

An Appreciative Way of Being

Giving dignity, raising self-esteem & competence through appreciative conversations.

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What is so special and precious about this approach?

Systemic Ideas

- Systemic brings forth the **value of a rich attention to culture, variety and complexity that we all live**, and the notion that **everything exists in relationship and dependant in some ways upon one another**
- When we look at a system it includes everything that influences or has/could have an effect on people living in that system.
- Schools have a community around them that influence that school & Vice versa. True also of Businesses, homes, shops etc
- A challenge for schools and communities is to engage each other for mutual benefit

Maturana

- Brought forth this idea of Structural Determinism, meaning that every system is “perfect” or coherent at any point in time. There is a logic/coherence to what its members are doing.
- This is important to respect and question them by asking them how they make sense of what they are doing
- This exploring gives the system validation and affirmation which will allow them to change

Wonder!

LOOKS AT THE WORLD/ALL THAT HAPPENS THRU THE EYES OF WONDER



Social Constructionist ideas

- The creative power of language, a power to create growth, flourishing love and learning
- **We live in language, we construct the world through language.** Language as creating and doing (Dewey) we have moral **responsibility for the world we create** through the stories we tell
- What we ask is **what we get**
- Ask questions that create positive image
- We live in a multi-storied world so many stories can be told
- All are seen as important and influential and needing attention

Social Constructionism

- Language is future orientated
- Language can be poetic and create opportunities, or it can close them down
- Change happens simultaneously, as we caress people with our words
- Words create morality

