

Weatherhead School of Management  
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**Appreciative Inquiry:**  
*A Positive Revolution in Change*

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# Five Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

- **Constructionist Principle:** The way we know is fateful.
- **Principle of Simultaneity:** Change begins at the moment you ask the question.
- **Poetic Principle:** Organizations are an open book.
- **Anticipatory Principle:** Deep change= change in active images of the future.
- **Positive Principle:** The more positive the question, the greater and longer-lasting the change.

# Appreciative Leadership

- Peter Drucker's definition of leadership...
- Power and craft of the positive question
- Framing and re-framing
- Leadership from the future "there to here"
- Concept of internal dialogue: healthy= 2:1
- Storytelling and hope
- Wholeness...internal and external voices
- Praise...circulating all the good you can

# Positive Image-> Positive Action

- Powerful Placebo
- Pygmalion
- Positive Affect
- Imbalanced “Inner Dialogue”
- Rise and Fall of Cultures
- Affirmative Capability

# A Theory of Affirmative Organizing

- Organizations are made and imagined
- No iron laws
- Metaphor: heliotropic hypothesis
- Healthy organizations = 2:1  
positively imbalanced “inner dialogue”
- Educative effect of positive imagery
- Positive image (discourse) as an obstacle
- Organizations do not need to be fixed
- Leadership = affirmation

# Problem Solving

- Identify Problem
- Conduct Root Cause Analysis
- Brainstorm Solutions & Analyze
- Develop Action Plans

*Metaphor: Organizations are problems to be solved*

# Appreciative Inquiry

- Appreciate "What is" (What gives life?)
- Imagine "What Might Be"
- Determine "What Should Be"
- Create "What Will Be"

*Metaphor: Organizations are a solution/mystery to be embraced.*

## Deficit Based Change : *Unintended Consequences*

- ◆ **Much lamented fragmented responses**
- ◆ **Slow: Puts attention on yesterday's causes**
- ◆ **No *new* positive images of future**
- ◆ **Visionless voice... fatigue**
- ◆ **Weakened fabric of relationships & defensiveness...negative culture**
- ◆ **out of sync with the embedded economy of speed, partnerships, alliances, & e-commerce**

