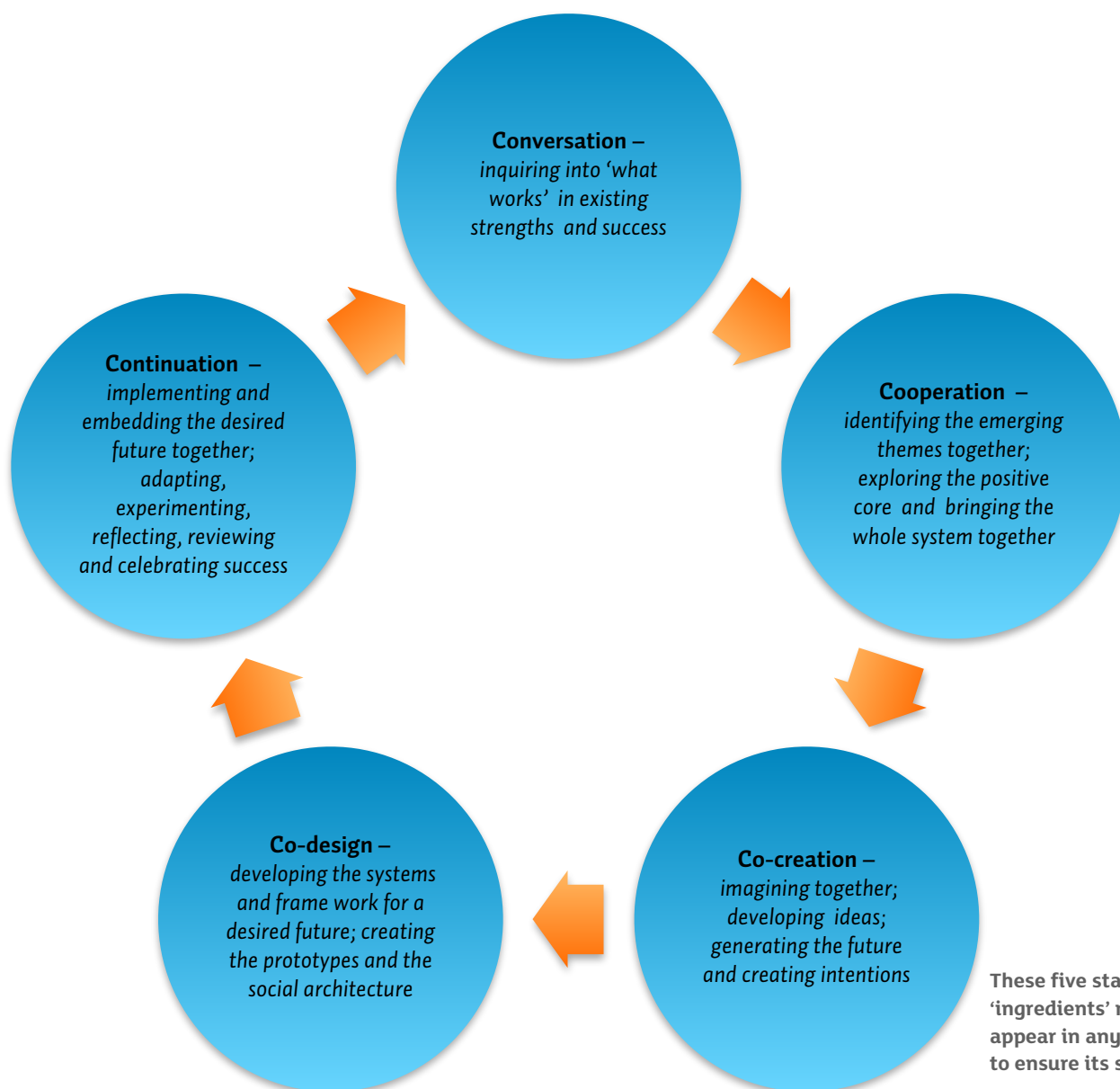


THE FIVE AI ELEMENTS



Background

Between March 2014 and April 2015 Appreciating People has delivered over 20 Appreciative Inquiry workshops, working with participants from a wide range of backgrounds. During this period, we also developed the young person’s journal [How to be More Awesome](#) – co-created and co-designed with staff and students from the Liverpool Studio School and World Merit programme.

From all this experience, we realised that five key components were required for an Appreciative Inquiry intervention to have maximum impact. Five ‘vital elements’ of the appreciative process need to flourish to support the use of the key AI tools (the appreciative conversation, the 5D process and SOAR). These ‘vital elements’ are: **conversations, cooperation, co-creation, co-design and continuation**.

Without these elements, the AI process doesn’t have life and vitality, and struggles to become generative. A useful way to understand these elements is to see the AI tools as a set of recipes, and the five elements as the staple ingredients – you can add other ingredients, but without these ‘staples’, the recipe won’t work.

We’ve tested this concept recently in a number of workshops and with a small number of AI practitioner colleagues, and response from both participants and practitioners has been very positive. The diagram above summarises the essence of each of the five.

Additional information about each element

- ✓ **Conversation:** This relates to the importance and value of paired and/or group conversations. These use generative questions to foster dialogue, establish a ‘trust field’, build on the foundations of shared and existing strengths, and explore times of peak performance and success. Such conversations create the space for change, identify possible opportunities, and lay the foundations for collaboration and creativity.
- ✓ **Cooperation:** This recognises the importance of working together throughout the AI process, using the whole system to create a common future path. It means ensuring all voices and ideas are heard and that the vision for the future is ‘owned by all’. Cooperation lays the foundations for co-production – a vital element, especially of the design and destiny stages.
- ✓ **Co-creation:** This refers to collectively identifying the future vision, sharing ideas, and using imagination to develop the future intentions, and provocative propositions or future frameworks.

“The vital elements make sense and are consistent with what I’m experimenting in now: focus on dialogue and conversations in order to establish a ‘trust field’ and recognise and share strengths; co-create the space for change and generate new opportunities.”

✓ **Co-design:** This is about encouraging prototyping, co-production and ‘design thinking’, based on the intentions that emerged from the **Dream** stage. It engages everyone in creating the arrangements for **Delivery** and **Destiny** stages.

✓ **Continuation:** This recognises that it’s an ongoing process of building on the intentions, supporting the actions and frameworks developed, trusting the system, encouraging reflective learning and evaluation and supporting flexibility and agility. Continuation includes embedding these five vital elements as the future norm. It also includes **celebrating** the successes.

We welcome people to use the ideas shared here, and to contribute to their development.

The vital elements concept has been co-designed and co-created with our international partners Inspiring Partners (Spain), Impact coaching (Belgium) and Active Change (Italy)

Tim Slack/ Suzanne Quinney, Appreciating People