

# Taos Institute News

Creating Promising Futures through Social Construction

January 2013

## Reflecting on the Past and Looking Forward

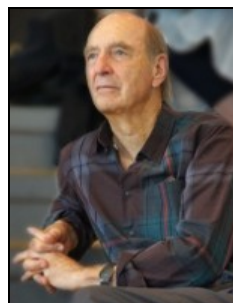
A message from Kenneth Gergen, President of the Taos Institute

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In the rush of daily life we tend to focus on the present and near future. What is past is past! Yet, there is good reason to cast one's gaze toward the wake. There we learn of the intensity of movement and its trajectory. Scanning the year's activity of the Taos Institute, I am dazzled at the power of collaborative participation, and what can be achieved by people working voluntarily together. Although it is difficult enough to produce a single conference each year, in 2012 our collaborative efforts yielded three separate conferences. With our neighbors at the Kanankil Institute in Merida, Mexico, we offered in early spring, *Enriching Collaborative Practices Across Cultural Borders*. Then, working with the Attractor consulting firm in Denmark, a Summer Institute in systemic/constructionist process was staged for a second year. Finally, joining together in November with Associates on the West Coast, we offered an international conference, *Exploring Relational Practices in Peacebuilding, Mediation, and Conflict Transformation*. Dozens of presentations, performances, and papers enriched every gathering for participants from around the world. Inspiring energies!

The PhD program, a collaborative effort with Professor John Rijsman at Tilburg University, reached a milestone this year. We graduated our 50<sup>th</sup> student! This program has been a source of enormous joy, as the participants have used this opportunity to create, enrich, or reflect on practices in organizational development, therapeutic process, education, community development, and so much more. Then, in collaboration with the Houston/Galveston Institute, the *International Certificate Program in Collaborative Practices* rolled into high gear, with the certificate now offered in six countries. Our collaborators in *La Red de Trabajo para Dialogos Productivos* have also been



wonderfully active, drawing together research projects in dialogue in seven countries.

Taos Institute Publications worked with gifted authors and editors to generate three new books, including Monk and Winslade's, *When Stories Clash: Addressing Conflict with Narrative Mediation*; Hedtke's *Bereavement*

*Support Groups: Breathing Life into Stories of the Dead*; Cole and Gergen's, *Retiring But Not Shy: Feminist Psychologists Create their Post-Careers*, I must add a special note of delight at the launching this year of *WorldShare Books*, a unique publishing venture in which we offer book length manuscripts for downloading free of charge! Some 30 Associates from around the world have volunteered to participate in the Editorial Board, thus offering an opportunity to publish in many languages. Thus far, we have offered eight books, beginning with John Shotter's *Wittgenstein in Practice*, and including a book in Spanish and another in Afrikaans. To our happy surprise, books have already been downloaded in over 50 nations!

Yet, for all the excitement, this reflective pause also offers a chance to consider routes not taken. In this period of political stalemates in the U.S. government and elsewhere, we have been disappointed that we have not been able to locate means of sharing with the political world resources on effective collaboration and dialogue. And, while we have been delighted this year at the opening of the Center for Social Constructionist Psychology Studies in China, there are no constructionist resources available so far in many other places. One hope is that we might develop our work in Arabic, and find ways to collaborate with colleagues in the Middle East, and in other troubled places in the world. Given all that has been accomplished in our first 20 years, we remain optimistic.

# Social Construction

## Constructing our Future



### Sheila McNamee

As one year blends into the next, it is typical to reflect on what has come and gone. This can be a useful exercise and certainly can drum up a lot of good feelings about what has been accomplished (while also providing the opportunity to ignore all the less positive details!). But I want to focus on the future. This year is a significant year for the Taos Institute. In April, we turn 20 years old! While it seems like a long time for the Institute's existence, it certainly seems young when I think of myself at 20. The Taos Institute started

as a dream – an idea – of seven friends and colleagues (Harlene Anderson, David Cooperrider, Ken and Mary Gergen, Sheila McNamee, Suresh Srivastva, and Diana Whitney). We gathered together in Taos to host *Realities and Relationships: Social Construction in Therapy and Organization Development*. This gathering inspired us to imagine, to construct together a world of possibilities. That world became the Taos Institute and it is so much greater than any of the seven founders.

The Taos Institute is, itself, an experiment in construction. We all live daily with the tension between the pull toward organizational policies and procedures and the emersion in constant evolution and possibility. We both crave order and stability while harboring a tremendous desire for freedom and the unknown. Inspired by our rich family of associates, we attempt to keep “just enough” policy and procedure to allow us to continually craft our dreams into action. The swarm of all who are part of TI keep the Institute in continuous motion, opening new possibilities in the form of conference ideas, book publications, educational programs, and funding possibilities for new and exciting work in the world. We are together an embodiment of social construction in action; ***we are all the Taos Institute.***

Constructionist practice invites us into a world where “knowing” and “being expert” are acknowledged as only accomplished *in the moment*. There is no pontification of “what social construction is;” there is only performance that – at its very best – invites each of us, and our conversational partners, into the amazing possibility of new constructions (and even favored old constructions). Personally, I love the ability to move in motion with others, letting imagined futures unfold.

And so it is with enormous enthusiasm and expectation that I look forward to our anniversary gathering in April because it is there that our focus will be on the future. What accomplishments will we be reflecting upon in the year 2033 (twenty more years hence)? Our future and the future of the world will be our conversational topic in Taos. Please join us as we continue to construct new ways of going on together.

### **Celebrating 20 Years Together, Social Construction Ideas and Practice**

April 11-13, 2013 in Taos, NM— [www.taosinstitute.net/20th-anniversary-celebration](http://www.taosinstitute.net/20th-anniversary-celebration)

# Taos 20th Anniversary Conference

## Come celebrate with us!

### Social Constructionist Ideas and Practice: From Origins to New Horizons

April 11-13th, 2013,  
in Taos, New Mexico



[Click here for more details >](#)

- Prioritize human possibilities!
  - Join together to construct transformative practices in education, healthcare, community work, organizations, globally.
  - Get inspired! Great ideas and practices to expand our horizons.
  - Experience the Magic of Taos, New Mexico! Taos is a magical place that holds very special meaning for the Taos Institute Founders, associates and friends – returning to Taos will nurture and inspire.
- Form relationships and create new paths forward in celebration of the Taos Institute 20th Anniversary!