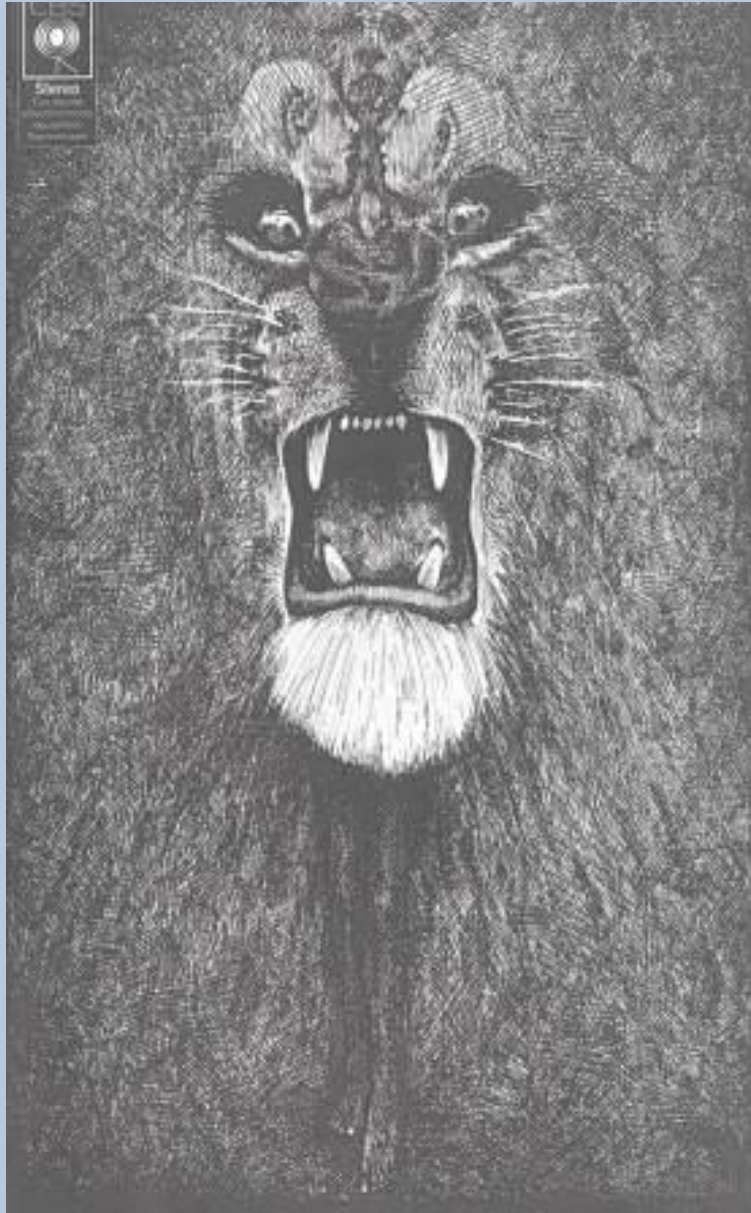
WORDS CREATE WORLDS

- It is an active process. Depends on the stories we tell in what context and to whom
- Words are doers that make the world we live in
- Words move us in our feelings & emotions
- Words move us to tears & laughter
- Language is grooming - it creates our bodyhoods (Maturana)
- Words create our physicality - our brains - our hearts



Social Constructionism

- What questions do we ask to create a world that helps people move on with dignity and respect? Valuing their contribution and stance
- We have a choice as to which of many stories to respond to a person, that will create them and us and our futures in that moment.
- So the language we use is a moral issue. We have to be very careful how we use it
- The present creates the future & the future creates the present



A Lion
(Santana Album Cover)

Questions are Fateful

- What you ask is what you get: people tell stories in the direction of the question
- So very important to ask questions that will give energy, dignity & respect
- Ask about high points or when things have worked well as these are times people show their abilities and give people energy.
- Positive stories give people a choice to change
- We all grow with being valued.
- Criticism, blame and shame invite people to justify their actions, and create explanations to repeat unwanted behaviour

Rational for working the way we do

- Most important element is relationships - vital for survival - brain is relational- mirror neurones, infants
- We create **our** world together in the interactions we have.
- We create each other and potential futures in the moment of interaction, so need to be aware of how we interact
- We all become someone different in every relationship we are in.
- RESULTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPATHY
- Our identities, We-identities - are created by the stories others tell of us (Ricoeur & Dewey)

Relational responsibility

- **Self reflexivity**
 - We are responsible for what we bring to conversation & relational dance
 - ?love ?delight ?anger ?disapproval ?language
- **Relational reflexivity**
 - Open and fully present to oneself, the other and the conversation
- how am I creating him/her and myself by what I say and how I say it? What would you like me to ask?
- **Relational Responsibility**
 - Is being aware of how my interaction affects you?
 - What sort of world /future are we creating?
 - Being aware of what I say and how I say it will create your bodyhood,
 - Is being aware of how my interaction affects you, taking responsibility for what I create.
- **What sort of future possibilities does it offer you?**

Working Appreciatively

Appreciative Inquiry not just a technique but a way of Seeing and Honouring the beauty, richness & coherence within the system, including stories about emotion and morality which need to be honoured to let them move forward

Appreciative Systemic way of being

- Values every person in their own special unique way- so everyone is contributing their own special skills.
- Approach fits our neurology and makes us grow
- Future orientated so we are always looking forward to what can be..... and what is desired.
- Problems presented within a system are often solutions

Appreciative Language

- Tell one of the untold stories and “look in the place is you don’t usually look” – Wittgenstein
- Positive stories allow people to have a choice to change
- We all grow with being valued
- Give people genuine dignity and respect
- Criticism, blame and shame invite people to justify their actions, and create explanations to repeat the unwanted behaviour

Joining people's grammar

- Part of the appreciative framing, is living and taking a not-knowing position, believing in the power of questions, and in being present with others with our whole body, mind, heart, and spirit.
- This is a way of living not a technique. What you talk about is what you live
- e.g. fire in bus station

Enquiry

- Enquiry co creates a curiosity about and in the other, so people become more reflective and curious and interested about themselves
- What you would enquire into is what you will get information about: together you will create stories and will live it out in practice
- Focus on looking for what works/moments of pride

Move out of a judgemental position

Identity - Ricoeur & Dewey

Identity is constantly changing/inflow. A mosaic. Multiple stories depending on context and relationship

Ricoeur “We get to know ourselves through the detour of the other.” Identity is created by **the stories others tell** of us.

