but didn’t fear to wander in the light of stars. In the bright and silent night, winds would knock and disappear. Still I felt the feeling near, like the first time you were ever hear. You are so far away”*

We are looking for cracks from where the cool wind of life enters the dialogues creating movements that deliver new horizons.

- Creating a narrative frame that invites life into the dialogue.
- The dance metaphor in coaching.
- Curiosity on circularity in life stories.
- Shape new patterns of life through wandering the landscape of emerging realities.
- Relational co-poetic processes.

If you want to participate, please bring a picture, a poem, a novel or a metaphor that plays a significant role in your life. Thank you.

**A4 – Jackie Stavros & Cheri Torres: Dynamic Relationships: Unleashing the Power of AI in Dialogue**

Dialogue is most generative when everyone feels equally valued and all are willing to allow the emergence of something new. The space for such positive dynamic relationships can be created through appreciative awareness and action: a willingness to examine the known and engage in reflective practice. This dialogue session invites you to join us in generating deeper understanding and knowledge for how we can create these dynamics

A5 - Dora Fried Schnitman: **Dialogues for Innovation: Creating Resources, Collaboration and Community**

This perspective focuses on dialogues for innovation and presents a generative approach to communities using peoples' resources, values and ability to innovate in the face of an array of difficult challenges. This approach helps clients move from problems to creativity. It regards the creation of meaning, experience and knowledge as constructive processes in action, and finds in the discourse-oriented paradigm a theory and a meta-theory on which to sustain its practice. The generative perspective offers tools for the dialogic construction of new domains of meaning and creating alternatives. We will present and illustrate generative questions, relational cycles, and several tools developed by the model.

**3:15 pm – 4:15 pm**

B1 - Marjorie Roberts: **Letter Writing: A Dialogic Practice in Clinical Work - Opening Stuck Conversations**

My use of writing is part of the therapeutic dialogue and is focused on letter writing. In the course of a therapeutic conversation, a client and I identify what I call a stuck conversation either with self at an earlier time or with another person. I often suggest that a client write a letter to revisit or open the stuck conversation. Most typically, clients choose to do the writing apart from our meeting and bring the letter to a following session. At other times, a client might choose to write a letter within a session. The very nature of a letter is both relational and conversational. In my work as a psychologist and family therapist, letter writing has become a vital and integral part of therapeutic conversations.

B2 - Ginny Belden-Charles: **My Story Listens to Your Story: Dialogues that Transform Leaders**

What happens when leaders from different worlds of work engage in ongoing self-development through dialogues with peers? This workshop presents the story of an intentional learning community involving over 100 women leaders, which has met for over a decade. Participants will experience various modes of inquiry and reflection developed within this community. Of special interest is the question of developing meaning, purpose, and direction in life and work. In addition, the ways of developing and sustaining a community of inquiry are discussed.

B3 - Aileen Tierney: **Disability Dialogues – Co -constructing generative conversations**

This dialogue will explore the capacity to suppress and give voice in dialogue, in particular where differences exist amongst discursive communities. It will consider the 'moment-in-time' constitutive reshaping of existing constructs in conversation with the 'other' and how questions can determine the domain of response. The focus will be on considering disabling discourses and the creation of stakeholder dialogical networks.

B4 – Jen Hetzel Silbert, Ada Jo Mann and Dawn Dole: **Positive Family Dynamics - Creating Space for Dialogue**

Dialogue within a family can take many forms and shapes. Creating positive family dynamics is a way to build a safe and mutually supportive environment where family members care for one another and positively influence each other's learning and development. The questions and activities in this session will focus on making the shift in a family from strategies for survival to strategies for growth and understanding.

B5 – Madelyn Blair: **Stories Inside Words**

Language is anything but static, yet organizations depend on the same words again and again. A familiar word may not do justice to its full meaning. Rooted in theory and practice of social construction and AI, this session will allow participants to experience the power of stories inside words.

## 4:30 – 5:30 pm

C1 - Myra Virgil: **Moving from “dialogic” theory to practice: is there room for courageous conversations, inquiry and deep respect in the workplace?**

We will discuss the types of dialogues that are occurring in the workplace and their implications for and about race, gender and other social constructs. I will offer some thoughts about if it is possible and if so, how, to dialogue and aspire to more successful working relationships and decision-making practices.