Come be in dialogue with the Taos founders: *Harlene Anderson, David Cooperrider, Ken Gergen, Mary Gergen, Sheila McNamee and Diana Whitney.*

In keeping with the spirit of the Taos Institute, the program will take a bold step forward in its structure. Rather than featuring a series of monologic presentations, typical of many conferences, we will establish a series of small working groups focused on topics of common concern to the participants. With the help of a discussion leader, a space will be made for all the group participants to share their practices and ideas, and then to build from these into the future. Given the experiences and expertise of the conference attendees, these discussions should be peak learning and creating experiences. During the conference, one would participate in several of these theme groups, in addition to opportunities for cross-fertilization.



**REGISTER NOW—Space is Limited**

[www.taosinstitute.net/register-20th-anniversary](http://www.taosinstitute.net/register-20th-anniversary)

Tweet about the conference @taosinstitute, #taos20

The Taos Institute Founders at our  
10th Anniversary Celebration in 2003

## Join the Taos Institute as we explore Social Networking....

**Join us on Facebook**—Join us today on the Taos Institute **Organizational Fan Page.**

- [www.facebook.com/pages/The-Taos-Institute/160613340634000](http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Taos-Institute/160613340634000)

**Follow us on Twitter**—@taosinstitute - <http://twitter.com/taosinstitute>

**Join us on LinkedIn**—<http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Taos-Institute-2288978?home=&gid=2288978&trk=anet ug hm&goback=.gna 2288978.gmp 2288978>



## Mediation, and Conflict Transformation

November 14-17, 2012, San Diego, California

Over 150 practitioners, academics and community members from 14 countries came together to share and create new forms of practice for peacebuilding informed by social construction. We focused on relational, collaborative, and appreciative practices for conflict transformation and mediation in families, organizations, communities, and the world.

There could not have been a more important moment for this gathering. As inequality, interpersonal violence, community conflict, environmental demise, political unrest, terrorism, and general global unease proliferate, it becomes increasingly important for us to share and expand our relational resources to create peacebuilding opportunities among people, communities, and nations.

Participants developed and shared ways of moving from conflict-saturated relations to collaborations across divides of meaning. Our time together was both educational and inspirational as we explored innovative ways of going on together.

Below is a Wordle word cloud created from the conference program descriptions. On the next page we share more resources from the conference along with photos.



## Videos on the Taos Institute Website

We have videos on our website that may be of interest to many of you. We invite you to take a look, spend some time and let us know what you think of this offering.

**[Click here to view the videos.](#)**





## Peacebuilding conference continued.....



At the opening keynote, Kenneth Gergen challenged us with 5 provocative propositions on Peacebuilding from a Social Constructionist Standpoint. [Click here to download the 5 provocative propositions.>](#)

Our keynote speakers, *Diana Whitney, Gerald Monk, John Winslade, Jennifer Freeman, and Charles Gibbs* all inspired and guided us into stories of powerful moments of peacebuilding and transformations. We thank them for being such a special part of our gathering.

One of our guest speakers, Mark Andreas, is a gifted storyteller. Take a look at one of his stories at this video link, where he tells the story of an amazing conflict transformation: <http://youtu.be/x4BT4pGMe-M>

Watch our video capturing the conference moments:

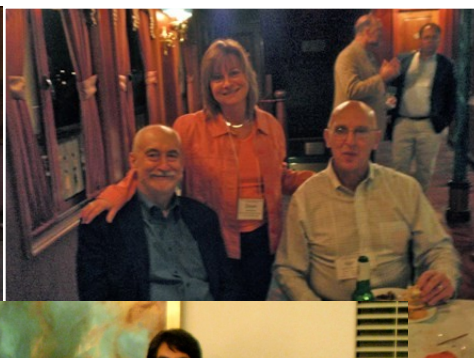
<http://vimeo.com/55269776>

Enjoy some poetry written by Gita Arjan Baack about her experiences at the conference: Relational Practices in Peace Building - click on the text: [Poetry - a document in PDF format.](#)

We want to thank our team of amazing volunteers (in picture at the bottom of this page) who came to us through Gerald Monk and San Diego State University, Department of Education and School Psychology.

To see the full program and other pictures, visit:

[www.taosinstitute.net/peacebuilding-conference](http://www.taosinstitute.net/peacebuilding-conference)

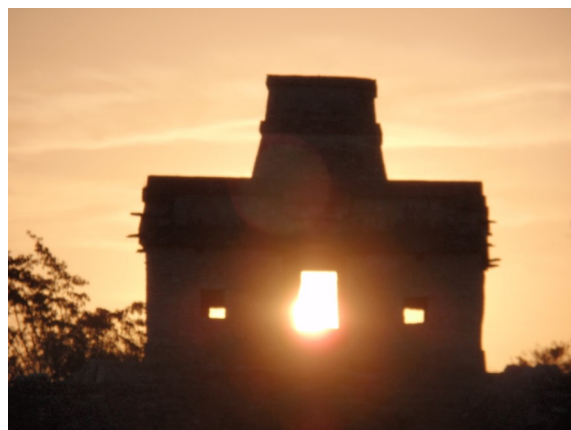


**Last March we had an incredible  
conference in Merida with our  
colleagues and hosts from the  
Kanankil Institute**

**Enriching Collaborative Practices  
Across Cultural Borders:**

**Constructing Alternatives in Psychotherapy,  
Education, Community & Organization  
Development and Research Practices**

**March 20 – 23, 2012 Merida, Yucatan, Mexico**



We live in a time when national and cultural boundaries are dissolving. This continuous movement of meanings, traditions, people and practices comes with both challenges and opportunities. With an appreciation of the multiple constructions of realities and values, and a belief that collaboration is our major means of moving forward together, conference participants shared and created enriching practices in multiple professions and from a diverse number of countries.

The conference activities began with an opening ceremony that shared with us a bit of the Mayan world, through prayer, dance and music. Participants had the experience of a lifetime by observing the sunrise on the Spring Solstice at a Mayan Ruin and it was breathtaking. The conference theme connected with a new cycle of the Mayan calendar and the beginning of a new era. This moment in history calls for an exploration of the ways we relate to each other, to the knowledge of our ancestors, and to nature. The relationships fostered during the conference among the participants have continued over time. We still hear about people who connected there and how they are collaborating today.

We want to thank Rocio Chaveste and Maria Louisa Molina for their graciousness and warm welcoming. They demonstrated the strengths that come from a cross-cultural collaboration.



