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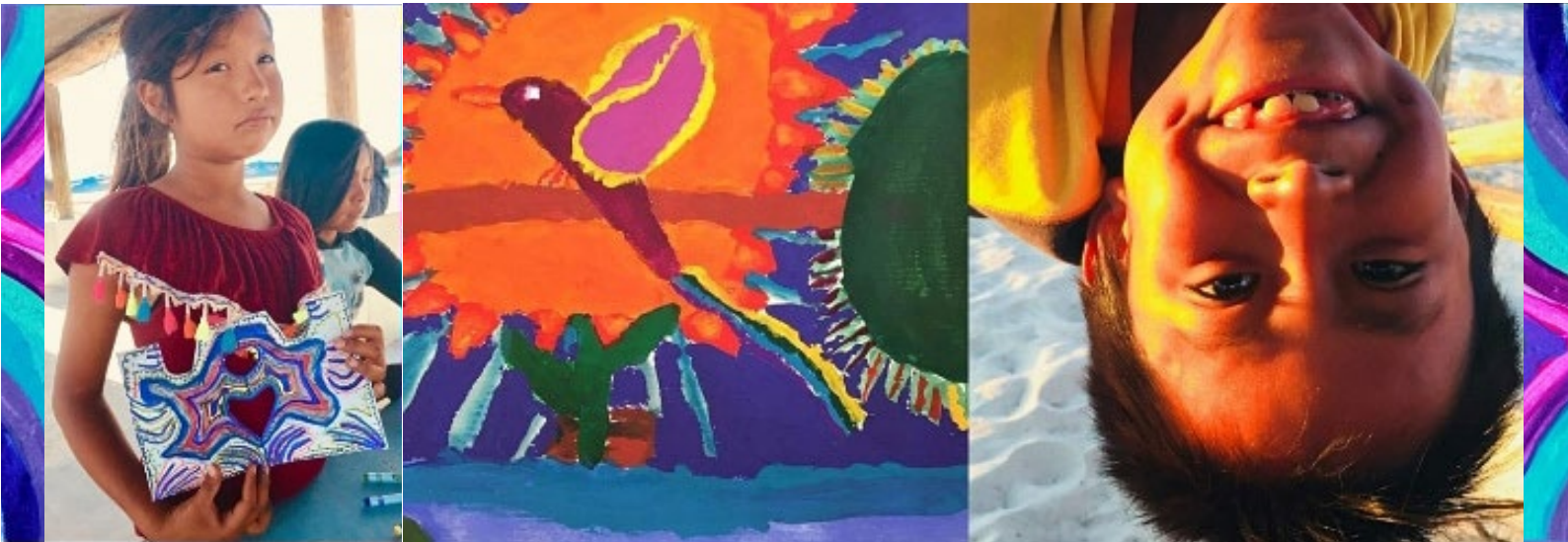
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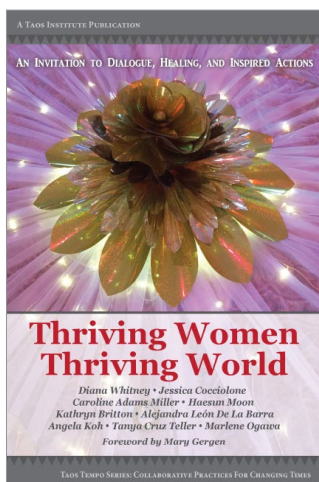
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Nourish to Flourish

Nourish to Flourish brings together practitioners' voices and creative practices, and appreciative reviews of books that support strengths-based approaches to human interactions.

Appreciative Resources

Sandra Adkins, MAPP



Thriving Women Thriving World: An Invitation to Dialogue, Healing, and Inspired Actions

Diana Whitney, Jessica Cocciolone, Caroline Adams Miller, Haesun Moon, Kathryn Britton, Alejandra León De La Barra, Angela Koh, Tanya Cruz Teller and Marlene Ogawa

TAOS Institute Publications, 2019
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Thriving Women Thriving World is less a book for reading than it is a book for doing. The text is designed to guide us through the challenges of the #MeToo movement and the variety of struggles gender bias and discrimination have created more broadly, applying the approaches of Appreciative Inquiry to co-create a future where all women can thrive.

I can easily see that using the discussion guides could facilitate workshops as part of our diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives

A mix of stories, poetry – and questions

The content is a mixture of personal stories, poetry – and most importantly questions to guide constructive dialogue, focussing on what works in supporting women to thrive, improving difficult situations, and creating a better future more systemically.

The authors offer ways to use the text in a range of applications, from personal reflection and journaling through women’s retreats to corporate organizations. Working in a large global organization myself, I can easily see that using the discussion guides could facilitate workshops as part of our diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, or within business resource/affinity groups.

I’ve seen many “listening sessions” where women share stories of bias and discrimination they’ve experienced in the workplace, including sexual harassment and microaggressions. While it’s essential to be aware of what people are experiencing, these sessions can be very draining when not coupled with a path towards solutions, to what has worked in addressing these issues successfully. The topics “women supporting women” and “men supporting women” would be excellent additions to these sorts of listening sessions.

In taking on discussions of “allies we know and love,” “supporting and celebrating women,” or “allies calling out injustice,” imagine the power of not only calling out existing injustices but also calling out when an ally has stood up against them or when changes have been made in policies to address them.

AI in difficult spaces

We can rally around solutions and actions while spending less time focusing on what isn’t working.

Appreciative dialogues are powerful in these difficult spaces. I have known many men who want to be allies to women or women who want to better support other women, but who don’t always know how or what that looks like in action. By gathering and sharing stories of what allyship looks like in every day and what we’ve seen work well in other parts of our lives or organizations, we can rally around solutions and actions while spending less time focusing on what isn’t working.

Some topics covered are more comfortable than others, such as “leveraging financial savvy” or “living life as a work of art.” For uncomfortable topics such as “claiming ownership of our bodies” and “healing from relational abuse” some might feel that, due to their gravely serious nature, the tone of Appreciative Inquiry feels less natural. However, while I found these sections of the book made me uneasy, I also found them rewarding. My initial concerns were the discussion

of what thriving women do when faced with situations like physical or sexual abuse. Would there be too much onus on the individual women and how they handled the situation versus the systemic factors that contribute to such abuses in the first place?

A balance of focus

The authors do a nice job at balancing the delicate conversation around such painful topics in a constructive light.

But there was a balance in focusing on actions within an individual woman's control, how women (and men) can support each other to be safe or to heal from abuses and, critically, an exploration of sustainable solutions to change behavior among men, the law, governments, and culture to support women and keep them from harm.

These sections of the book, while difficult, are essential. The authors do a nice job balancing the delicate conversation around such painful topics in a constructive light, with a focus on solutions for both healing past harms and preventing harms in the future.

As mentioned in the beginning, this is not a book for reading but for doing. Full benefits will only be achieved by taking time to pick sections that resonate with you and sit with them, writing, reflecting and taking action to do more of what works in our lives and in our communities. To spread those benefits even further, engaging with others in dialogue, storytelling and workshops around such important topics will help enable us to start moving towards more of what we need in the world to foster an environment where all women and girls can thrive with ease.

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