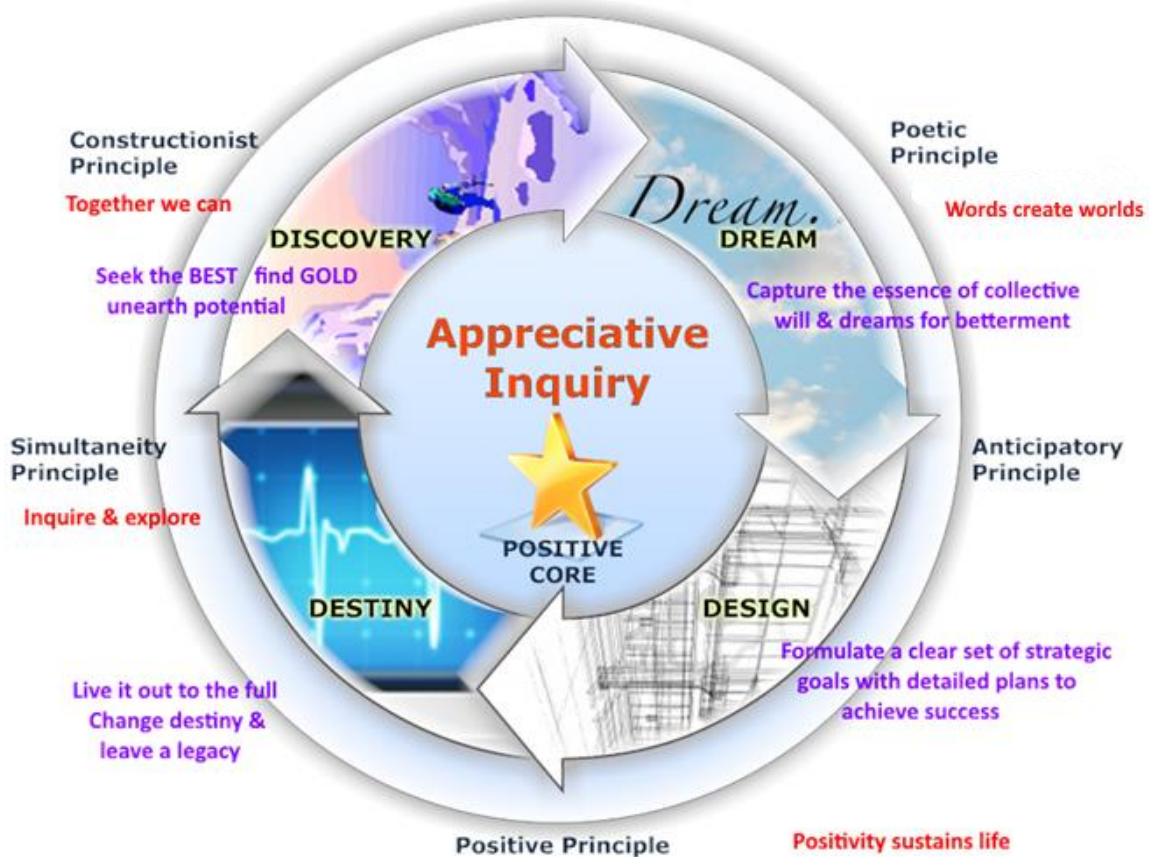


## Using Appreciative Inquiry for teambuilding

**Appreciative Inquiry** (AI) was pioneered in the 1980s by **David Cooperrider** and **Suresh Srivastva**, at Case Western Reserve University. Practitioners use an appreciative approach to bring about collaborative and strengths-based change in thousands of organizations and communities in more than 100 countries. **Appreciative Inquiry** is a way of being and seeing. It is both a **worldview** and a **process for facilitating positive change in human systems**, e.g., organizations, groups, and communities. Its assumption is simple: Every human system has something that works right—things that give it life when it is vital, effective, and successful. **AI** begins by **identifying this positive core** and connecting to it in ways that heighten energy, sharpen vision, and inspire **action for change**. As **AI** consultant Bernard J. Mohr says, “**Problems get replaced with innovation** as conversations increasingly shift toward uncovering the organization’s (or group’s, or community’s) **positive core.**”



**Appreciative Inquiry** begins by grounding ourselves and our organizations in the **Core Principles of AI**. The five original principles are: **Constructionist, Simultaneity, Anticipatory, Poetic, and Positive**. They are explained thus -

**The Constructionist Principle:** Words Create Worlds

Reality, as we know it, is a subjective vs. objective state and is socially created through language and conversations.

