


International Journal of Appreciative Inquiry

May 2015

Volume 17 Number 2

ISBN 978-1-907549-23-6

 dx.doi.org/10.12781/978-1-907549-23-6

AI Practitioner



www.aipractitioner.com/subscriptions

INTERGENERATIONAL

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."
-Helen Keller



Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry in Conversation and in Action

Edited by

Marge Schiller
Matthew Moehle
Peter Whitehouse

Sponsored by

Appreciating People



Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry in Conversation and in Action

Inside this issue

Welcome to May 2015 issue of AI Practitioner

Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry in Conversation and in Action celebrates the diversity and generativity of intergenerational conversations. Business, education and communities show what they can achieve by reaching out and connecting with different age groups. They share their successful methods to 'go between in order to create the beyond'.

In her Feature Choice, Jacqueline Wong develops a model for engaged governance

in reviewing the momentous citizen engagement process in Singapore that involved 660 dialogues, 47,000 who met in face-to-face meetings and 4,000 more who engaged online.

In Research Review & Notes, Gail Simon at the University of Bedfordshire in the UK highlights cases on collaborative or reflexive inquiry from social services.

AI Resources includes a variety of resources related to intergenerational efforts that celebrate diversity.

We would like to thank Appreciating People for sponsoring this issue.

Anne Radford
Editor, AI Practitioner

5 Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry In Conversation and In Action

Editors: Marge Schiller,
Matthew Moehle and
Peter Whitehouse



9 Feature Choice

Towards a Model for Engaged Governance: Citizen Conversations for a Participatory Democracy



Jacqueline Wong

Intergenerational AI Methods

24 Film Portraits

Their Potential for Appreciative Intergenerational Conversations



Joep C. de Jong

27 'I Have a Dream'

A Call for Intergenerational Dreaming



Margaret Wright

29 Appreciating All Generations

Intergenerational Dialogue



Robyn Stratton-Berkessel

Intergenerational AI and Business

- 32 Children of their Time**
Descriptions, Credos and Views of the Different Generations



Agnes Joester

- 36 Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry Helps Managers Move Beyond Generational Misconceptions in the Workplace**



Candace Steele Flippin

- 40 Mentorship is Ageless**
It is About Gratitude, Reciprocity and Appreciation

Maureen McKenna and Diane Pascoe



Intergenerational AI and Communities

- 43 Appreciative Intergenerational Community Building**

A Strengths-Based Approach in Uganda

Kristin Bodiford and Arthur Namara Araali



- 46 Stories and Examples of Results Using Appreciative Inquiry**

Generations Coming Together to Make a Change in Their Community



Kristin Bodiford

- 47 Generations United**
Because We are Stronger Together



Donna Butts

- 50 Girls About Political Participation (GAPP)**

Marge Schiller and Charlotte Marshall



Intergenerational AI and Education

- 55 Beyond Intergenerational to Intergenerative**
Going Between to Imagine Beyond



Peter Whitehouse

- 58 Appreciating Young People**
Conversations that Matter



Sue James

- 64 The First Appreciative Education Conference**

A Story of Intergenerational Ingenuity

Jennifer Bloom, Stephanie Ann Suarez, Hope Wooten, Jodie Waldroup, Kaitlynn Kirk, Stephanie Baskerville and Erin Smith



- 61 Young People in a School Setting Making a Positive Difference to Senior Citizens in their Community**

Craig Knight and Glyn Willoughby



Intergenerational AI and Thriving Families

67 Lessons from Ancestors

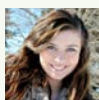
My Historical Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry



Thomas E. Myers

74 Appreciative Intergenerational Conversations

A Place to Flourish



Alexandra Stavros

77 Intergenerational Conversations Toward End of Life

Structure for Storytelling, Inquiry and Dialogue

Tony Silbert and Mary Vargas



80 Appreciative Inquiry Research Review & Notes

Appreciative Inquiry as Organisational Research Culture



Gail Simon

85 Appreciative Inquiry Resources

A variety of resources that focus on generational diversity as a resource to be celebrated

Matthew R. Moehle,
Roopa Nandi and Hardik Shah



89 About the August 2015 Issue

Stories and Examples of Results Using Appreciative Inquiry



Editor: Ralph Weikel

90 About the sponsor of this issue

Appreciating People



92 Advertisements The Taos Institute

93 The Centre for Appreciative Inquiry

Feature Choice Articles
AI Practitioner 2015

94 2015 World Appreciative Inquiry Conference

95 IAPG Contacts and AI Practitioner Subscription Information



Marge Schiller

Marge Schiller is grandmother to Max and Sarah and founder of the Positive Change Core : a global community serving schools and youth with strength focused approaches. She is co editing the second version of *Appreciative Leaders: In the Eye of the Beholder*. serves as an advisor for the Leiden/Taos Ph.D. program and lives in Massachusetts and Florida. Contact: margeschiller@me.com



Matthew Moehle

Matthew Moehle is president of Positive Change Core and academic coordinator and associate professor for Field-based Graduate Programs in Education for Southern New Hampshire University. He often consults with schools, businesses, and not-for-profit and community organizations to help foster innovation and positive change. Contact: matthew@matthewmoehle.com



Peter Whitehouse

Peter Whitehouse is a professor of Neurology and Psychiatry, Neuroscience, Psychology, Nursing, Organizational Behavior, Bioethics, Cognitive Science and History at Case Western Reserve University interested in developing innovative learning environments to promote flourishing, including intergenerational schools. Contact: peter.whitehouse@case.edu

Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry in Conversation and in Action

This issue of *AI Practitioner* focuses on the connection between intergenerational interactions and Appreciative Inquiry, and how this connection can be reflected in conversations, in actions and in the stance we take in everyday situations.