Dewey identity is more usefully thought about as a process of **identifying the abilities of the self by another.**

Identity is constant inflow as new abilities are recognised and used

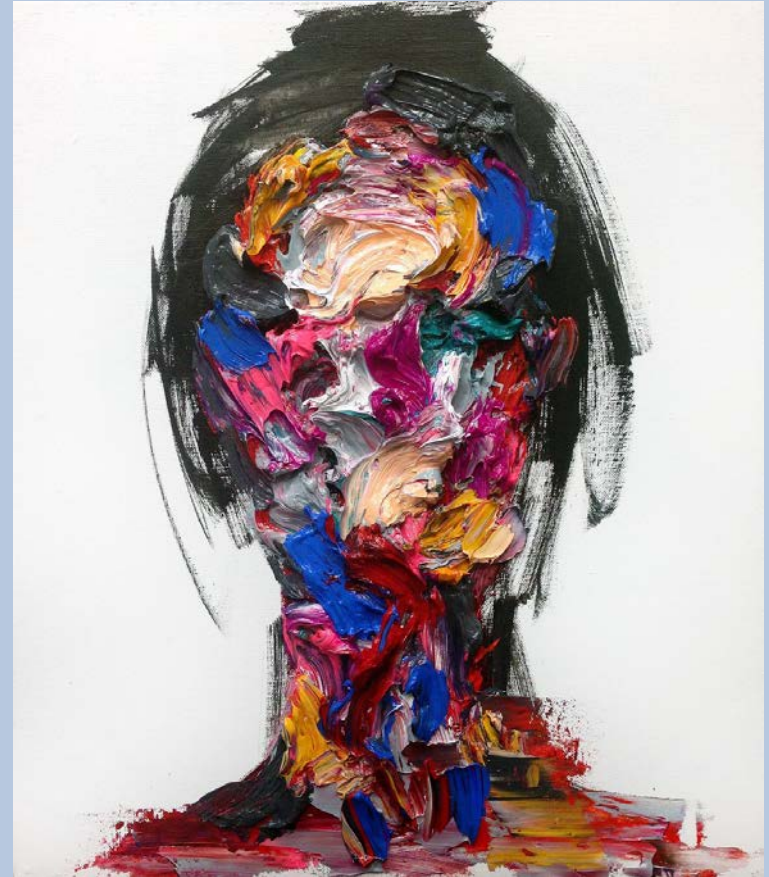
Stern 3 sec - when fits as child can feel fit - its me!



Identity

We exist in the worlds of others:

- What stories would you like told?
- What would you have to do to get those stories told?
- What actions live the identity?
- Dewey identity is more usefully thought about as a process of identifying the abilities of the self.
- Identity is constant inflow as new abilities are recognized and used



Ability Spotting

- Be curious about high points/movements of pride or joy as many abilities are demonstrated in fulfilling these actions – spot abilities as they emerge
- By asking questions and getting into the details of the others story
- The abilities emerge through the stories told. They fit as the evidence is before you
- It happens through detailed exploration, sharing, and co creativity of stories lived

Appreciative interview

- IN PAIRS
 - Tell me a time when you have done something you are proud of. Or others would be proud of you for having done
 - Interview about the story in detail, ask lots of questions. Try and create a visual image of the episode
 - SPOT ABILITIES AND SKILLS
 - Amplify ask about other episodes when skills have been used

Ability Spotting - what do we mean ?

- When talking about high points/moments of pride or joy, SPOT abilities whilst fulfilling these actions – spot abilities as they emerge
- By getting into the details of the other's story, the abilities emerge through the stories told. These emerge through detailed exploration, sharing, and co creativity of stories lived. They are accepted, as the evidence is before you in the story told.
- Connect this with positive emotion - how does it make you feel when I see you have an ability to

Appreciative interview – In Pairs

- Find someone you do not know very well
- Tell me a time when you have done something you are proud of, (or others would be proud of you for having done)
- Interview the story in detail, ask lots of questions. Try and create a visual image of the episode
- SPOT ABILITIES AND SKILLS put on a “post it” Daniel Stern says only have 3secs to give post it!
- Amplify contexts - ask about other times skills have been used
- Discuss values that the abilities fulfil

Reflect

- What effect has the interview had on you and your partner?
- How do you feel?
- How much energy do you have?
- What do you learn from it for your future work/life?