**Six Taos Institute Books Available as E-Books Now**

*When Stories Clash: Addressing Conflict with Narrative Mediation*

*Retiring But Not Shy: Feminist Psychologists Create their Post-Careers*

*Developing Relational Leadership: Resources for Developing Reflexive Organizational Practices*

*Social Construction: Entering the Dialogue*

*Bereavement Support Groups: Breathing Life into Stories of the Dead*

*Mapping Dialogue: Essential Tools for Social Change*

[www.taosinstitute.net/e-books](http://www.taosinstitute.net/e-books) (For Kindle and Nook, soon to be for iPad)





New New New New New

## WorldShare Books

The Taos Institute is pleased to introduce a new initiative to bring free downloadable full-length books to the world.

These books are offered free of charge for reading online or down-loading from our website to your favorite tablet/reader from the internet in PDF format.

As with all the Taos Institute Publications, WorldShare Books represent significant contributions relevant to social constructionist theory and practice. The offerings are carefully selected by an International Publications Board.

Books available online now:

***Wittgenstein in Practice: His Philosophy of Beginnings, and Beginnings, and Beginnings,***  
by John Shotter (2012)

***Ethical Ways of Being,*** by Johan Roux, Dirk Kotze, Johan Myburg and associates (2002)

***Images of Man,*** by John Shotter (1975)

***Social Construction of the Person,*** by Kenneth Gergen and Keith E. Davis (1985)

***Therapeutic Realities,*** by Kenneth Gergen (2006)

***Contextualizing Care: Relational Engagement with/in Human Services Practices,***  
by Janet Newbury (2013)

***PIEMP: Voices of South Africa,*** edited by Therese Hulme (in Afrikaans) (2009)

***La terapia como dialogo hermeneutico y construccionista,*** by Gilgerto Limon Arce  
(in Spanish, 2012)

### International Editorial Board

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# Moments with the Taos Institute Board—2012



**Harlene Anderson** - My passion in 2012 continued to center around the exploration and application of post-modern/social construction collaborative practices across cultures and

professional practices, especially in organizations and education. I conducted trainings and consultations with educational institutions, professional associations and businesses in South America, Asia, Mexico, Canada and in the United States and at the Houston Galveston Institute, my home base in Texas. With Taos Associate Sylvia London, I convened the Annual International Summer Institute in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. The inspiring part of all of these travels (and the internet) is the opportunity to be in conversation with long-time and new colleagues - as we share our work with each other and push the boundaries of our thoughts and practices. In addition to my travels and 2012 publications, I have two completed inquiry projects that I am writing about: *Handmaidens to Power: What Executives can Learn from their Assistants* and *Mother-Daughter Owned Business: The Business and the Personal*. When in Texas, along with my husband David, I enjoy spending time at our river cabin, entertaining friends in our home and enjoying our dog Beaux.

**Bob Cottor** - This past year has been a very unusual and busy year for my wife, Sharon, and me. My best friend, a psychiatrist from Harlem, who had lived in Arizona for 20 years before retiring and moving to Mexico, developed lung cancer last January, and he and his wife decided to return to Arizona for chemotherapy treatment. They, of course, had no place to live here so we invited them to stay with us for as long as necessary to complete his treatment. They moved in with us in mid-January and the four of us launched a long journey of attempting to overcome a very aggressive cancer through the use of the very toxic chemotherapy and radiation together with the most collaborative and appreciative relational culture we could create around us and around our families. The experience was incredible and our learning together was immense. Social construction in action. My friend could not survive the bodily ravages created by his cancer and its biological treatment. He died in July but he had a beautiful death. We all were transformed by our collaborative experience and our dear friends, a psychiatrist and a psychologist, no longer had any doubts or reservations about the power of constructionist/appreciative living and dying.



**Mary Gergen** - 2012 saw the publication of two important books in my life. *Playing with Purpose: Adventures in Performative Social Science*, with K. J. Gergen, a compilation of the performance work that we have done together and separately in the

past 20 years, and *Retiring but not Shy: Feminist Psychologists Create Their Post-Careers*, edited with Ellen Cole. We shared our stories of retirement with 20 others. I was also honored to be chosen as a plenary speaker at the American Association of Family Therapists conference this fall in Charlotte, NC. My talk focused on the changing nature of gender in the 21 Century. It was an intense experience to remember my talk, press the power point key, and respond to interactive audience participation monitors all at once. Travels have been far flung this year, and I am sometimes torn between wanting to be abroad and wanting to be home with kids and grandkids.



**Ken Gergen** - In 2012 I found myself once again traveling the world, sharing social constructionist and relational ideas with diverse audiences. Some of the highlights came from a week of lectures in Bogota, Colombia, Taos conferences in Mexico and San Diego, and most especially a three-week lecture stint in China. I was awarded the Hong-

guo Professorship at Nanjing Normal University, thanks to scholars there who specialize in constructionist ideas. Perhaps my most unusual audience was at an elementary school in Nanjing, where 1200 students greeted Mary Gergen and me, as I became an honorary principal. Another special event, one I was especially pleased with, was when my five-year attempt to establish a qualitative research wing in the American Psychological Association succeeded. Many thanks to my colleagues for that victorious fight. Another plus for the year: My golf game is improving, largely owing to my Achilles tendon on the tennis court in August.

**Sheila McNamee** - Another year ended, and it was a full and lively year! So much of my time and energies are devoted to the Taos Institute and our many exciting endeavors. The Taos/Tilburg Ph.D. program graduated our 50th Ph.D. in October!

In addition, I spent a good deal of the year traveling to work (and play) with colleagues in Bogota, Manizales (Colombia), Cardiff, London, Newcastle, Bilbao, Vancouver, Merida (Mexico), Houston, San Diego, and Minneapolis. I had the great pleasure of collaborating with Ph.D. candidate Vicky Lugo and her colleagues at the University who are working with under-age, ex-combatants in the Colombian conflict. Taos Associate Kristin Bodiford collaborated with us! Their work is inspiring and a beautiful illustration of social construction in action. In between my travel, I continue writing (chapters and articles on research, education, health care, and therapeutic process). I just completed the editing of a volume in honor of the work of Barnett Pearce (forthcoming from Fairleigh Dickinson University Press). The snow is better this winter than last, allowing me to take a break from my desk for a noon cross-country ski (so much more fun than going to the gym!).





## Taos Board continued .....

### **Sally St. George and Dan Wulff**

- On the professional front, we have secured a contract from Routledge to edit a book with Karl Tomm and Tom Strong (Taos Associates), which focuses on interpersonal patterns in family therapy (a significant arena in which Karl Tomm has invested a lot of his professional energies over the years). On a personal note, we moved into our "dream home" this past July on the northwest edge of Calgary with a gorgeous view of the mountains. Not a day goes by that we don't marvel at how fortunate we are to live in such a beautiful place!



