Appreciative Inquiry (AI)*

AI is an approach to self and organisational development which is rooted in positive psychology. It was developed by David Cooperrider & Suresh Srivasta in the 1980s in the Cleveland Clinic and has been used to effect positive personal and organisational change ever since. Its purpose is to help the user improve and grow through the study of what works. AI proposes that to create positive change we need to ask questions about what we want more of or what we want to grow in value. It is not about ignoring the negatives but rather about using what is working to focus improvements.

It involves exactly what its name would suggest – asking positively framed questions (inquiring) about a particular topic, in order to increase the value of that topic (appreciate). It could be applied to any area – for example, if we wished to improve workplace behaviour we could seek out examples of positive behaviours or generate conversations with colleagues about what positive behaviours would be.

This short video is an introduction to how to do an Appreciative Inquiry Interview: How to Do An Appreciative Inquiry Interview - YouTube

This video explains AI in more detail – what it is, how it was developed and how it can be used: Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry and the Cooperrider Center at Champlain College SD - YouTube

You can also find out more about what AI is Appreciating People - What is AI? and AI in action here: https://appreciatingpeople.co.uk/about-us/ai-in-action/

Putting AI into practice

AI is governed by a set of principles and to help put these principles into practice there are several tools which can be used to help to guide conversations. One of the key tenets of AI is that questions are fateful – the process of asking a particular question creates change itself – so it is important to choose your questions carefully.

- The "5 D cycle" – this is a conversation framework to generate practical change ideas and implement them. The "Ds" are Define (the topic to improve) – Discover (what is working – so this can be amplified) – Dream (what could be) – Design (what should be done in practice) – Deliver (how is this going to be done). 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry - The Appreciative Inquiry Commons (champlain.edu)
- Reframing – we have an innate bias to the negatives and it is easy for conversations to become negative and for us to focus on what doesn't work. Reframing is a technique to uplift and change conversations and create a positive focus that can generate ideas and solutions.
- SOAR (Strengths – Opportunities – Aspirations – Results (or Resources)) analysis – this is a positive alternative to a SWOT (Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats) analysis, which can be used by an individual or a group. SOAR, don't SWOT - Appreciating People

More information about AI and the above tools can be found here: AI-summary-information.pdf (appreciatingpeople.co.uk)

*spelling reflecting its US origins

With thanks to Dr Emma Plunkett   https://learningfromexcellence.com

Examples of using AI in practice in healthcare

- Learning from Excellence – AI has been used to "investigate" Learning from Excellence reports. [Learning from excellence in healthcare: a new approach to incident reporting | Archives of Disease in Childhood (bmj.com)](#)
- [Positive Reporting and Appreciative Inquiry in Sepsis (PRAISe) | The Health Foundation](#)
- Entrance and Exit interviews: [Entrance and Exit interviews | Learning from Excellence](#)
- Using AI to turn around a Care Home after an inadequate CQC inspection: [Ash Grange Nursing Home - Elaine Proud - YouTube](#)
- The West Midlands Academic Health Science Network ran a webinar series about Appreciative Inquiry during the COVID pandemic: [WMAHSN](#)

*spelling reflecting its US origins

With thanks to Dr Emma Plunkett   https://learningfromexcellence.com