**The Simultaneity Principle:** Inquiry Creates Change

Inquiry is an intervention. The moment we ask questions, we begin to create change. “Questions we ask are fateful.”

**The Poetic Principle:** We Can Choose What We Study

Teams and organizations, like open books, are endless sources of study and learning. What we choose to study makes a difference. It describes – even creates – the world as we know it.

**The Anticipatory Principle: Image Inspires Action**

Human systems move in the direction of their images of the future. The more positive and hopeful the image of the future, the more positive the present-day action.

**The Positive Principle: Positive Questions Lead to Positive Change**

Momentum for [small or] large-scale change requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding. This momentum is best generated through positive questions that amplify the positive core.<sup>1</sup>

**APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY** - is a very valuable exercise designed to harness the positivity in a team. It can be called a team positivity booster – consisting of 4 main stages referred to as the 4 D cycle: **Discover – Dream – Design & Deliver**.

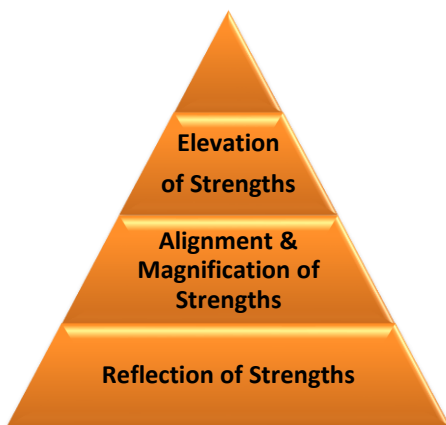
This is a meaningful process that requires a high level of team interaction that involves:

- **DISCOVERY** - Assessing our **positive baseline** situation by **discovering** the **positive core** of the team and looking at what makes you unique. Discovering the gold – seeking the **best practices** that are buried in conflict or overlooked.
- **DREAMING** - It is followed by **daring to dream of & design** a better future built on the strengths of what was discovered in the **positive core**. Taking your organisation to new heights ... a dream for hope & a hope for the future.
- **DESIGNING** - Formulating a plan in order to attain the dream. Seeking positive growth with clearly defined goals and an action plan to make the dream a reality. Looking at an informed **T.I.A – Turn it Around** strategy
- **DELIVERING** - It culminates in **Deliverables** that are negotiated and kept alive by a selection of **champions of the cause** that are held **accountable**. Leaders will be able to use the outcomes they design to initiate and **sustain change initiatives** and record vital successes.

**WORLD APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY CONFERENCE: 6-10 July 2015, Johannesburg, South Africa – Tony Clarke** attended the **WAIC** which was held in Africa for the first time in 2015. Delegates from across the world converged in Johannesburg to answer the burning question: *“How can we collaborate to elevate, magnify & refract our best strengths to create a flourishing & prosperous world for all?”*

**Dynamic Vision** embraces the use of **AI** in every facet of their thinking – **thriving on ideas & positive change!**

**Appreciative Inquiry** essentially assumes that every system has something that works right and functions correctly, and that the best way to succeed and excel at anything is to know and **amplify strengths**. By identifying and improving upon the things that work in a system or organisation, we can sharpen focus, stimulate innovative thinking and introduce simple, acceptable ideas to initiate change, improve productivity & increase energy.



- “Problems” become challenges to find solutions as conversations focus more time & energy on the solutions than on looking at problems and allocating blame.
- We ask questions with a **positive bent**. What is right about this?
- **How do we identify the strengths** in our people and our systems, and how can we improve upon those strengths in order to excel?
- How can we **intensify** and **leverage existing strengths** to create intentional transformation?
- How can we break down barriers and connect individuals across all ages, races and generations to magnify our strengths? How can we learn to **SOAR**

**“The growth and application of Appreciative Inquiry... has been nothing short of phenomenal. It is arguably the most powerful process of positive organizational change ever devised.” ~ Ken Gergen**

An organisation which knows and **grows its strengths** is an organisation destined to become a **positive force in the world**. It is a vehicle for **elevating** and **magnifying** the **strengths of the individuals** who make up our organisation and **reflecting those positive energies outward** to the world.

Follow leaders in this field around the world like: **David Cooperrider** at <http://www.davidcooperrider.com/>

**Robyn Stratton-Berkessel** at <http://positivitystrategist.com/> and follow stories of positivity making great changes in society at <https://appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu/story-of-impact/choppin-youth-led-dialogues-positive-change/>

**Tony Clarke** at [www.dynamicvision.co.za](http://www.dynamicvision.co.za) and <http://www.dynamicvision.co.za/our-services/appreciative-inquiry>