**Jason Wolf** - Of late I have been busy focusing on the growth of The Beryl Institute into a global community of practice on improving the patient experience. We just celebrated our second anniversary, reaching a milestone of over 15,000 members and guests in more than 30 countries. I have just recently authored our latest paper,

Voices from the C-Suite: Perspectives on the Patient Experience and now working on an exciting paper Voices of Patients & Families in Improving Patient Experience. On the personal front I continue to try to find races to run...to at least focus on staying in shape. Just recently ran the Annapolis Half Marathon in December and now training for the Cherry Blossom 10-miler here in Washington, DC. Most importantly, I have been focusing my weekends on turning my home office into a nursery...as my wife Beth and I are expecting this spring. Talk about life changing. With all of this on the horizon including The Beryl Institute's conference the week following Taos' 20th celebration, I will miss you in Taos in April, but send well wishes and know we are working hard to ensure The Taos Institute has many more anniversaries to come.

**David Cooperrider**, Honorary - A highlight for me this year was keynoting the Fourth World Conference on Appreciative Inquiry, in Ghent Belgium. An article "The Concentration Effect of Strengths: How the AI Summit Brings Out the Best in Human Enterprise" was published in Organizational Dynamics. I worked with Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick bringing his Appreciative Inquiry Summit large group skills to the state's energy savings revolution.



Massachusetts leads the nation in its sustainable energy transition. A UN Leadership report calls Appreciative Inquiry "the best large group method in the world today."

### **Diana Whitney**, Emerita - Ah, 2012. A

highlight of my year was the World Appreciative Inquiry Conference in Ghent, Belgium. It was a magnificently planned and very lively event. I enjoyed meeting and greeting AI friends from around the world. Many Corporation for Positive Change colleagues attended and we shared great dinners and provocative dialogues. I was delighted to be on the plenary stage with Taos colleagues, Ken Gergen and David Cooperrider. The National Hospice and Palliative Care Association invited me to offer ideas about Appreciative Leadership as the closing keynote speech at their Annual Conference. And I got to attend their formal gala. What fun. I also did a pre-conference workshop on Appreciative Inquiry and Strategic Planning with Gwynn Sullivan. That led NHPCA to use AI for its strategic planning. It is an honor to contribute to such a meaningful and significant organization. I had great fun consulting with UNC's Ackland Art Museum, facilitating their strategic planning process. Prof. Barbara Fredrickson's positive psychology class did appreciative interviews with museum members and their findings were shared with the National Board as works of art. It made for a lively and highly relevant discussion. I can imagine working with more art museums.



**Dawn Dole**, Executive Director of the Taos Institute

I spent the past year managing all the various projects and initiatives of the Taos Institute. Particularly active this year was the publishing efforts with three new books and hosting and preparing for two conferences in 2012, in Mexico and in San Diego, and our 20th anniversary to be held in Taos, NM in April, 2013. This is very exciting as I have been with the institute for the past 19 years. I traveled again to Tilburg University in October to be present at 7 of our PhD students' defenses. I also organized the annual Board retreat that followed in Brussels. I continue to enjoy supporting the outreach to all of our Taos associates around the world and hearing about the wonderful relational work that is happening near and far. On the personal front, it has been a joy to send my first child off to college and to see her blossom and grow. My second child is now driving for the first time and it is wonderful to see him take on that responsibility with maturity.

"...the future well-being of the planet depends significantly on the extent to which we can nourish and protect not individuals, or even groups, but the generative process of relating."

— Kenneth Gergen, Relational Being, 2009

## Remembering Peggy Penn

By Sheila McNamee for the Taos Institute Board

It is with great sadness that we share the news that Peggy Penn, wonderful colleague, friend, and Honorary Associate of the Taos Institute passed away on July 28, 2012. Peggy was a leading voice in the therapy world, writing and presenting widely on dialogue, innovative questioning, and re-storying through writing. She served for several years as Director of the project on the use of writing in chronic illness and trauma at the Ackerman Institute for the Family where she also served for many years as director of training. She is co-author of *Milan System Family Therapy: Conversations in Theory and Practice* (with Lynn Hoffman, Gianfranco Cecchin and Luigi Boscolo) and author of *Joined Imaginations: Writing and Language in Therapy* (Taos Institute Publications). In addition to Peggy's major contributions to the field of mental health, she was also a prolific poet. Her poetry is published in numerous journals and in her book, *So Close*. Her contributions to the Taos Institute and to the field of constructionist practice in general have inspired many and will continue to blossom for generations.



Peggy spoke at the Taos conference in Cancun, Mexico in 2010.

Margarita Tarragona translated Peggy's talk



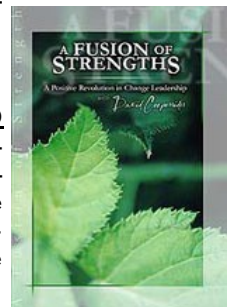
Peggy Penn with Ken Gergen in Cancun



The Taos Institute has been given the rights to sell this DVD and has reduced the price from \$350 to \$100. If you have always wanted to own this DVD, now is your opportunity to buy it at the lowest rate ever.

### A DVD— **Fusion of Strengths: A Positive Revolution in Change Leadership**

(2006) The next generation of management thinking....Join Dr. David Cooperrider, Professor, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University, as he passionately explores the next generation of management thinking. Dr. Cooperrider's ideas are on the leading edge of the field and are bringing about a positive revolution in change. Three powerful concepts in the film are: The Power of Positive Image; The Power of Words; and The Power of Positive Emotions. This video was produced by the Film Investment Group (FIG) and FIG has given the Taos Institute the rights to this film





# Taos Institute -Tilburg University Ph.D. Program in Social Sciences

## 11 students graduate in 2012

**Congratulations go out to all our 2012 graduates!**

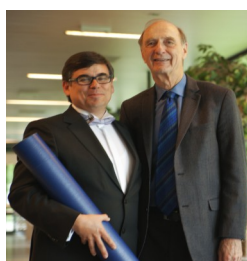
We especially recognize the 50th student to graduate from this program: Bonnie Milne, Ph.D.