C2 - Jerry Gale: **Meditation as a relational dialogue: A self-reflective discourse analysis**

The focus of this presentation is on inner dialogues and narratives and their impact on shaping self-identity and actions. Using meditation as a tool for slowing down thoughts, and employing discourse analytical practices to examine inner dialogues, participants will be invited to notice the impact of meditation on self-awareness, mindfulness and the construction of a witnessing-I. Both individual and dyadic meditations will be presented.

Resource: Gale, J. (in press). Meditation and relational connectedness: Practices for couples and families. In F. Walsh, (Ed.), *Spiritual resources in family therapy*. New York: Guilford Press.

C3 - Mishka Lysack, Dan Wulff, Sally St. George: **The Teach-In as a Form of Dialogical Action**

Mishka will share with us a project called "Teach-In on Global Warming and Climate Change." This dialogue session will explore how twelve professors and students from seven different faculties and departments—social work, biology, education, business, environmental design, religious studies, and veterinary medicine—outlined what their various disciplines could offer by way of resources or solutions to the problem of global warming. Over 150 student and faculty participated in the Teach-in. Using a teach-in as a community to heal ecological grief or fears, evoke a sense of hope and empowerment, and mobilize interest and action to address social problems/issues will be the focus of this live video conversation with Dr. Lysack (who will be connected from Calgary via Eluminate).

C5 - Theresa Bertram: **Creating Dialogue about New Expectations for Growing Older**

C6 – Jane Seiling and Jackie Stavros: **Change and Capacity Building in Nonprofits**

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) recently provided evidence that the ability to lead change is now a crucial leadership capability in organizations—whatever the type of organization. How change is led and managed is important. Join us for a conversation on leading change and capacity building in nonprofits.

## SATURDAY, Sept 27, 2008

### 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

D1 - Anne Radford: **Dialogue about Delivering Consultant-free Organizational Change**

Increasingly, leaders and managers are doing DIY AI – facilitating participative large-group change events themselves with no or little formal preparation. Pressure on budgets means organisational change dialogues are being facilitated by leaders and managers who have little preparation in the area. Consultants are providing minimal ‘just-in-time’ input to these facilitators. What are we learning about the importance of “dialogue” throughout this process? And what does it mean for change work in the future?

D2 - Ilene Wasserman: **Exploring Social Identity through a Relational Lens**

What does it mean to be African American, White, a Man, a Woman, Jewish, Muslim. What does it mean to be? We all inherit stories of our families, our communities that has us be like some people and not like others. How do we expand our inherited narratives as we engage those of each other? What are the implications for the new social worlds we can create?

D4 – Vikki Reynolds: **Creating Community through Dialogues of Solidarity: Solidarity Witnessing Groups**

Solidarity witnessing groups are informed by the principles of a supervision of solidarity, which are centered in both the doing of justice and honoring acts of resistance. In solidarity witnessing groups, we create connecting conversations which invite collective accountability in relation to our ethics and our acts of resistance against the unfairly structured institutions and practices that negatively impact the people with whom we work. We work together to re-search our relationship with ethics and accountability, and keep our collective spirit of social justice alive. We look at both the ways we can abuse our power and the ways our work is a site of liberation for all of us. This community-making dialogue promotes solidarity and the sustainability of our collective spirit of social justice.

D5 – Dan Saint: **Explaining Social Construction Where There Is Seemingly No Language for Connection**

Have you ever struggled in explaining social constructionist thinking to a client, business colleague or even a family member? In this session we discuss ideas of how to do that effectively. The session begins with a wonderful story told from an amazing picture of two people in relationship used to explore Ken Gergen's four assumptions of social constructionism. This invitation to social construction was developed for a day-long session of business ethics for the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) in Florida. In developing a story about how our reality and the concept of ethics are socially constructed, I feared being booted off stage. I assumed it would not be popular to question the existence of a clearly quantifiable world of certain, measurable reality with accountants. Surprisingly, it was the highest ranked portion of the seminar!

D6 - Carsten Hornstrup: **From Appreciative Inquiry to Inquiring Appreciatively**

This workshop elaborates the turn from Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to inquiring appreciatively (i-a). By doing so this gives a strong appreciative approach to organisational development with even more vitality. In the workshop Carsten will present these ideas in three parts:

1. To foreground inquiring and to give it a more vivid understanding and use by connecting it to some of the key ideas in systemic thinking and practice
2. To expand the idea of appreciation by connecting to the work of Maturana & Varela and to the work of Axel Honneth
3. Adding a three-dimensional reflexivity (self-, relational and (the) other reflexivity)