# Deficit Language at GTE



# What would *you* call it?

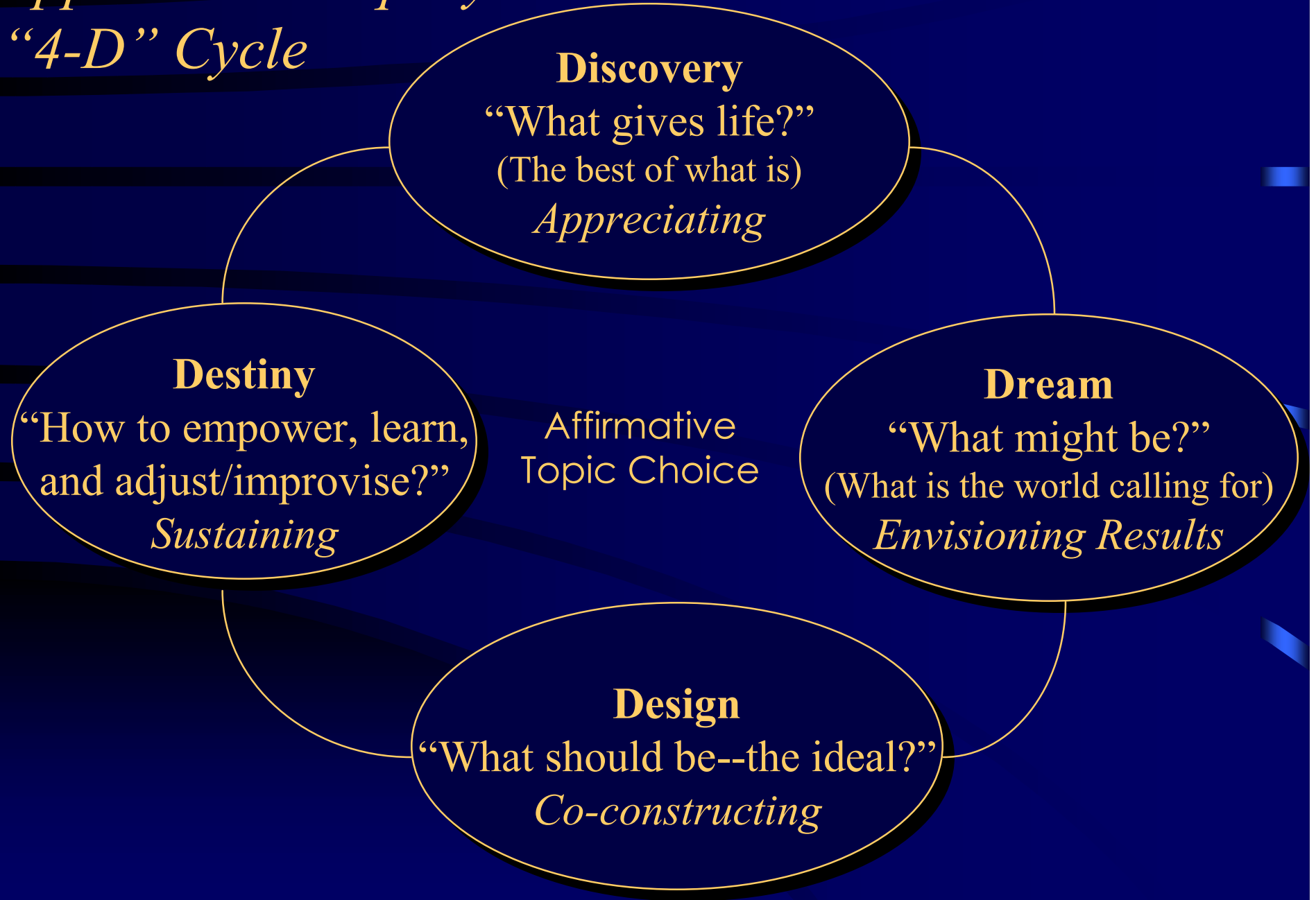
(all these things taken together)

- Achievements
- Strategic opportunities
- Product strengths
- Technical assets
- Innovations
- Elevated thoughts
- Best business practices
- Positive emotions
- Financial assets
- Organization wisdom
- Core competencies
- Visions of possibility
- Vital traditions, values
- Positive macrotrends
- Social capital
- Embedded knowledge
- Business ecosystem +s  
eg. suppliers, partners,  
competitors, customer

# The Positive Core

# *Appreciative Inquiry*

## *“4-D” Cycle*



# The Art of the Question

- What's the biggest problem here?
- Why did I have to be born in such a troubled family?
- Why do you blow it so often?
- Why do we still have those problems?
- What possibilities exist that we have not thought about yet?
- What's the smallest change that could make the biggest impact?
- What solutions would have us both win?
- What makes my questions inspiring, energizing, and mobilizing?

# What Makes AI Questions Important?

- Language: questions & statements...
- Focus attention
- Heighten energy...drive to complete, to answer
- Every creative act
- Rapport and relationship (people are honored)
- Fulcrum change: connect to strength, imagination
- Break automatic thinking, essence of learning
- Alter internal dialogue & storytelling
- *Specific* positive future (the fairway)

# Applications Appreciative Inquiry

- Strategic change... "Org Summit"
- Core business redesign
- Quality...surveys...culture change
- Customer partnerships
- Labor-management relations
- Transformation of measurements
- Knowledge exchange: the "PCN"
- Business ecosystem analysis...

# 4 Common Approaches to Change

- Top Down Strategies
- Bottom Up Strategies
- Representative Cross-Section Strategies
- Pilot Strategies

# Typical Results

- Less Informed and Ultimately Less Effective Change Efforts
- A Few Try to Convince Many That Change is Needed
- Partial Responsibility Mindset
- Change Occurs Sequentially
- Change is Perceived as a Disruption of “Real Work”

## Typical Results (cont)

- Pace of Change is Too Slow
- Substantial Change in Part or Modest Change in an Entire Organization
- Breakdown at Implementation

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