**Roberto Aristequi**



**Teresa Quintana**



**Jorge Sanhueza**



**Gita Baack**



**Sherry Harsh Porter**



**Kristin Bodiford**



**Nick Dayton**



**Margot Brink**



**Kon Madut**



**Bonnie Milne**



**Stephen Shimshock**



### **Completed**

### **Dissertations**

[www.taosinstitute.net/completed-dissertations](http://www.taosinstitute.net/completed-dissertations)

### **Noteworthy**

### **Dissertations**

The Taos Institute is collecting dissertations from around the world which are related to social construction research, theory and practice. Visit

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/noteworthy-dissertations>

# Attractor/Taos Summer Institute

July 1st-3rd, 2013 in Berlin, Germany

The Summer Institute is a perpetual source of inspiration, perspective, network and good old fashioned wisdom. But most of all, it gives you the ability and energy to make the social communities of your organization even stronger. We invite you to join us. For details: [www.attractor.dk/english/summer-institute](http://www.attractor.dk/english/summer-institute)

## New Associates in 2012

We are pleased to introduce the following colleagues as Associates of the Taos Institute. They were invited to participate in this capacity for their outstanding work in their field related to social construction and its applications to academics, professional practice, organizational and community development. The Honorary Associates are colleagues whose contributions have been unusually stimulating and inspiring and exceptional contributions to the dialogues, practices and ideals of the Taos Institute. We invite you to get to know them.

[www.taosinstitute.net/institute-associates](http://www.taosinstitute.net/institute-associates)

### Honorary Associates

**Mark Freeman** - Professor of Psychology and Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Society, College of the Holy Cross,  
[mfreeman@holycross.edu](mailto:mfreeman@holycross.edu)

**Ellen Barry** - Insight Prison Project, CA, USA,  
[ellen@barry.org](mailto:ellen@barry.org)

### Taos Institute Associates

**Jeff Abrams** - Attorney-Mediator, TX, USA,  
[Mediator7@aol.com](mailto:Mediator7@aol.com)

**Roberto Aristegui** - Chile,  
[roberto.aristegui@uai.cl](mailto:roberto.aristegui@uai.cl)

**Lynda M. Ashbourne** - Couple & Family Therapy Centre, University of Guelph, Canada,  
[lashbour@uoguelph.ca](mailto:lashbour@uoguelph.ca)

**Gita Baack** - OTI Collaborative Consulting and Coaching, Canada, [gbaack@rogers.com](mailto:gbaack@rogers.com)

**Tahereh Barati** - Narrative Family Therapist, Canada, [Therapy@taherehbarati.com](mailto:Therapy@taherehbarati.com)

**Dorti Been** - Platform Systeemtherapie, Netherlands, [d.been@home.nl](mailto:d.been@home.nl)

**Duane Bidwell** - Claremont School of Theology, CA, USA, [dbidwell@cst.edu](mailto:dbidwell@cst.edu)

**Peter Bishop** - Futures Studies, University of Houston TX, USA, [pbishop@uh.edu](mailto:pbishop@uh.edu)

**Kristin Bodiford** - Community Strengths, IL, USA,  
[bodiford@communitystrengths.org](mailto:bodiford@communitystrengths.org)

**Glenn Boyd** - Private practice, TX, USA,  
[glennearlboyd@yahoo.com](mailto:glennearlboyd@yahoo.com)

**Margot Brink** - South Africa,  
[margot.brinkl@gmail.com](mailto:margot.brinkl@gmail.com)

**Kristin Chorba** - Kent University, OH, USA,  
[kchorba1@kent.edu](mailto:kchorba1@kent.edu)

**Nick A. Dayton** - IL, USA,  
[nickdayton@comcast.net](mailto:nickdayton@comcast.net)

**Lothar Duda** - Psychologischer Psychotherapeut, Germany, [lothar.duda@me.com](mailto:lothar.duda@me.com)

**Jeff Faris** - The Family Institute, University of Glamorgan, UK, [faris.jeffrey@gmail.com](mailto:faris.jeffrey@gmail.com)

**Steve Gaddis** - The Narrative Therapy Initiative, MA, USA, [srgaddis@mac.com](mailto:srgaddis@mac.com)

**Adela Garcia** - CES. Centro de Estudios Sistémicos, Argentina, [adelaggacia@fundaces.com](mailto:adelaggacia@fundaces.com)

**Miguel Goncalves** - University of Minho, Portugal, [mgoncalves@psi.uminho.pt](mailto:mgoncalves@psi.uminho.pt)

**Billy Hardy** - The Family Institute, University of Glamorgan, UK, [willhardy@bigfoot.com](mailto:willhardy@bigfoot.com)

**Sandy Harper-Jaques** - Canada,  
[sharperjaques@gmail.com](mailto:sharperjaques@gmail.com)

**Sherry Harsch-Porter** - The Porter Bay Group, MO, USA, , [porterbay@swbell.net](mailto:porterbay@swbell.net)

**Lorne Jaques** - Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary, Canada, [ljaques@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ljaques@ucalgary.ca)

**Ercy Jose** - Private Practice, Centro de Pesquisas Oncológicas, Brazil, [ercysoar@gmail.com](mailto:ercysoar@gmail.com)

**Esko Kilpi** - Esko Kilpi Ltd., Finland,  
[kilpi@kilpi.fi](mailto:kilpi@kilpi.fi)

**Ran Kuttner** - Werner Institute, Creighton University, Israel, [rankutnner@creighton.edu](mailto:rankutnner@creighton.edu)

**John Lannamann** - University of New Hampshire, NH, USA,

**Pietere Leroux** - University of Rochester, School of Medicine, NY, USA,  
[pieter\\_leroux@urmc.rochester.edu](mailto:pieter_leroux@urmc.rochester.edu)

**Alberto Fernandez Liria** - University Hospital Principe de Asturias, Spain, [afiria@gmail.com](mailto:afiria@gmail.com)

**Gerrit Loots** - Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium,  
[Gerrit.Loots@vub.ac.be](mailto:Gerrit.Loots@vub.ac.be)

**Kon Madut** - Employment Services Specialist, Ottawa Municipal Government, Canada,  
[kon.madut@ottawa.ca](mailto:kon.madut@ottawa.ca)

