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AI Practitioner

International Journal of Appreciative Inquiry



Appreciative Inquiry and Virtual Technology: An Improbable Pair for Accelerating the Wholeness Principle

Edited by

Tanya Cruz Teller and Sherri Sutton

Editorial support

Joep. C. de Jong

Co-publishers

The David L. Cooperrider Center for Appreciative Inquiry and Kessels & Smit, The Learning Company

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Luc Verheijen

Luc Verheijen is a partner at Kessels & Smit, the Learning Company. He is a Taos Institute Associate and co-publisher of *AI Practitioner*. His book, co-authored with Saskia Tjepkema and Joeri Kabalt, *Appreciative Inquiry as a Daily Leadership Practice* was published by Taos Institute Publishers in 2020.
Contact: lverheijen@kessels-smit.com



Lindsey N. Godwin

Lindsey N. Godwin, Ph.D., is the Robert P. Stiller Professor of Management at Champlain College, where she serves as the Academic Director for the David L. Cooperrider Center for Appreciative Inquiry and co-publisher of *AI Practitioner*. As a practitioner-scholar active in the global AI community, she has helped organize and facilitate AI processes around the globe.
Contact: godwin@champlain.edu



Saskia Tjepkema

Saskia Tjepkema is a partner at Kessels & Smit, the Learning Company, a member of the supervisory board of NSO-CNA Academy for School leadership and a co-publisher of *AI Practitioner*. Her co-authored book *Appreciative Inquiry as a Daily Leadership Practice* was published by Taos Institute Publishers in 2020.
Contact: stjepkema@kessels-smit.com



Shelagh Aitken

Shelagh Aitken, who started proofreading *AI Practitioner* over ten years ago, has been the managing editor since 2016. She is responsible for editing articles and laying out each issue.
Contact: aipeditor@editorproofreader.co.uk

Thank You, Editorial Board

AI Practitioner is the result of support from many people: the Cooperrider Center and Kessels & Smit, the co-publishers; the editors who find authors, edit their articles and make sure all the materials needed for an issue are ready; and the authors, without whose articles AIP would not exist. But there is one group, whose names appear on the last page of every issue of AIP, without which the journal would not have developed and grown in the directions it has. The Editorial Board is a group of practitioners who meet virtually twice a year to discuss new possibilities for the journal. Their suggestions, such as making all issues available to subscribers, and their practical support for editors of the issues are invaluable and we'd like to recognise their work, thoughtfulness and contributions. Many of them also support the journal by contributing articles or editing issues. AIP is richer for their contributions.

As the co-publishers said in the invitation to the last meeting, "it has been a joy to experience so much enthusiasm from all of you. Three years ago, that felt like a good length of time for tenure on the board. And now seems like a good time to revisit that idea, because we know that lives change and priorities pivot, and that the last year has been full of change for all of us. We agreed that we wanted to ask each of you to reflect and think about the invitation to reaffirm."

We'd like to thank all those who have committed to remaining Editorial Board members: you can see who they are on the back page. And we'd like to thank those whose commitments mean that their priorities have pivoted, so they have stepped away from being members of the board. They are *Michelle McQuaid*, *Mille Duvender*, *Anastasia Bukashe* and *Dhruba Acharya*.

We will be looking for additional board members, with a focus on reflecting the diversity found in the community of AI practitioners around the globe. If you have any suggestions, please email Shelagh Aitken, the managing editor of *AI Practitioner*, at aipeditor@editorproofreader.co.uk.

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Tanya Cruz Teller

Tanya is a strengths-based OD practitioner committed to a building a more diverse, equitable and inclusive world through thriving organizations. She has harnessed her many years of combining participatory convening, coaching and culture work with technology to engage and build inclusive processes for stakeholders online.

Contact: tanya@spaciousness.worksl



Sherri Sutton

Sherri inspires others to make positive transformations by helping them navigate through the waves of change and disruption. She is passionate about making work situations more equitable and inclusive, and helping team members shine a light on what is often overlooked, their strengths. She does this using whole systems thinking, Appreciative Inquiry, technology and reinvention.

Contact: sherri@positiveimpactforce.com

Appreciative Inquiry and Virtual Technology

An Improbable Pair for Accelerating the Wholeness Principle

In today's environment it is easier than ever to host a virtual event, and gather stakeholders and sponsors to attend webinars or engage in recorded sessions.

