



# Appreciative Administration: Putting the Appreciative Education Theory- to-Practice Framework into Action





# About Me



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She/Her/Hers  
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APPRECIATE.





What We All  
Have in  
Common

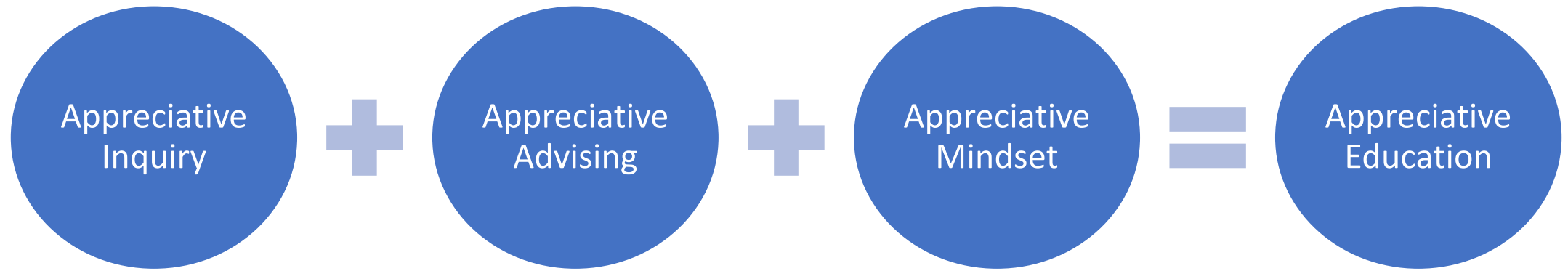


# Purpose of Study

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to examine how higher education administrators infuse the Appreciative Education framework into their daily administrative practices.

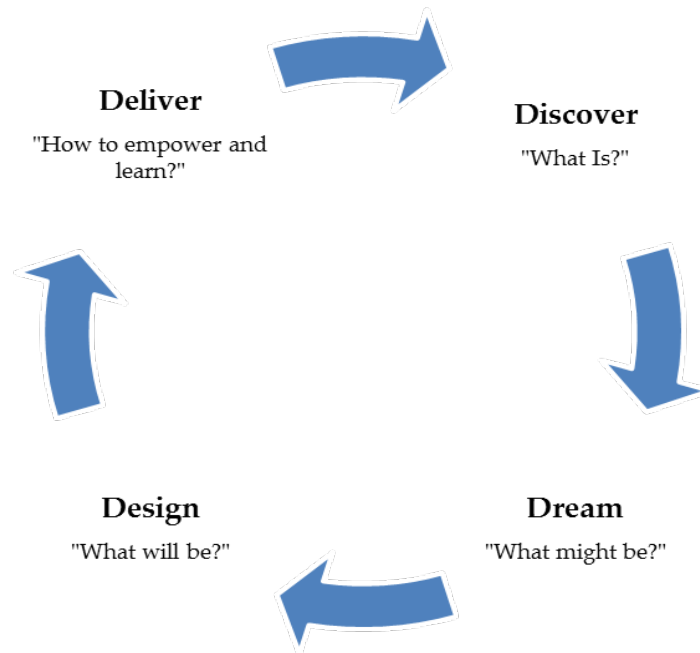


# Appreciative Education



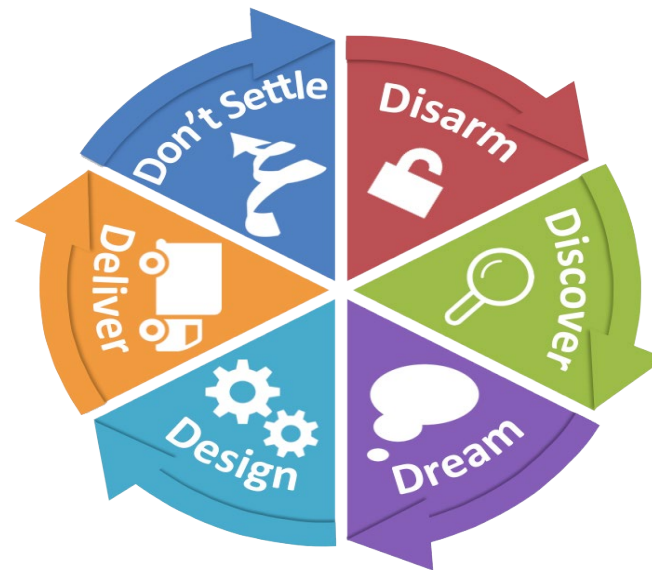
# Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry, first introduced by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987), “provides a positive rather than a problem-based lens on the organization, focusing members’ attention on what is possible rather than what is wrong” (van Buskirk, 2002, p. 67).



# Appreciative Advising

Appreciative Advising is “a social-constructivist advising philosophy that provides an advising framework for advisors to use in optimizing their interactions with students in both individual and group settings” (Bloom et al., 2008, p. 19).