**Bonnie Milne** - United Arab Emirates,



bonmilne@gmail.com  
**Mary Morris** - The Family Institute, University of Glamorgan, mmorris@glam.ac.uk  
**Dina Mousteri** - Cyprus Society of Family Therapy, Cyprus, dmousteri@cytanet.com.cy  
**María Muñoz** - Grandes López de Lamadrid, Spain, munozgrandes@yahoo.es  
**Janet Newbury** - University of Victoria Canada, janet.newbury@gmail.com  
**Katerina Novotn** - Masaryk University, Czech Republic, info@psychoterapeut.org  
**Chaim Noy** - School of Communication, Sapir College, Israel, chaimn@mail.sapir.ac.il  
**Nigel Parton** - Applied Childhood Studies, UK, n.parton@hud.ac.uk  
**John Pihlaja** - Helsinki Psychotherapy Institute, Finland, john.pihlaja@hpi.fi  
**Louise Phillip** - Communication, Denmark, lousep@ruc.dk  
**Teresa Quintana** - Universidad Adolfo Ibaez, Chile, teresa.quintana@uai.cl  
**Celia Quintas** - Private Practice, FL, USA, mcelia@nova.edu  
**Cathie Scanlon** - Private Practice, OH, USA, cscanlon@catherinescanlonphd.com  
**Josep Segui** - Open University of Catalonia, Spain, jseguid@gmail.com

**Jasmina Sermijn** - Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, jsermijn@vub.ac.be  
**Gail Simon** - University of Bedfordshire, UK, gail.simon@beds.ac.uk  
**Stephen Shimshock** - Practice Technology Advisor, WA, USA, sshimshock@casey.org  
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**Mette Vinther Larsen** - Aalborg University, Business and Management, Denmark, mvl@business.aau.dk  
**Kieran Vivian-Byrne** - The Family Institute, University of Glamorgan, UK, kvivianb@glam.ac.uk

## Taos Institute Web-page Featuring the Associates

Taos Institute Associates are colleagues who have supported the work of the Taos Institute and continue to promote and work with social constructionist thought, practice and theory in their own work. We hope you will take some time to visit the Taos Institute website page which features our colleagues who are Taos Associates.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/institute-associates>

## Taos Associates Council 2012 Accomplishments

The 2011-2012 Council included Chris Blantern, Diana Carleton, Marvin Shaub, Dora Fried Schnitman, Ralph Kelly, Madelyn Blair, Pavel Nepustil, Leslie Lahaye Susan Swim, and Rocio Chaveste. Using a collaborative process, the Council has achieved a remarkable set of accomplishments this year, given that they meet virtually less than 2 hours each month.

The accomplishments included the following:

Welcome Partner Program, Forum Calls, and New Associates Online Community.

**The mission** of the Taos Associate Council is to invite new life-giving relationships between Taos Associates in a way that generates new collaborative opportunities.

**Our vision** is to explore and develop ways of bringing together the resources of the Taos Institute Associates with the hope to develop ideas and practices that generate better relations in families, communities and organizations.

**The 2012-13 Taos Associates Council members are:**

Ginny Belden-Charles, Madelyn Blair, Chris Blantern, Rocio Chaveste, Adela Garcia, Ralph Kelly, Lesley Lahaye, Pavel Nepustil, Marvin Shaub, Susan Swim, Eduardo Villar,

## Web of Connections

The **AI Practitioner**, edited by Anne Radford is an excellent source for up-to-date and relevant examples of Appreciative Inquiry. Visit Anne's website at:

<http://www.aipractitioner.com/>

You may find other innovative and interesting links on our web page called **Web of Connections**

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/web-of-connections>

This page includes a list of institutions with which our work at the Taos Institute is deeply resonant.

## NEW Online Workshop

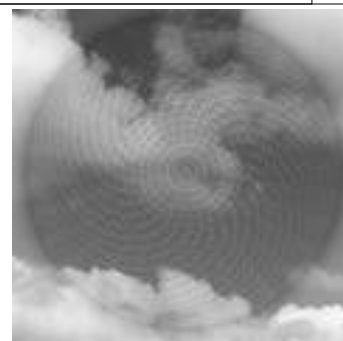
### An Introduction to Social Construction

Join the Taos Institute as we offer an online learning opportunity. We held our pilot course this past fall and the participants gave us many helpful suggestions to make it even better. We will offer this course again beginning in April. If you are interested, please email us at [info@taosinstitute.net](mailto:info@taosinstitute.net) for information.

## Visual Resources for Teaching, Exploring and Enjoying Social Construction

We offer you here a collection of visual resources to explore and enjoy social constructionist thinking. A number of these resources are used by our Associates and colleagues in social constructionist training contexts. Many of the resources are compiled from what is available on the worldwide web and we ask you to appropriately acknowledge the original sources in your use. The resources are organized into cartoons, interactive visuals, mini-movies, photographs/images and presentation slides. We invite you to post your comments in the space provided on each resource page. You can also narrow the search for resources by using the above categories or by selecting the tags on the right margin. We are interested in your resources too. Please submit them for consideration using this form. Enjoy!

Visit: <http://www.taosinstitute.net/visual-resources>



## Conferences through the Years: Take a look at all the conferences we've held over the past 19 years.

The first Taos Institute conference was in April 1993 with over 130 participants from around the world.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/previous-conferences1>

It is exciting to see the growth and YOU have been an important part of making this happen.



## Workshops for 2013

### The Taos Institute Workshops

These workshops are sponsored by The Taos Institute. Questions regarding content, registration, and fees for a particular workshop may be directed to the presenter of the workshop.

For general questions email the Taos Institute —  
[info@taosinstitute.net](mailto:info@taosinstitute.net).

**For information and details visit:**

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/upcoming-workshops>

**Co-creating Research & Practice**, with Celiane Camargo-Borges, Jenny Helin, Ottar Ness | Feb. 23-24, Tilburg, NL

**Social Construction, Relational Theory and Change Practices**, with Ken and Mary Gergen | April 9-11, Taos, NM

**Research and Social Change: A Relational Constructionist Approach**, with Dian Marie Hosking and Sheila McNamee | May 15-17, Utrecht, Netherlands

**Social Constructionist Inquiry and Research Practices**, with Sheila McNamee, Dan Wulff, and Sally St. George | June 3-6, 2013, Calgary, Canada

**INTERNATIONAL SUMMER INSTITUTE 2013**, with Harlene Anderson | June 16-21, Playa Del Carmen, Mexico

**Social Construction, Relational Theory and Transformative Practices**, with Sheila McNamee and Harlene Anderson | Oct. 24-26, New Hampshire

### e-learning: Relational and Performative Practices for Transformational Change

**Collaboration and Dialogue:** We invite you to join the **online course** where the participants jointly inquire and explore the notions of social construction thinking. We currently have participants from 10 different countries having rich trans-disciplinary conversations to further our understandings of how to create communities of collaborative and performative practices. Using the *learning community model*, we meet for five *webinars*, each for 1.5 hours, along with asynchronous *online conversations* via forum postings. The program offered over five months helps participants to read, reflect and implement their understanding to real life situations creating an embodied learning context.