At the same time, there is also a great need for human connection, wholeness, and the ability to bring diverse and broad groups of people together for positive change. This environment is the perfect accelerator for Appreciative Inquiry practitioners to intentionally evolve using new technologies and virtual tools.



Longtime readers may recall that the May 2008 issue of *AI Practitioner*, *Wired Discovery: New Conversations and Deeper Connections*, focused on the digital shift and the capacity to integrate technology into AI work. Fast forward to 2021, and the global pandemic is making technology not just a novel extension of AI but a vital life source.

We invited AI practitioners who were applying “the Flip” – shifting a problem focus to an opportunity focus – in today’s context of face-to-face and travel limitations to share how they were using technology and this mind shift to embrace the collaboration, discovery, inclusiveness and wholeness of the experience. The articles in this issue will introduce you to new tools and technologies, but it isn’t the tools that are exceptional – it is the thoughtful care and learning mindset that went into creating the power of the appreciative inquiries– human stories and human connections – they’ve been able to undertake online.

Virtual technology and the Wholeness principle

Our world has simultaneously been rising to the burgeoning call to attend to climate, race, gender and refugee crises to name but a few. It has been a time of

It has been a time of frustration, fear, excitement, opportunity and new beginnings as we co-create novel experiences in digital and online spaces

frustration, fear, excitement, opportunity and new beginnings as we co-create novel experiences in digital and online spaces. So we asked authors how they were embracing the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) Wholeness principle which “brings out the best in people and organizations, bringing all stakeholders together in large group forums stimulates creativity and builds collective capacity.”

In these articles you’ll read and see, through the multi-media offerings, how contributors have creatively and collaboratively inquired into race, religion, youth and children, global inclusion, internationalisation, trauma-resilience, online learning and social media conversations. Facilitators have been taken outside of their comfort zones and skill sets to reinvent outcomes, increase results, and learn effortless digital facilitation – all while retaining the focus on how best humans can continue to share generative stories. In our own journey as geeky tech lovers and AI practitioners committed to social justice, editing this technology edition has confirmed over and over again that it’s how we use ourselves as virtual facilitators and online co-creators of experiences of wholeness more than which virtual technology we choose that is the game changer in creating human-centered, resilience-building, relationship-thriving appreciative inquiries.

As editors, our definition of the Wholeness principle included ensuring diverse voices. We intentionally sought authors spanning the globe so you could read and hear how technology has amplified wholeness in different contexts. We are especially pleased to offer Circe Peralta’s unique virtual AI work with children and youth in both English and Spanish.

Our new multicultural, multimedia virtual world

How might we continue to grow and expand the wholeness that is possible in the world by mirroring the courage and delight of these virtual technology AI pioneers?

The AIP co-publishers and editors met our enthusiasm for a new virtual world, agreeing to “walk the talk” by blending traditional articles of telling stories through text and images with an online YouTube portal for videos and an interactive website link. Through this multimedia you’ll not only hear each author’s stories but learn about their different viewpoints, challenges, decision points, and how they made the technology work for them and their process. We hope some articles will re-define current notions of what’s possible or thought to be desirable – such as self-service Appreciative Inquiry. This edition is filled with tools, questions, opportunities and the clear message that we can facilitate AI through technology if we focus our efforts on creating an experience that stimulates creativity, relationships and collective capacity. These authors have embraced the wholeness principle and, in many cases, were able to reach more people than they would have in a “live” setting. How might we continue to grow

and expand the wholeness that is possible in the world by mirroring the courage and delight of these virtual technology AI pioneers?

Tanya Cruz Teller and Sherri Sutton
November 20201

The interest of the Appreciative Inquiry community shift and grow; AI Practitioner’s perspectives and ways of connecting have shifted as well.

As the interest of the Appreciative Inquiry community shift and grow, *AI Practitioner’s* perspectives and ways of connecting have shifted as well. When we entered the second decade of the century, no one had any idea of what lay ahead, nor of the adaptations each and every one of us would have to make. We’ve come to rely on the virtual world to keep us connected with family and friends, to keep businesses working, to keep us informed and engaged. This is not likely to be a temporary change. Like everyone else, *AI Practitioner* has made many changes during the pandemic. We have had an issue of podcasts, a bilingual issue, and now one where videos, on the AIP YouTube channel and elsewhere, are as important as – perhaps more than– the written articles which filled the May 2008 technology issue.