# Appreciative Mindset

The appreciative mindset involves looking for the best in others and in organizations instead of using our default tendency to look for the worst (Bloom et al., 2008).





# Research Questions

1. How do higher education administrators use the Appreciative Education framework in their administrative practices?
2. What do higher education administrators that use the Appreciative Education framework find to be:
  - a. The benefits of using this framework?
  - b. The challenges of using this framework?





# Methodology

- “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (Merriam, 2009, p. 13).
- Grounded theory approach is appropriate “when you want to develop or modify a theory, explain a process, and develop a general abstraction of the interaction and action of the people” (Creswell, 2002, p. 456).





# Research Participants

## Sampling Criteria

- Purposeful sampling
  - Had at least one full-time professional reporting to them.
  - Had participated in a formal Appreciative Education training.

## Sample Size

- Saturation was reached at 21 participants.

## Gender Breakdown

- 9 Males
- 12 Females

## Institutional Representation

- 19 Institutions
  - 2 from Community Colleges
  - 13 from 4-year, Public
  - 6 from 4-year, Private

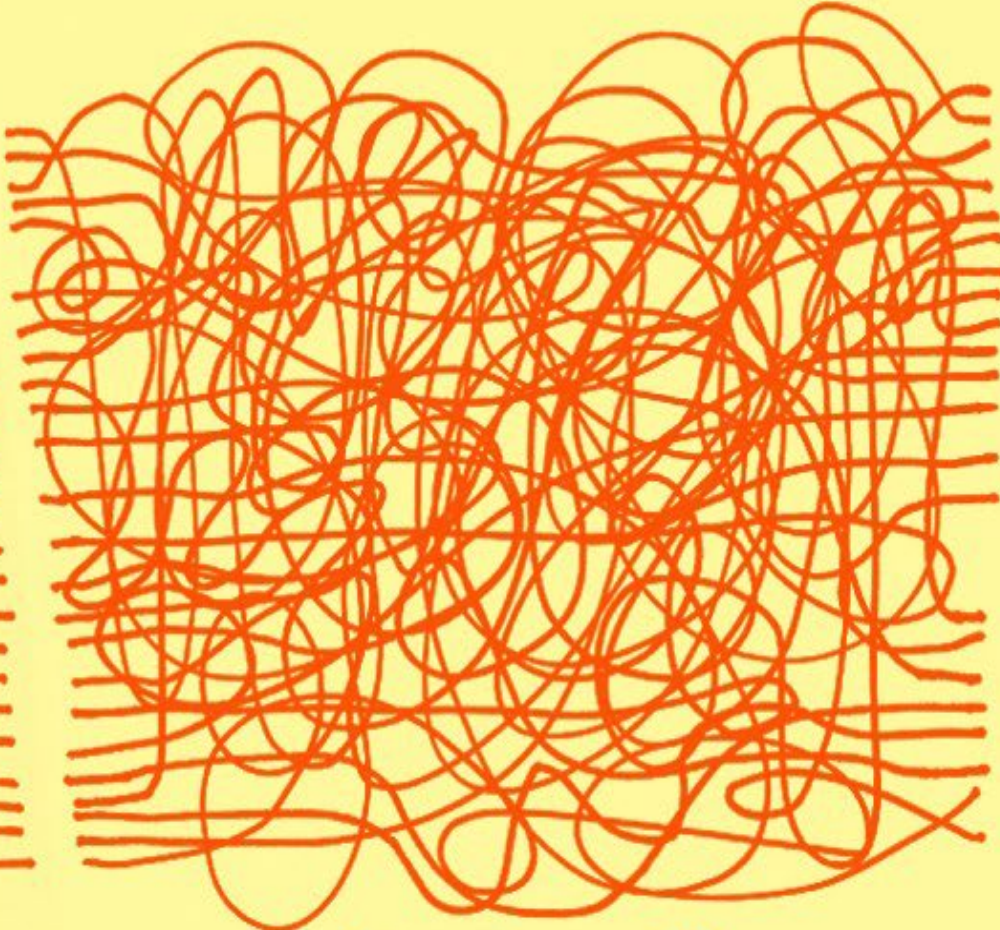
## Positions Held

- Assistant/Associate Directors
- Directors
- Assistant/Associate Deans
- Vice Presidents