As Kristen, one of the participants said "I am enjoying learning different ways of collaborative performance of meaning making. I find this useful and I can bring these ideas into my work in the future. Adding to my repertoire."

Visit [salihabava.com/learning](http://salihabava.com/learning) or email [drbava@gmail.com](mailto:drbava@gmail.com) for more information and dates.

## Friends of the Taos Institute Workshops—2013

The Taos Institute offers this workshop listing opportunity as a service to our Associates and friends to share their great work. The Taos Institute is not responsible for the content or management of these workshops. Questions regarding registration and content should be directed to the workshop presenters. **For locations & details visit:**

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/friends-of-taos-institute-workshops>

**Cultivating Strengths with Appreciative Inquiry**, with Ralph Weickel, Tenny Poole | Jan. 28-29

**Counselor to Coach Workshop**, with Harlene Anderson, Diana Carleton | February 22

**Appreciative Coaching: The Art of Transformation**, Diana Whitney, Claire Fialkov, David Haddad, Ralph Weickel | March 4-5

**Relational Responsibility in Practice: Ethical Considerations for Today's Therapist**, with Sheila McNamee, Julie Tilsen | March 22

**De las prácticas relacionales a la política: el trabajo con diferentes Comunidades, In Spanish, with Rocio Chaveste** | April 9

**The Collaborative Practice of Buddhist Psychotherapy with Life Demonstrations**, with Maurits Kwee | April 10

**Arguments for the Humanistic and Sustainable Work: A Conference** | April 25-27

**Appreciative Leadership Development Program©**, with Amanda Trosten Bloom, Barbara Lewis | April 30 - May 3

**Appreciative Leadership Development Program©** Trainer Certification, with Amanda Trosten Bloom | May 6-7

**Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry**, with Ralph Weickel, Tenny Poole | May 27-31

**Cultivating Strengths with Appreciative Inquiry**, with Claire Fialkov, David Haddad | June 7-8

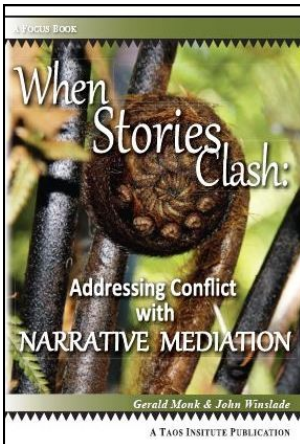
**Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry**, with Ralph Weickel, Tenny Poole | Aug. 5-9

**Appreciative Leadership Development Program©**, with Diana Whitney | Sept. 24-27

**Appreciative Leadership Development Program©** Trainer Certification, with Diana Whitney | Sept. 30-Oct. 1

**Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry**, with Amanda Trosten-Bloom, Barbara Lewis | Oct. 14-18

**Collaborative Supervision Workshops 2013** with Harlene Anderson, Texas (April & May), Denmark (March), Mexico (June & September)

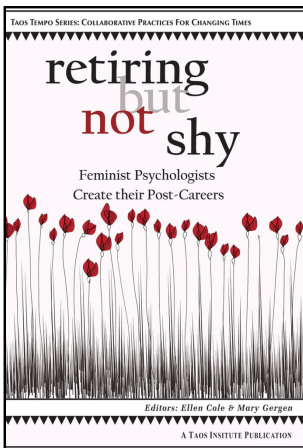


### **When Stories Clash: Addressing Conflict with Narrative Mediation**

By Gerald Monk and John Winslade

This book is intended to give practitioners an accessible window into the skills of narrative practice. In the stories that people tell about conflict, the relationship narrative is commonly shaped to fit the conflict story. But there are always other relationship stories that can be told. This book shows how to find and grow a counter story to the conflict story and to help people make choices about which story they want to perform. Inviting people to shift from a fraught relationship story to one that is more just, peaceful or cooperative is at the heart of narrative mediation. As you might expect, this is a book of engaging stories as well as robust concepts. It shows, it instructs, and it guides. Designed to be able to be read in one sitting, it is, in the end, a book that begs to be used.

*“This work brilliantly and briefly illuminates the essentials of one of the most significant movements in mediation of the era. Inspiring reading not only for those engaged in mediation, but for all concerned with the challenges of human conflict. Bravo!”* ~ Kenneth Gergen, Ph.D.

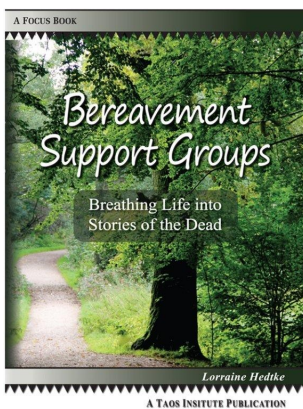


### **Retiring But Not Shy: Feminist Psychologists Create their Post-Careers**

Edited by Ellen Cole and Mary Gergen

*This book* is a must read for everyone who has ever contemplated retirement. It is composed of the stories of 23 women who address this time of life we call “retirement.” Each woman has been highly successful in her career as a psychologist, and each has taken seriously her commitment to feminism. Yet the authors are diverse in other ways, with differences in age, career specialties, ethnicity, ableness, sexual orientation, and partner status. The chapters are engaging, personal, lively, and, above all, a helpful guide to any professional woman who is considering what the future holds for her in her “post-career.” Issues of health, emotional well-being, housing issues, balancing career and post-career tensions, partner negotiations, financial decisions, endings and beginnings, are all touched upon. These accounts of resilience and creativity are written from the heart but

also provide practical resources for readers.



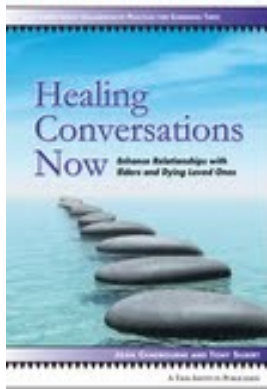
### **Bereavement Support Groups: Breathing Life Into Stories of the Dead**

By Lorraine Hedtke

This book fills the gap between the challenges to conventional grief psychology and the practice of bereavement counseling. The deceased person has often been left behind in counseling conversations, requiring the bereaved to distance themselves from honoring memories that could soothe their heartache. Ironically, the stories about the dead person have not featured prominently in the grief experience.

This book offers a structured guide for facilitating bereavement support groups, but is intended as more than a simple “how to” book. It will also inspire readers with invigorating practice ideas. This new way of thinking includes the stories and love that remain after death. Here is a model for folding the deceased person's values, legacies, meanings, and connections into the lives of the living.