Social Construction of Human Brain and Neuroscience of Relationships

Drives, Pleasure seeking behaviour, resource focused, Excitement, Achievements,

Contentment, Secure Base
Self-worth, Feeling Safe and secure, Being Connected, Empathy

Dopamine

Oxytocin Opiates

Flight/fight/freeze
Adrenaline/NA

Reptilian Survival Brain

Fight/Flight/Freeze

- Most basic response – startle response-protective -in brainstem with fast SUPER HIGHWAYS
- Children born to survive so are alert and highly aroused – easily go to fight/ flight/freeze
- If not cared for become aggressively defensive, so have to be trained not to be aggressive.
- Depression/anxiety -brain wired for negatives & constantly reinforced
- NO LEARNING OR REFLECTION IN THIS STATE

A Secure Base

- **Oxytocin**
- Look for social contact - **feeling felt**
- Calming, soothing, alters pain threshold, buffers stress, decreases fear and production of cortisol
- Stimulates neuronal/synaptic growth
- Allows children to be receptive and open to learning



Goal Seeking/Ambition/Learning Curiosity to find mates, food, jobs etc



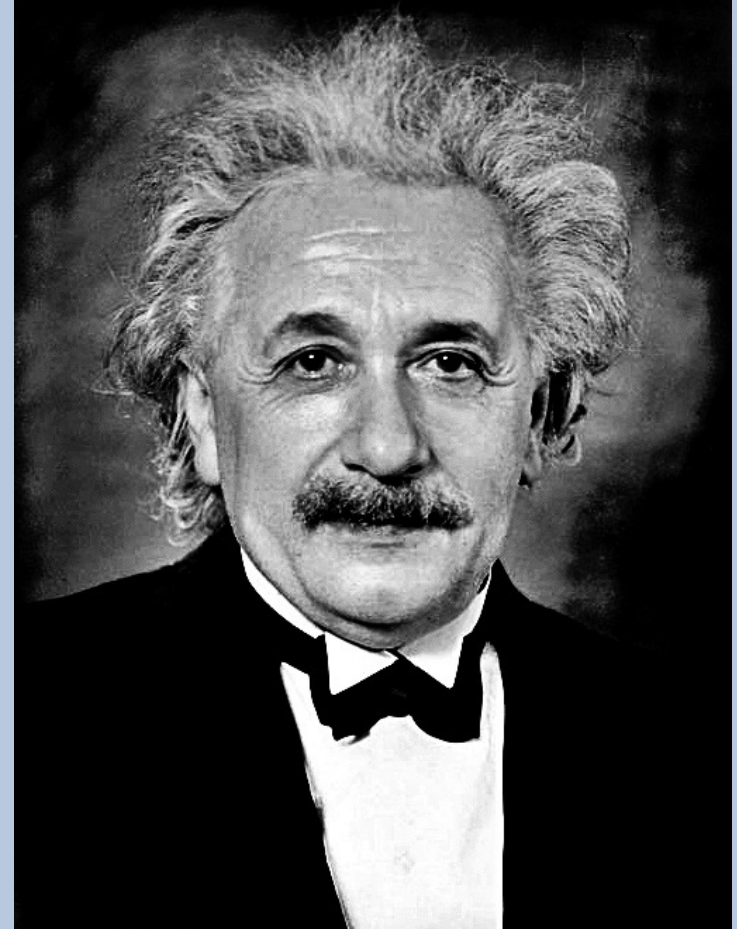
- Connections between brainstem and left brain
- Excitement about learning, curious, questioning , seeking, discovering, reading, exploring

Mirror neurones (brain cells)

- Children do not use spoken language until 18–24 months but understand and communicate clearly.
- They learn very early to respond via mirror neurones to carers' communication – smile they smile, anger they withdraw or cry
- Children and vulnerable people are very sensitive to this communication responding fast, often with a defensive story.