In this issue, we have a richness of Feature Choice articles: not one, but two. In the first, the authors present how they have used AI to engage postgraduate nursing students in co-creating their learning experience. The second, in keeping with the issue topic, was written in a co-creation platform, Medium.com.

Shelagh Aitken, Managing Editor, AI Practitioner

To support you in your AI virtual journey, Tanya Cruz Teller and Sherri Sutton have created a reference tool to showcase the technology that is working well today. Obviously, with the speed of change and technology innovation in a VUCA world, written glossaries are obsolete by the time they are publication. We offer Sherri’s matrixes with that caveat and trust that they serve as guideposts for what questions to ask when looking for the best fit of mulitmedia tools and processes, rather than trying to offer definitive “right answers.

Some popular tools that have some brainstorming/collaboration functionality:

	Exports to .csv	Exports to .pdf	Allows Individual Ideas	Shows who contributed what	Allows multiple groups to access the same data
IdeaBoardz	x	x	x		x
Klaxoon	x	x	x	x	x
Miro	x	x	x	x	x
Mural		x	x	x	x

Some platform choices (there are many others) include:

	Adobe Connect	Blue Jeans	Click Meeting	CloudApp	Digitell	Go To Meeting	Microsoft Teams	Zoom
Can join calls on more than just a laptop		x				x	x	x
Powerful meeting security	x	x		x		x	x	x
User friendly			x			x	x	x
Recording capability		x		x	x	x		x
Built-in collaboration tools	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Chat	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Streamlined calendar						x		x
Share screen	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Virtual background							x	x
Connects with other applications		x				x	x	x
Large meeting capacity	x		x		x	x	x	x
Can use other Microsoft functions							x	
Breakout Rooms – Self-select, Manual, Random							x	x

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Education as Relating... The world is ready...the future is at hand... for replacing assembly-line classrooms with the vitalizing powers of relating. The directions are clear: from standardization to dialogue, from control to co-creation, and from regimentation to collaboration. Here lie the wellsprings of creativity, caring, and curiosity. Here we prepare for a global future in which inclusion, innovation, and improvisation are essential for a world in harmony.

Come join in this virtual conference designed for sharing and exploring practices, experiences, and inspirations in all aspects of education – within classrooms, communities, and outward to the circling globe. Come join in shaping the future of education.

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Thought leaders share innovative ideas, followed by small group reflections.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Participants attend sessions of their choice (detailed program to come)

Topics include:

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project-based curricula
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"at-risk" students
family involvement
teaming
technology
global classrooms
restorative practices*

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AI Practitioner is published by a partnership between the David L. Cooperrider Center for Appreciative Inquiry and Kessels & Smit, The Learning Company.

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CENTER FOR APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

David L. Cooperrider Center for Appreciative Inquiry contacts:

Website:

<http://www.champlain.edu/appreciativeinquiry>

Email: appreciativeinquiry@champlain.edu

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DLCCenterforAI>

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The David L. Cooperrider Center for Appreciative Inquiry is the global Center of Excellence in Appreciative Inquiry and strengths-based organizational management. Situated in the Robert P. Stiller School of Business at Champlain College, the Center:

- Provides cutting-edge educational offerings in AI and Positive Organizational Development,
- Provides AI-related organizational consultancy services to organizations,
- Serves as a scholarship incubator that advances the theory and practice of AI across all organizational sectors around the world.

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Kessels & Smit, The Learning Company contacts:

Website: <http://www.kessels-smit.com/en>

Email: contact@kessels-smit.com

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Kessels & Smit, The Learning Company is an international group of consultants, coaches and facilitators with a passion for learning and development. From their bases in The Netherlands, Belgium, South Africa and Germany they support individuals, organisations and communities around the world to strive for solutions that build individual growth, sustainable organisational development, and social change. They carry The Learning Company as their name because:

- Learning is at the heart of what they do: they aim to create and facilitate powerful learning processes.
- The professionals from Kessels & Smit want to be good company to each other and to people they work with: they believe the best solutions are developed in partnerships.
- They strive to be a learning organisation, constantly renewing their work processes, structures and approaches. The company is their “laboratory”, where they experiment and find answers for learning and development and organisational questions.

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