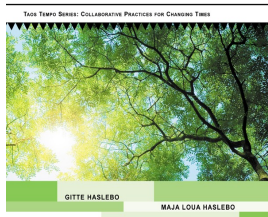
# Great Books for Your Personal Library at [www.taospub.net](http://www.taospub.net)



## **Healing Conversations Now: Enhance Relationships with Elders and Dying Loved Ones**, by Joan Chadbourne, Tony Silbert

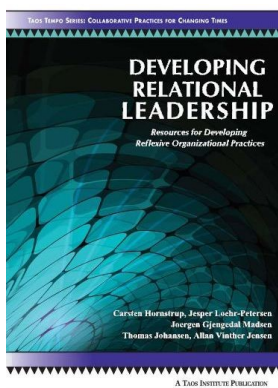
In this book you'll find stories to inspire you to initiate Healing Conversations with your elders and dying loved ones. Questions and conversation starters are also provided, to help you know what to say and do. The handbook section will guide you, step-by-step, as you engage in these new conversations. They will open your heart, give you a better understanding of loved ones, ensure that you have the conversations you need and want to have. You will find peace and have no regrets and so will your loved ones.

**Visit:** [www.HealingConversationsNow.com](http://www.HealingConversationsNow.com) and <http://changingaging.org/> and [www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Fct0\\_dk0dw&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Fct0_dk0dw&feature=player_embedded) the author, Tony Silbert, is interviewed by Dr. Bill Thomas about the new book.



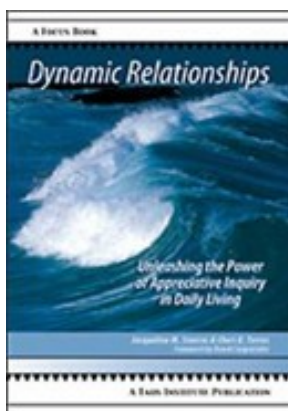
## **Practicing Relational Ethics in Organizations**, by Gitte Haslebo, Maja Loua Haslebo

This is a wonderful book that moves forward the discussion about ethics in organizations within a social constructionist perspective. In unforeseeable ways, events in organizations can lead to loss of face, violations of personal dignity, damaged relationships and poor results. Managers, employees and consultants search for ideas that might help them deal with complicated situations in morally respectful ways. By telling nine dramatic real life stories the authors illustrate how managers, employees and consultants might find inspiration in key social constructionist concepts and relational ethics. They introduce and unfold five key moral obligations in relational ethics: social responsibility, dialogic obligations, shared responsibility for positioning, inquiry of value to the work community and the obligation to interact as morally responsible agents.



## **Developing Relational Leadership: Resources for Developing Reflexive Organizational Practices**, by Carsten Hornstrup, Jesper Loeher-Petersen, Joergen Gjengedal Madsen, Thomas Johansen, Allan Vinther Jensen

This book is for those who are interested in systems theory, cybernetics, constructionism, and communication theory, as well as those interested in leadership, coaching, and organization development. The authors, true to their reliance on positioning ourselves in a multitude of roles, invite us to converse with an ecology of ideas, and open space for a profound reflective practice. A joyful read that will change how systems practitioners think and systems theoreticians act.



## **Dynamic Relationships: Unleashing the Power of Appreciative Inquiry in Daily Living**, by Jacqueline M. Stavros & Cheri B. Torre

How is it that some people seem to have great relationships and success in their lives while others do not? Why are some organizations successful at sustaining positive change while others make a great start but let it fade away? It rests on the dynamics of their relationships. Creating positive dynamics and sustained success requires continuous awareness and informed appreciative action. 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.



# International Certificate Program in Collaborative Practices

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The International Certificate Program offers practitioners around the world an opportunity to expand their knowledge and competency in collaborative practices based in postmodern philosophy and social construction and dialogue theories, and to be part of an exciting growing international community. The Program welcomes practitioners across disciplines and contexts- therapy, organization development, education, coaching, research and other social science disciplines--an intensive, in-depth and experiential study of collaborative practices. This Certificate will be offered simultaneously in the following countries: Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Paraguay, Spain, Argentina and USA.

For information and curriculum be sure to visit:  
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## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

*relationships and conversations that make a difference*

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The Journal brings together authors and readers who are part of an ever-growing international community of practitioners including scholars, educators, researchers, and consultants interested in postmodern collaborative practices. This community is part of the broader dialogical movement in the social sciences composed of those who share an interest in: "How can our theories and practices have relevance for people's everyday lives in our fast changing world, what is this relevance, and who determines it?"

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## Innovation & Appreciative Inquiry: Positive Images, Positive Action

Special Video Issue of the *AI Practitioner* documenting 13 stories that show the creative ways in which people use Appreciative Inquiry in their work and their lives to tell their stories.

Available on a wristband thumb drive or stick as some call it.

[www.taosinstitute.net/special-video-issue-of-the-ai-practitioner](http://www.taosinstitute.net/special-video-issue-of-the-ai-practitioner)

## E-Journal in Danish

## Relational Practices: Leadership & Organization Development

### RELATIONEL PRAKSIS



A free e-journal "Relational Practice" which is about leadership and organizational development, drawing on inspiration from the social constructionist, systemic, appreciative and narrative thinking, well known in many Danish organizations.

[http://forlagetmindspace.dk/etidsskrift/1\\_2010/1\\_2010.html](http://forlagetmindspace.dk/etidsskrift/1_2010/1_2010.html)



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Chagrin Falls,  
Ohio  
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## **Positive Aging Newsletter — A newsletter for all ages**

For the past eleven years Ken and Mary Gergen have been editing the *Positive Aging Newsletter*, sponsored by the Taos Institute. The electronic newsletter, which is free to subscribers, is dedicated to one goal, and that is to publish all the research results and news, as well as web, visual and literary resources, that suggest that the last third of life, the “third age” as some call it, is a time of life that is highly generative and rich in wisdom and personal satisfaction. The aim of the newsletter is to actively fight the stereotypes of old age that are so prevalent in our society. The hope is to undermine the notion that the life-span is an archway, with those who are growing older becoming “over the hill.” Instead, the attempt is to emphasize a way of understanding the later years as an upward trajectory.

Thanks to volunteers, the newsletter is also available in French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish and Chinese.

The Gergens also give workshops and seminars on positive aging. If you would like to receive the newsletter in any of its languages, visit: [www.positiveaging.net](http://www.positiveaging.net) to sign up and to read the current and archived newsletters.