This issue of *AI Practitioner* celebrates the diversity of human experience and the intergenerational power of sharing and learning from our different perspectives and experiences. We highlight how Appreciative Inquiry has been a source of inspiration for people to turn multigenerational efforts into intergenerational efforts. We are excited about Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry. Like the difference between multi and interdisciplinary the prefix “inter” draws attention to importance of deeper, more powerful connecting relationships.

It has become popular to categorize individuals by age and generation. References to “millennials” circulate in the press and social media seemingly constantly. Other labels include Gen X, Baby Boomers, Teenages, Seniors, Gen Y, The Greatest Generation, iGen, Traditionals, War Children and more. We categorize individuals by age as soon as they start formal school, when we divide individuals by grade levels based almost exclusively on age. Because this categorization is so prevalent, seeing beyond socially constructed walls between age groups can be just as difficult as seeing alternatives to traditional deficit-based problem-solving approaches to change!

This is not to say that there are not benefits to understanding the differences between an infant and a toddler, a first grader and a fifth grader, and recognizing that someone in their 20s holds a different reality of the world than someone in their 50s. Indeed, there is theoretical and practical value in understanding developmental stages.

In multigenerational settings, differences in ages and the resulting differing perspectives based on generational perspectives are not fully valued ... intergenerational interactions happen when generational diversity is celebrated and leveraged.

However, when age and generational differences are treated as problems, such labels can bring about biases and limitations much as labels of religion, gender and race can.

In intergenerational interactions – engaging with people of different ages and stages of life – is an opportunity to go beyond what would otherwise be possible, to maximize innovative potential and realize new levels of generativity. We coined the word “intergenerative” to call attention to the creative energy that occurs when fields of knowledge, theories and practices as well as generations, disciplines, professionals, nations and faiths come into dynamic tension with each other.

This issue focuses on the connection between Intergenerational interactions and Appreciative Inquiry and how this connection can be reflected in conversations, in actions, and in the stance we take to everyday situations.

What do we mean by intergenerational?

Intergenerational interactions happen through multi-age conversations and actions. Generativity is maximized when the limitations created by socially constructed labels based on people's age are minimized. When generational differences are leveraged as strengths rather than treated as barriers to understanding, transformative conversations emerge and our capacity for positive possibilities expands.

Intergenerational interactions are a specific type of multigenerational interaction. In both, people from different generations come together in conversation and action. However, in multigenerational interactions, the strengths inherent in such diversity are not being leveraged. In the workplace, multigenerational workforces have been characterized as something that needs to be managed and overcome.

In contrast, intergenerational interactions happen when we leverage generational diversity. In intergenerational interactions, engaging with people of different generations is seen as opportunity. We can go beyond what would otherwise be possible. Instead of allowing socially constructed labels based on people's ages to be barriers, they are seen as a means to something greater. By embracing intergenerational interactions, we open ourselves up to transformative conversations and actions with those of another generation.

By moving from multigenerational interactions to intergenerational interactions, we expand our mutual capacity for the positive. In intergenerational settings, having different ages together creates a maximum mix that is magic.

This May 2015 issue of *AI Practitioner* focuses on theoretical and practical aspects of intergenerational interactions – cases and stories when multiple ages of individuals come together to increase opportunity, possibility and generativity. This issue highlights theoretical concepts and practical examples from individuals, businesses, schools, communities, families and other organizations that flourish through the maximum mix of ages and perspectives. We see this maximum mix as intergenerational magic.

For most people, our most fundamental intergenerational experiences are those with our families.

Intergenerational AI Methods

Film Portraits: Their Potential for Appreciative Intergenerational Conversations (De Jong)

'I Have a Dream': Intergenerational AI and Communities A Call for Intergenerational Dreaming (Wright)

Appreciating All Generations: Intergenerational Dialogue (Stratton-Berkessel)

Intergenerational AI and Business

Mentorship is Ageless: It is About Gratitude, Reciprocity and Appreciation (McKenna and Pascoe)

Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry Helps Managers Move Beyond Generational Misconceptions in the Workplace (Steele Flippin)

Intergenerational AI and Communities

Appreciative Intergenerational Community Building: A Strengths-Based Approach in Uganda (Bodiford and Araali)

Intergenerational Community Building: Generations Coming Together to Make a Change in Their Community (Bodiford)