“The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honours the servant and has forgotten the gift.”



“I have a dream...”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

1929-1968

Thursday was August 28, the year, 1963. Dr. Martin Luther King stood before 250,000 people at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. His voice rang out, and his words moved millions. He spoke of his “dream” that “one day little children will see the sky in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” Dr. King’s speech helped make 1963 the year of the great movement in the civil rights struggle of the 1950s and 1960s—a struggle for which Dr. King himself had done so much.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1954, he became pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1955, Dr. King led Martin to a boycott of Montgomery’s segregated bus system. This was only the first of many nonviolent protests, boycotts, and other actions Dr. King would lead in efforts to end the Jim Crow laws. His efforts throughout the 1950s and 1960s were central to many parts of the nation, and the persistence he led helped secure voting rights for blacks and broke down many of the legal barriers that forced

Dr. King and his followers, “to march across the state to make our voices heard.” Dr. King’s efforts with the SCLC were often praised. But Dr. King was often a target of hate. On April 4, 1968, at the age of 39, he was shot and killed in Memphis, Tennessee.

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Working with the future

- The future is in the present.
- In the Future meaning grows, the meaning of events emerge.
- Meaning is crafted in the consequences of an action as it is lived out in the future in relationships.
- The future creates present action
- Dewey talks about END - in – VIEW
- Dewey suggests having at least 5+ dreams
- Vygotsky -- We are always in the PROCESS OF BECOMING

Dreaming

- . Love is Visionary!
(Maturana)
- . Dimension of the sense of magical
- . Fun and Motivational & you begin to live it



Dreaming - Every problem is a frustrated dream

- Use DREAMING instead of solutions as different language game.
- Imagery stimulates the oxytocin and dopamine pathways
- DREAMS ARE:
- Often Unrealistic, Idealistic – hopeful and create possibilities
- Energising & Fun & Playful –life giving
- Emotion is positive, enthusiasm, person feels valued, Values are lived,
- Everything is possible, Can't fail, Fragmentary

Imagination and Dreaming

- Imagination creates the same pathways in the brain as actually doing it - like a rehearsal.
- Dreaming a future also stimulates dopamine and oxytocin. Gives a sense of energy, hope, possibilities and a realisable future.**CREATE IMAGES AND EMOTION**
- Through backlighting pathways are laid down which makes it easier for people to act

Dreaming the future

- Explore the Dream – 10 - 15 years hence gets away from as yet unsolved problems..
- Tell a reassuring story – you are a mature adult leading a really happy competent life, suggest all problems gone so how are they now relating to family/friends etc.
- When playing with the future talk about future in present tense.
- Be as unrealistic / creative as desire, enjoy the metaphors look at meaning in metaphor.

Curiosity about the future

- **So it is 2030 ... where are you living which community/country? What sort of house/apartment? What does it look like? Are you married , do you have children? Etc etc What job are you doing?**
- **Great detail – like a video – 3D experience**
- **Create the details of dreams by asking lots of detailed questions**
- **What you ask is what you get.**
- **Back light – work slowly back to the present -- Ask about how managed to get there as they have already solved difficulties and created a future.**
- **Continue dreaming right up until the present day in more minute details so they know exactly what to do tomorrow.**

Backlighting

- Creating successful pathways to the present.
- Slowly go back in time, asking questions about how they got to this position and steps in between.
- As near the present ask about how over came present difficulties, what they did, who they talked to, who helped them, who talked to etc.
- DREAMING IS AN ACTIVE CO-CREATION BETWEEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
- Have at least 5 dreams - Dewey

Dreaming in Pairs

- . In pairs, dream your futures -- starting with -- it is now 2030 or later. Where are you living? What are you doing?
- . Then back light

Every Problem is a Frustrated Dream

- Work with the dream rather than the problem
- Stick very closely to the dream/problem
- Explore what life looks like in the dream and then ask how this was achieved.
- So question how they managed to resolve all their problems. How did you get your children to sleep, to be so well behaved? How did you talk to them, what did you say etc
- Talk as though they have been successful.