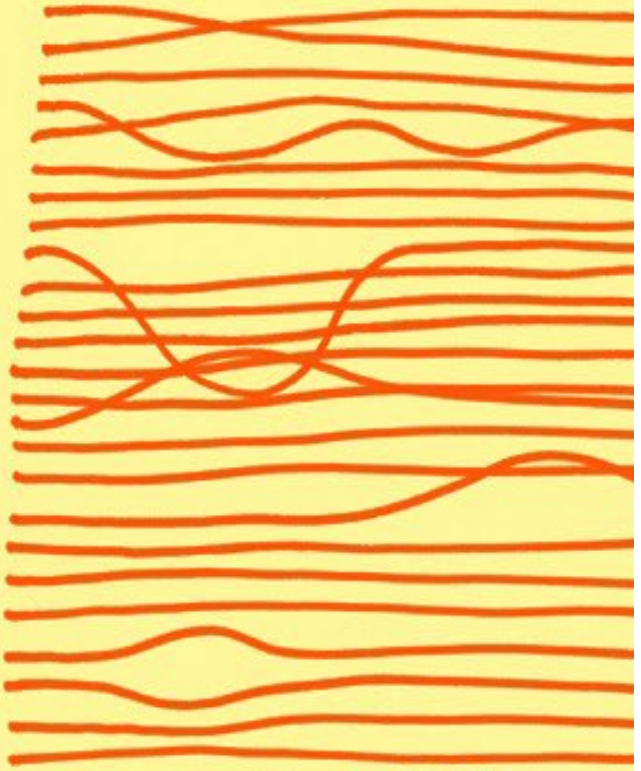




THEORY



PRACTICE



THEORY  
INTO  
PRACTICE

# Appreciative Administration



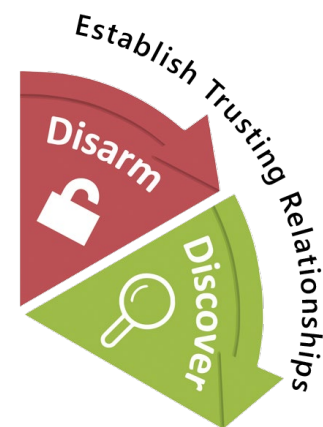


# Establish Trusting Relationships

*“I know that under everything that is successful,  
is a trusting relationship.” Ann*

- Walk the Appreciative Talk First
- Provide Support
- Include All Voice
- Ask Powerful Questions
- “Really” Listen





# Provide Support

*“You do this by building people up, not breaking them down, you do that by offering encouragement, just as often as you offer challenge.” Beth*





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# Foster Relationships to Achieve Personal and Organizational Goals



*“Approach each person, trying to figure out what can you do to help the team and what can I do to help you? I like that I don’t have to be in control, that I can let good leaders lead.” Ben*

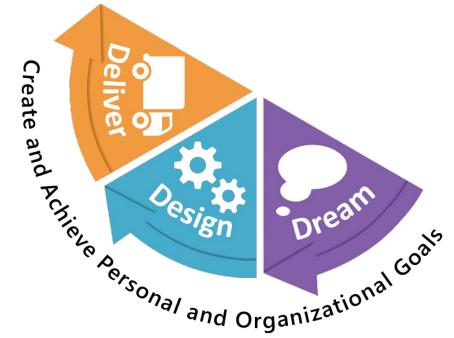
- Seek Buy-In
- Empower Without Micromanagement
- Walk Side by Side



# Seek Buy-In

*“Appreciating the ideas from his team and showing the trust with new projects, the staff had buy-in and were energetic to support each other.” Lyle*

# Foster Relationships to Achieve Personal and Organizational Goals



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# “Positive Restlessness”

*“We are never perfect, we are never there.” MR*

- Celebrate Accomplishments
- Perfectly Imperfect
- Continue to Foster Relationships





# Perfectly Imperfect

*“It is a commitment to continuous learning and improving. A constant commitment to reflecting.”*

*Lorena*



# “Positive Restlessness”

*“We are never perfect, we are never there.” MR*

- Celebrate Accomplishments
- Perfectly Imperfect
- Continue to Foster Relationships





# Benefits

## Adaptability of the Framework

- Toolkit for Dealing with Uncertainty and Change
- Intentional Framework for Building Better Relationships and Organizations
- Reframe Problems into Opportunities
- Common Language

## Employee Development

- Well-Being







# Intentional Framework for Building Better Relationships and Organizations

*“What we focus on grows, that is where I come from with intentionality, it is not about not talking about stuff or not doing stuff, but it’s the intentional framing and intentional way that you come about addressing issues.” Nicole*





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# Challenges

## Messy and Hard

- Educating People
- Misperceptions about the Framework

## It Takes Consistent Practice





# Misperceptions about the Framework

*“We have to be more intentional about describing that there’s actually a lot of accountability built into the process....It doesn’t ignore failure. It doesn’t ignore weakness. It doesn’t ignore areas of growth. It just approaches the way that we do that from a different angle that builds trust and allows for vulnerability.” Ann*



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- Misperceptions about the Framework

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# Bringing it all Together



Appreciative Administration is fundamentally situated as a human experience and involves the intentional, consistent, and aspirational practice of establishing trusting relationships in which team members' strengths and skills are identified and leveraged to co-create and achieve personal and organizational goals.



# Breakout Questions

- Who comes to mind in terms of somebody who does one or more of these practices of Appreciative Administration well? What specific characteristics about that person are congruent with Appreciative Administration?
- What specific appreciative practices or strategies would you like to develop into habits?



# Personal Reflection



“To the world you may be one person; but to one person you may be the world.”

~Dr. Seuss







# Questions?

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Thank You!





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