Generations United: Because We are Stronger Together (Butts)

Girls About Political Participation (GAPP) (Schiller and Marshall)

Intergenerational AI and Education

Beyond Intergenerational to Intergenerative: Going Between to Imagine Beyond (Whitehouse)

Appreciating Young People: Conversations that Matter (James)

Young People in a School Setting Making a Positive Difference to Senior Citizens in their Community (Knight and Willoughby)

The First Appreciative Education Conference: A Story of Intergenerational Ingenuity (Bloom, Suarez, Wooten, Waldroup, Kirk, Baskerville and Smith)

Intergenerational AI and Thriving Families

Lessons from Ancestors: My Historical Intergenerational Appreciative Inquiry (Myers)

Appreciative Intergenerational Conversations: A Place to Flourish (Alexandra Stavros)

Intergenerational Conversations Toward End of Life: Structure for Storytelling, Inquiry and Dialogue (Silbert and Vargas)

For most people, our most fundamental intergenerational experiences are those with our families. In this world where children have a promise of greater longevity and elders the possibility of enhanced legacy, intergenerational relationships and experiences are an imperative for human flourishing. Thus, we share photos of each of our families to highlight the importance of connecting with, celebrating and learning from our most fundamental intergenerational experiences. As you read the articles in this issue, we invite you to connect with and celebrate your foundational intergenerational experiences as well.

Marge Schiller, Matthew Moehle and Peter Whitehouse, May, 2015

Marge's family, including three generations: sister and spouse, sons, Simon, Marge and grandchildren. This photo was taken at a lifetime achievement ceremony that was Marge's honor. The occasion also marked the launch of the GAPP project Marge discusses in her article in this issue.



Matt's family, including his parents, brothers, and his family's youngest generation on the occasion of his parents' 40th wedding anniversary.



Peter with his wife Cathy, co-creator of their three creative daughters and three intergenerational schools in Cleveland (with more to come around the world).



 [Back to Table of Contents](#)



Ralph Weickel

Ralph Weickel is the owner of Performance Management and a partner in the European Center for Positive Change, appreciative consulting practices that utilize the principles and practices of AI to elevate performance and consistently deliver results. Ralph has been in sales for over thirty years.
Contact: info@ralphweickel.com



About the August 2015 Issue

Stories and Examples of Results Using Appreciative Inquiry

The August 2015 issue of *AI Practitioner* seeks to bring quantitative results into the discussion about the benefits of using Appreciative Inquiry in our engagements.

Results

Results are expected from any client engagement, and one of the most frequently asked questions regarding an engagement using Appreciative Inquiry. We, the practitioners of Appreciative Inquiry, know that using AI methodology and practices delivers results yet find ourselves challenged at times to be able to quantify them. It is the ability to quantify results that lends credibility to a process and also encourages those of us using the process to think of the engagement in new ways. How do we quantify results, what questions do we need to ask at the beginning of an engagement, do we need to change our processes or do we need to think about our application of the Appreciative Inquiry process from a new perspective? These are questions that will be answered through the articles in this issue and ought to be discussed among practitioners using Appreciative Inquiry.

Clients

It is the client who ultimately decides the result of an engagement using Appreciative Inquiry. The articles in this issue will be co-authored by practitioners and their respective clients in regard to an engagement, giving voice to the client and their perspective. The articles review engagements in the areas of business, education, government and the non-profit sector, while also providing a review on the literature regarding results through Appreciative Inquiry, and discussion between two of the thought leaders in the field of AI and positive emotions. The issue will close with a section of tools that facilitate the delivery of results, taken from the articles in the issue.

IAPG Contacts and AI Practitioner Subscription Information



International Advisory Practitioners Group IAPG

Members of the International Advisory Practitioners Group working with AIP to bring AI stories to a wider audience:

Dhruba Acharya, Nepal

Anastasia Bukashe, South Africa

Gervase Bushe, Canada

Sue Derby, Canada

Sara Inés Gómez, Colombia

Lena Holmberg, Sweden

Joep C. de Jong, Netherlands

Dorothe Liebig, Germany

John Loty, Australia

Sue James, Australia

Maureen McKenna, Canada

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Jan Reed, United Kingdom

Catrina Rogers, Hong Kong

Daniel K. Saint, United States

Marge Schiller, United States

Jackie Stavros, United States

Bridget Woods, South Africa

Jacqueline Wong, Singapore

Margaret Wright, United Kingdom

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Purpose of AI Practitioner

This publication is for people interested in making the world a better place using positive relational approaches to change such as Appreciative Inquiry. The publication is distributed quarterly: February, May, August and November.

AI Practitioner Editor/Publisher

The editor-in-chief and publisher is Anne Radford. She is based in London and can be reached at

editor@aipractitioner.com

The postal address for the publication is:

303 Bankside Lofts, 65 Hopton Street,
London SE1 9JL, England.

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7633 9630

ISSN 1741 8224

Shelagh Aitken is the issue editor for AI Practitioner.

shelagh@editorproofreader.co.uk

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